



MOLENDINAR PARK HOUSING ASSOCIATION

ESTATE MANAGEMENT POLICY

Adopted: 7 May 2019
Date of Next Review: May 2022

Molendinar Park Housing Association
3 Graham Square
Glasgow G31 1AD

Registered in Scotland 2400 R (S)
Registered Scottish Charity SC043725
Registered Property Factor PF 000125

POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

This document sets out Molendinar Park Housing Association's policy in relation to Estate Management. Our Estate Management Policy is integral to the overall environment in which our properties are located and sets out our approach to the management and standards of the surrounding environment, in our ownership. We recognise the importance of maintaining the physical condition, cleanliness and safety of the area, in which our properties are located, both to preserve the fabric and to ensure that it is a safe place where people feel proud to live.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The aim of the estate management policy is to manage the environment around our properties and any common areas effectively, to ensure that the neighbourhood is an attractive, well-maintained and safe place to live.
- 2.2 We accept that the Association has a responsibility both to inspect and to maintain the areas in our ownership. We believe that we must work with tenants to encourage everyone to participate in this process. We will therefore take a fair but firm, approach in dealing with tenants who are found not to be accepting their responsibilities in relation to estate management.
- 2.3 Overall, as part of our Policy we aim to:
 - allow all tenants and members of their household to live in well managed and maintained housing
 - ensure that the common areas for which the Association has responsibility are regularly checked and maintained to the highest possible standard
 - ensure that tenants are made aware of and accept their responsibilities in relation to the upkeep of their tenancy and the surrounding area
 - ensure that tenants are made aware of and accept the Association's responsibilities in relation to estate management
 - react promptly and take appropriate action in relation to estate management problems – including complaints from tenants
 - consider the employment of local contractors where appropriate and where this contributes to value for money in the delivery of our services
 - work collaboratively, with other agencies and statutory bodies with the aim of ensuring that the area is tidy, safe, secure and well maintained.

3. POLICY SCOPE

3.1 This policy covers the following:

- Prevention
- Regular checks
- Responding to problems

3.2 Our Estate Management Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- The Association's Tenancy Agreement
- Our policy on Neighbour Disputes and Anti-Social Behaviour

4. LEGISLATION AND THE SCOTTISH SOCIAL HOUSING CHARTER

4.1 This policy takes account of the following –

- the Housing (Scotland) Acts 2001 and 2014 and the Scottish Social Housing Charter, April 2017 – Neighbourhood and community, Estate management, antisocial behaviour, neighbour nuisance and tenancy disputes which states that Social landlords, working in partnership with other agencies, help to ensure as far as reasonably possible that – tenants and other customers live in well-maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe.

5. EQUALITIES

5.1 We will make copies of this policy available in a range of formats, including large print and in other languages where required.

We will also work to meet the Equalities section of the Social Housing Charter, which states that Social landlords perform all aspects of their housing services so that – every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect and receives fair access to housing and housing services.

6. PREVENTION

6.1 We believe that prevention of estate management problems is one of the most effective ways of ensuring tenants can enjoy living in a well cared for environment. We will therefore seek to minimise estate management problems by:

- Making clear to tenants what their responsibilities and obligations are in relation to estate management
- Detailing landlord and tenant responsibilities in relation to estate management in the Association's tenancy agreement
 - at the tenancy signing-up interview
 - at the settling in visit with housing staff
 - in the tenants handbook
- Ensuring that contracts are agreed for the upkeep of open spaces
- Regularly inspecting the estate and taking prompt action where problems are found
- Ensure that estate management services are planned, effectively budgeted and managed to the highest standard possible in line with the resources that are available.
- Maintain appropriate estate management records covering each house and common areas
- Engaging with our tenants to seek their views on the services and standards provided and using these to inform practice and change as appropriate

6.2 Regular Inspection

6.2.1 We will ensure that staff undertake regular inspections of the exterior of the properties and of the common areas for which Molendinar Park has responsibility.

6.2.2 Every area will be checked regularly and a record kept of this inspection. This inspection is designed to highlight:

- Repairs required to the outside of the property
- Repairs required to common areas
- Vandalism
- Graffiti
- Abandoned vehicles or property
- Maintenance required to the property
- Maintenance required to common areas and any fire safety issues
- Action required by other agencies (e.g. refuse collection)
- Cases of tenants failing to maintain their property/surrounding areas as detailed in their tenancy agreement

7. RESPONDING TO ESTATE MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS

7.1 We will ensure that prompt and appropriate action is taken to deal with estate management problems arising either from regular staff inspections, from staff observations when visiting an area, or from tenant complaints.

- 7.2 All tenants will be given information detailing how to make a complaint concerning estate management – whether it is about a tenant, a contractor or the Association.
- 7.3 All complaints will be recorded. Tenants will usually be asked to put complaints in writing, particularly where they are of a serious nature or where they are repeat complaints. Anonymous complaints may be dealt with at the discretion of the senior housing staff.
- 7.4 All complaints will be treated in a professional manner and appropriate action taken.
- 7.5 Where one tenant is complaining about another, the neighbours will usually be encouraged to resolve the problem themselves without the formal involvement of the Association.
- 7.6 Where this action does not resolve the problem, the Association will intervene by taking appropriate action:
- Informal visits
 - Formal visit or writing to a tenant or number to tenants to advise them of a problem and to outline a course of action required of them
 - Ordering a repair
 - Recharging tenants for work that is a tenant's responsibility
 - Liaising with other agencies
- 7.7 Where there is a persistent problem with a tenant/tenants failing to maintain areas for which they have a responsibility, Molendinar Park may encourage these tenants to transfer the obligation for upkeep to the Association in return for the levying of a service charge.
- 7.8 We will minimize the use of legal action in relation to estate management as far as is possible but will be prepared to take such action where a tenant is in breach of their tenancy agreement and all other action has been tried and has failed to remedy the situation.
- 7.9 The decision to initiate legal action will be taken by a senior member of the Housing Management team. All legal action will be reported to the Management Committee WITH THE Director acting under delegated authority on the progression and enforcement of legal action.

8. ABANDONMENT

- 8.1 We will make every effort to identify any properties that have been abandoned.
- 8.2 Where staff believe that a tenant has abandoned the property, appropriate steps will be taken to repossess the house in line with our Abandonment Policy

and Procedures. Any items in good condition found in the property will be stored for a maximum of six months where it is cost effective to do so.

9. LIAISING WITH OTHER AGENCIES

- 9.1 We recognize that some of the estate management problems with which we are asked to deal, may actually be the responsibility of other agencies (such as the Police Scotland, Environmental Health, Social Work, Cleansing, Street Lighting Etc.)
- 9.2 We will seek to establish good working relationships with each of these organisations recognising that effective inter-agency communication may, in itself, prevent or solve estate management problems.
- 9.3 We will ensure that staff are aware of the roles, responsibilities and obligations of these different agencies. This information will also be made available to tenants. Relevant agencies are likely to include:
- Police Scotland– in relation to vandalism, drugs misuse/dealing, illegal activities, violence, theft etc.
 - Environmental Health – in relation to dogs, excessive noise etc.
 - Cleansing Department – in relation to domestic rubbish
 - Social Work Department – in relation to support for vulnerable households etc.
 - Fire and Rescue Scotland – in relation to home fire safety and fire safety of communal areas, stairs and closes

10. OPEN SPACE MAINTENANCE

- 10.1 We will ensure that all open spaces (grassed and planted areas, play areas/equipment, common paths, fencing and railings) for which the Association has responsibility are regularly inspected and adequately maintained.
- 10.2 We will, where appropriate, consider the use of local contractors, where this contributes to value for money.
- 10.3 We will ensure that open spaces are regularly checked to ensure that they are being well looked after.
- 10.4 Prompt and appropriate action will be taken in response to complaints about the maintenance of open spaces.

11. PETS

- 11.1 We will provide details of tenants' responsibilities in relation to pets in the tenancy agreement. The tenancy agreement will stipulate that tenants require written permission for any pet. No reasonable requests will be refused.
- 11.2 In addition, tenants are required to:
- Keep all pets under control
 - Ensure that their pets do not cause a nuisance or danger to others
 - Ensure that their pets do not cause damage to property
 - Ensure that their pets do not foul public places

12. VANDALISM

- 12.1 We will take firm action against tenants who are found to be responsible for vandalism (either directly or indirectly).
- 12.2 In relation to vandalism, either within houses or to any property/area owned by the Association, tenants will be responsible for their own actions, for those of other members of their household and for their visitors.
- 12.3 All cases of vandalism will be reported to the police.
- 12.4 Tenants may be charged for vandalism caused by themselves, other members of their household or their visitors.
- 12.5 We will aim to develop a close working relationship with the local police, schools, local youth groups and any other relevant agencies.
- 12.6 We will encourage all tenants to report vandalism to the Association as soon as it is discovered.
- 12.7 Where appropriate, we will ensure that a property that is likely to be empty for some time is made secure.
- 12.8 Graffiti that is racially abusive, sectarian, or in any other way offensive will be dealt with as an emergency.

13. REFUSE DISPOSAL AND LITTER

- 13.1 We will liaise with the Cleansing Department, where necessary, concerning the collection of rubbish.

- 13.2 We will ensure that guidance is given to tenants concerning rubbish disposal – including garden waste, bulky items and ordinary household waste.
- 13.3 For the removal of discarded needles and syringes, we will contact Glasgow City Council to arrange uplift. In practice where this may result in a delay, we will minimise risk by having our cleaning contractor safely dispose of any such objects in a sharps box.

14. VERMIN AND PEST CONTROL

- 14.1 We will provide written information for tenants on:
- How to report such problems to the Association
 - Other agencies which may provide assistance
- 14.2 We have clear procedures for dealing with infestations of pests or vermin in Molendinar Park stock. These procedures link in with relevant agencies such as Environmental Health.
- 14.3 We will respond to cases of vermin and pest infestation within Molendinar Park stock in a prompt and appropriate manner.
- 14.4 Where pests/vermin cannot reasonably be eradicated while the tenant is living in the flat the tenant will be temporarily rehoused until the necessary work is completed and may be recharged for the cost of associated work.

15. SATELLITE DISHES

- 15.1 We will not permit individual dishes to be erected on our property but may provide permission for residents to do this, subject to the usual consents where the Association does not erect a pole on the roof that the residents can attach their own dish to.

16. SECURITY

- 16.1 We will take account of security issues in the design, management and maintenance of our property.
- 16.2 We will provide tenants with advice and information about home security and home contents insurance.
- 16.3 All final exit doors to building will be fitted with locks that comply with British Standards.

- 16.4 Consideration will be given to additional safety measures (such as window locks, safety letter boxes) for the homes of tenants who are victims of racial, domestic, sexual or other forms of harassment.
- 16.5 We will liaise with appropriate agencies to ensure that street and communal lighting is maintained in good working order.

17. OWNER OCCUPIER CHARGES

- 17.1 We will ensure that owners are charged for estate management services provided to common areas and this is covered in more detail in our Factoring Policy.
- 17.2 Owners will be notified as to the basis of these charges.
- 17.3 Reasonable steps will be taken to collect charges owing and to recover any arrears outstanding.

18. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 18.1 We will ensure that the Management Committee and staff responsibilities in relation to estate management are clearly defined and appropriate.
- 18.2 The Management Committee has overall responsibility for overseeing policy development and performance monitoring in relation to estate management.
- 18.3 Appropriate reports will be provided by staff on a regular basis to the Management Committee - and we may work towards Committee members taking part in future estate walkabouts.
- 18.4 Committee members will not be given the names (or any other identifying information) of tenants involved in estate management problems.
- 18.5 We will ensure that there is sufficient staff to provide the estate management service indicated. We will also ensure that all staff with estate management responsibility have the required training and refresher training. This will particularly important in relation to the identification of repair or maintenance requirements and in relation to insurance matters.

19. CUSTOMER CARE AND INFORMATION

19.1 We will:

- Make sure that the estate management services are accountable to tenants and both appropriate and respective to local needs;
- Provide new tenants with information and advice concerning estate management
- Ensure that the tenancy agreement is written in a clear and concise manner and that it covers responsibilities in relation to estate management
- Provide tenants with a handbook that provides information and advice on estate management.

20. STANDARDS, TARGETS AND PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

20.1 We will survey our tenants, normally every two years, to ascertain their views on a range of services, including estate management. This information will inform our Annual Return on the Charter to the Scottish Housing Regulator who requires the following information to be submitted:

-Percentage of tenants satisfied with the management of the neighbourhood they live in. (i) Number of tenants who were asked: 'Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your landlord's management of the neighbourhood you live in?' (ii) Number who responded: (a) very satisfied (b) fairly satisfied (c) neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (d) fairly dissatisfied (e) very dissatisfied (f) don't know/no opinion This information will also inform our budget planning and preparation, enabling us, within our income streams, to be proactive in addressing any concerns raised.

20.2 We acknowledge the need to have:

- Legal, fair and effective policies for dealing with all estate management matters.
- Procedures on estate management which take account of the legal requirements and good practice guidance. We will also collect and monitor information on estate management activities as appropriate and use such information to inform budget planning.

21. COMPLAINTS

21.1 Complaints regarding estate management will be referred, in the first instance, to the Association's Director. If the matter is not resolved, tenants will be advised to complain in accordance with the Association's complaints

procedure copies of which are available on our website, and at our office and available from staff.

- 21.2 If after exhausting the Association's complaints procedure a tenant or former tenant is still unhappy, they should contact the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO):

**Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
Bridgeside House
99 McDonald Road
Edinburgh
EH7 4NS**

Telephone 0800 377 7330 – free phone or 0131 225 5300

Fax 0800 377 7331
Text 0790 049 4372
E-mail ask@spsso.org.uk

**SPSO
Freepost**

22. POLICY REVIEW

- 22.1 This Estate Management Policy will be reviewed, subject to consultation with tenants, every three years or earlier where legislation, guidance or practice requires.