

## Neighbourhood Management Policy Statement May 2025.

This policy is implemented by Midlands Rural Housing on behalf of four independent partner associations: Leicestershire Rural Housing Association, Northamptonshire Rural Housing Association, Peak District Rural Housing Association and Warwickshire Rural Housing Association. Midlands Rural Housing provides the full range of housing and management services for these four associations in line with a procedure agreement.

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| Document title                    | Neighbourhood Management Policy Statement  |
| Version number                    | 1  |
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| Author title & issuing department | Area Housing Managers                      |
| Target audience                   | MRH colleagues<br>Residents<br>Contractors |

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|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| Approved by   |                                     |
| Date approved |                                     |
| Review date   | May 2028 – and 3 yearly thereafter. |

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| Links to Regulatory Standards – Economic/ Consumer Standards                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard (“the TIA Standard”)</li> <li>• The Safety and Quality Standard (“the SQ Standard”)</li> <li>• The Tenancy Standard</li> <li>• The Neighbourhood and Community Standard (“the NC Standard”)</li> <li>• The Code of Practice (“the Code”)</li> </ul>   |
| Outcome for customers   | Residents<br>The policy will ensure improved services for residents through a tailored approach to identifying and improving our open spaces, communal areas and neighbourhoods.   |
| How were tenants, residents and service users involved in the review/development of this document | Consultation took place on the ....  |
| Links to Business Plan  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 - Engage effectively with our residents</li> <li>• 3 - Provide high quality housing management services</li> <li>• 6 - Strengthen and grow partnership arrangements with local authorities, developers, financial organisations and other stakeholders</li> </ul>   |
| Links to key values   | <p>Diversity: This policy outlines our approach to ensure our services are fair and accessible for all our customers.</p> <p>Openness: This policy sets out our approach to neighbourhood management and how residents can influence and help shape our services.</p> <p>Accountability: The policy sets out the roles and responsibilities in relation to planning and managing our open spaces, communal areas and neighbourhoods.</p> <p>Clarity: This policy provides guidance for colleagues on our service standards and how we will deliver them.</p> |

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Neighbourhood management is an integral part of our role through the provision of safe, secure, and well-maintained neighbourhoods. Well managed neighbourhoods provide a better quality of life for our residents and can act as a deterrent to anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance, and crime.
- 1.2 We aim to provide high quality homes and services, create sustainable communities, and promote pride in our neighbourhoods. We comply with the Regulator of Social Housing's Neighbourhood and Community Standard through partnership working with our residents and external organisations; and we're committed to keeping neighbourhoods and communal areas clean and safe.

## 2. Purpose

- 2.1 This policy sets out our commitment to maintaining and improving neighbourhoods and providing services to residents which enable them to have quiet enjoyment of their homes, in a safe and secure neighbourhood they are proud to live in.
- 2.2 Through this policy we aim to:
  - develop a pro-active approach to the management of our homes and neighbourhoods
  - ensure the grounds and communal facilities we own and manage are well maintained
  - ensure that where we instruct work, it provides value for money for our residents
  - manage the environment with partner agencies and residents to create sustainable and safer neighbourhoods
  - ensure that all residents are aware of their respective responsibilities
  - ensure we continue to comply with legislation and the Regulator's Consumer Standards.
- 2.3 We aim to put residents at the heart of their neighbourhood by encouraging resident involvement and consultation on neighbourhood management. We're committed to working in partnership with relevant partners and external agencies, such as the local authority and the police, to help promote the social, environmental, and economic wellbeing of our neighbourhoods.

## 3. Scheme and neighbourhood inspections

- 3.1 Alongside feedback from residents, regular inspections of our schemes and neighbourhoods are one of the main ways that we can ensure schemes and local neighbourhoods are being looked after and to identify problems that

need to be addressed. These inspections will also focus on ensuring that our contractors are delivering high-quality and value for money services. The frequency of these inspections will be determined by the housing officer for that area and reviewed by the area housing manager. We will notify residents of upcoming scheme surgeries by letter and email. We will also publish these dates on our website and Facebook.

#### 4. Customer and community engagement

- 4.1 We encourage our residents and communities to engage with us at a local level. Our housing officers and maintenance surveyors actively seek feedback, comments and views when they are visiting schemes; carrying out scheme surgeries; and undertaking scheme risk assessments.
- 4.2 If we deliver grounds maintenance services at a scheme, we will survey residents on a regular basis. This is part of our contractor performance management, and enables residents to influence future decisions on service levels and design for new buildings and schemes.
- 4.3 Active participation and involvement of our residents is also encouraged in our decision-making processes. We use a tailored approach in the delivery of our local plans to carry out community initiatives and community events. These create a sense of belonging, according to the need in the local area.
- 4.4 We provide residents with a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in how neighbourhood services are delivered; how performance is monitored; and how satisfaction is assessed. In particular, the tenant satisfaction measures survey is sent to all residents every two years. This measures their satisfaction with:
  - how we keep communal areas clean and well maintained
  - how we make a positive contribution to our neighbourhoods
  - our approach to handling anti-social behaviour.

Other examples of resident engagement include:

- residents monitoring grounds maintenance services and feeding back to us
- a dedicated housing officer who is the first point of contact to help our residents
- specialist advice and assistance to help our residents when needed
- tailored solutions which address local neighbourhood priorities, including mediation, scheme surgeries with local beat officers and scheme clearance days
- consultation with residents on new policies, giving them the opportunity to influence the content

- involving residents in the process of appointing new contractors.

4.5 Residents are encouraged to maintain good neighbourhoods. Their responsibilities include, in line with their tenancy/lease agreement, to:

- make sure their home, garden and driveways are maintained and in a good condition
- report repairs promptly
- keep all communal areas clean, safe, and free from obstruction
- make sure pets are kept under control and do not defecate in communal areas and are not used in a threatening manner
- not engage in anti-social behaviour, nuisance or annoyance to neighbours and report any concerns to the association
- dispose of all rubbish and unwanted items responsibly by placing in the correct bin and storage area. This includes disposal of large or bulky items by arranging collection or by taking it to the household waste facility.

## 5. Rubbish and fly tipping

5.1 Rubbish and fly tipping can have a significant negative impact on the appearance of schemes and neighbourhoods, which have the potential to attract other types of anti-social behaviour.

5.2 We will investigate all instances of fly tipping and misuse of bin stores on our communal areas. If we establish the identity of a resident or person responsible, we will request they remove the items, within a reasonable timescale. If the request is not adhered to, we will arrange for the removal of the items and will recharge those concerned for the cost of this service (where possible).

5.3 Flying tipping is a breach of tenancy and we may take legal action against offenders. Where fly tipping is reported within our communities, but not within the boundary of our land, we will work with local services and enforcement agencies to identify those responsible and support actions to resolve the issue.

5.4 If we identify that a scheme would benefit from a scheme clearance day, we will arrange a community event and skips to support and help residents dispose of items. This is offered subject to budget being available.

## **6. Tree management**

- 6.1 We take a risk-based approach to tree management. If we identify any potential issues with the trees on our land, we aim to deal with them before they escalate into complex problems that require greater attention and expense.
- 6.2 We aim to only remove trees because they are diseased, dead, causing structural damage to property or pose a risk to health and safety of people. Where these are within front or rear gardens of individual properties, they will be reviewed when the property is void.
- 6.3 Residents are responsible for the trees and bushes within the curtilage of their property.

## **7. Abandoned vehicles and car parking**

- 7.1 Regarding abandoned or unroadworthy vehicles and car parking, we can only take action if the vehicles are parked on land that we own. We might make a report to the local council if there is a problem on a public road, like it being blocked and stopping emergency services vehicles getting through, or there is a potential health and safety risk.
- 7.2 Only road worthy vehicles are allowed to be parked on a resident's drive. If a vehicle that's not fit for use on a public road or that presents a health and safety concern is parked within the boundary of a home (such as a drive or allocated parking space), the resident will be asked to remove it.
- 7.3 If you live in a scheme with communal parking areas, please be considerate of other residents when using the parking spaces. We will not get involved in parking space disputes.
- 7.4 We generally do not allocate specific parking bays. However, if your tenancy agreement includes a specific parking bay, it will have your house number marked out as part of a parking plan, or you will be issued with a parking plan when you sign your tenancy agreement.
- 7.5 We may consider allocating an individual parking bay for disabled parking requirements. This will be on a case-by-case basis. You can request this by contacting your housing officer.
- 7.6 If there are specific covenants around parking within a neighbourhood, these must be met by all residents. All potential residents will be made aware of any restrictions during the allocation process.

7.7 The following vehicles may only be parked within communal parking areas if we've granted permission (any requests should be sent to your housing officer):

- boats
- buses or minibuses
- caravans or motorhomes
- heavy goods vehicles
- trailers
- vehicles with Statutory Off-Road Notice (SORN)

7.8 If we suspect a vehicle has been abandoned on our land, we will work with the Drivers and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) to identify the owner. The DVLA will notify the owner that they intend to remove the vehicle. If the owner does not respond within the notice period, the DVLA will arrange to remove, store and dispose of the vehicle. If the owner is identified, we may recharge the costs for the removal, storage and disposal of the vehicle.

## **8. Keeping communal spaces safe**

8.1 We make sure that communal spaces in blocks of flats meet the fire safety regulations. Internal communal spaces must be kept free of anything that could block the area at all times. These areas include stairwells, corridors, landings, lobbies, communal laundry rooms, and mobility scooter storage.

8.2 We will consider requests for personal items to be kept in communal areas on a case-by-case basis. Requests should be made to your housing officer.

## **9. Pests and vermin**

9.1 Residents are responsible for pest control issues in their homes

9.2 If there is a pest control issue in a communal area, we will arrange for pest control services to treat the area.

9.3 If a pest infestation has spread from a communal area to a resident's home, or is affecting multiple homes, we will arrange for treatment of the individual dwellings. Please refer to our Pest Control Process.

## **10. Playgrounds**

10.1 We will ensure that playgrounds, that we're responsible for, are managed and maintained as safe places for all users. We will inspect these as per

recommended guidance and legislation, and on a frequency based upon the management requirements for each site.

## **11. Legal and regulatory framework**

11.1 We work within a legal framework which includes all applicable statutory and legal requirements in relation to the local neighbourhood environment. This currently includes:

- Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- The Removal, Storage and Disposal of Vehicles (Prescribed Sums and Charges) Regulations 2008
- Law of Torts (Interference with Goods) Act 1977
- Public Health Act 1936
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Occupier's Liability Act (1957, Revised 1984)
- Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)
- Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002

11.2 The introduction of the new Consumer Regulation and Tenant Satisfaction Measures through the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 requires a renewed focus on communal area standards and maintenance.

11.3 The Neighbourhood and Community Standard, issued by the Regulator of Social Housing, requires all registered providers to have policies and practices in respect of the upkeep of common parts and communal areas, and for providing responsive neighbourhood management services.

11.4 The Safety and Quality Standard requires registered providers to have an effective repairs and maintenance service and for legal health and safety requirements to be met. Ensuring residents live in good quality, safe homes is the most fundamental responsibility of all registered providers.

## **12. Equality of access**

12.1. It is essential that the Neighbourhood Management Policy is equally accessible to all our residents. We will ensure that the policy is provided in easy-to-read formats and provide residents access to appropriate support which will include:

- translation of communications into another language
- translation of communications into braille
- use of language line interpretation service
- communicating with the resident's advocate, where permission has been granted.

### **13. Review**

13.1 We will review this Policy every three years and/or to address changes in legislative, regulatory, best practice or operational issues.

### **14. Responsibility and training**

14.1 The area housing managers take responsibility for the implementation and review of this Policy. Staff will be trained to administer it to the full and to report any difficulties in its administration. Officers will be aware of the legal remedies and be trained in their use, providing them with the knowledge to deal with reports relating to shared/community spaces effectively and appropriately.

### **15. Associated Documents**

- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy