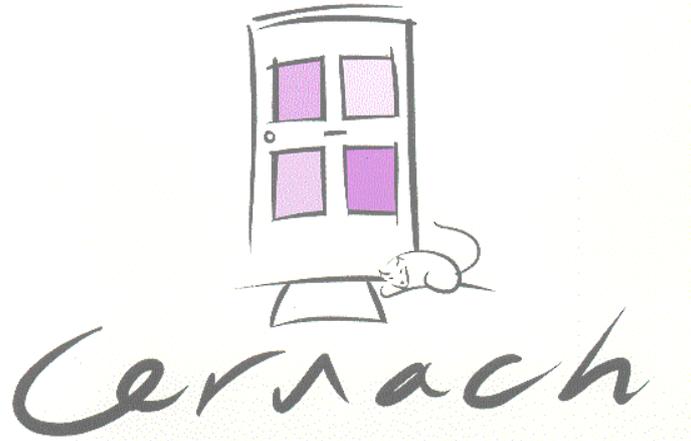


**CERNACH HOUSING ASSOCIATION  
LIMITED**



**ESTATE MANAGEMENT POLICY**

**Date Approved by Operations Sub-Committee:**

September 2022

**Date Issued to Staff:**

September 2022

**Due for Review:**

September 2025

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# Cernach Housing Association

## Estate Management Policy

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### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Cernach Housing Association is committed to providing good quality affordable housing and to manage the property owned and factored by the Association to the highest possible standard within existing financial constraints.
- 1.2 Estate Management is a vital part of housing management and a particularly important service from the tenants viewpoint, yet there is no accepted definition of what tasks it covers. The Chartered Institute of Housing uses the term in its widest sense to refer to property management and services to tenants, leaseholders and sharing owners which aim to enable residents to have quiet enjoyment of their homes and a decent, safe and secure environment. Estate Management is not just about looking after buildings and the physical environment, but also involves providing or arranging necessary advice and support to tenants, and involves working with other agencies to achieve decent living conditions. Tenancy management also comes under the heading of estate management and is best described as intervention action necessary to ensure tenants and residents are aware of their responsibilities in relation to their property and their neighbours.
- 1.3 Maintenance of the properties and the common areas in our ownership is the responsibility of the Association. Estate management therefore is seen as a fundamental aspect of this service. Ground maintenance and the many other day-to-day tasks that go into looking after the estate are all important in creating and maintaining a clean, attractive and safe estate. Although taking good care of our area is primarily the Associations responsibility, some services that impact on estate management, such as refuse collection, close lighting and street lighting are not within the Associations direct control. The Association will endeavour to foster good working relationships with City Council to ensure that their departments provide a good quality service in our area. A multi agency approach to estate management is required particularly with a high profile for the police and community wardens. This policy places a strong emphasis on a proactive and supportive approach to estate management.
- 1.4 For the Association this means having the responsibility to inspect and maintain its housing, the common areas of that housing, the surrounding environment within the curtilage of the buildings and any land within the Associations ownership.
- 1.5 For tenants it means compliance with their responsibilities for maintaining in good order their surrounding environment, as well as their own individual property, and in doing so respect the rights of their neighbours and the surrounding community, as laid down in their Tenancy Agreement.
- 1.6 This policy cross relates to the Neighbour Disputes and Anti-Social Behaviour Policy, Racial Harassment Policy, Pet Policy and other Housing Management policies as these are tenancy related, and compliant with the tenancy agreement.

- 1.7 The aforementioned policies and procedures govern how the staff should deal with nuisance problems caused by the behaviour of residents and their guests and for responding to customers' complaints about problems such as:
- General domestic noise, foul language, DIY activity
  - Noise from amplified music
  - Late night parties
  - Car repairs in the street, abandoned cars
  - Nuisance caused by animals
  - Racial, sexual and other forms of harassment
  - Violence
  - Drug dealing
  - Improper disposal of waste

## **2. Policy Aim and Objectives**

- 2.1 Our estate management policy is designed to enable us to
- Ensure that stock and surrounding environments are managed and maintained to high standard.
  - Provide a direct housing management service, ensuring that tenancy conditions are adhered to and providing advice and support where required.
  - Develop positive partnership working with external agencies to utilise resources already available to achieve lasting change.
  - To ensure all tenants are aware of their responsibilities under the terms of the Tenancy Agreement
  - To ensure that all tenants are treated equally and that no groups are discriminated against in the operation of this policy

## **3. LEGISLATIVE & REGULATORY FRAMEWORK**

- 3.1 This Policy meets The Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes:
- No. 6: Estate Management, anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and tenancy disputes. Social landlords working in partnership with other agencies, help to ensure that:  
*“Tenants and other customers live in well-maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe”.*
  - No. 11: Tenancy Sustainment. Social landlords ensure that  
*“tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations.”*

- No. 13: Value for Monday. Social landlords manage all aspects of their business so that:

*“tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay”*

3.2 The following legislation has also been taken into consideration in the development of this policy:

- Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
- The Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003
- Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Equalities Act 2010

## **4. Risk Management**

4.1 The Association, in implementing this policy seeks to ensure that where a problem is identified prompt action will be taken to remedy the situation. The Association will ensure that good practice in relation to estate management is adopted and encouraged at all times. It is vitally important that the high standard of the area is maintained and tenancy breaches dealt with swiftly and appropriately to ensure the Associations Housing Stock remains desirable and that people are happy to remain in the area. Failure to do this would result in the Associations housing stock or pockets of the housing stock becoming difficult to let and the consequential rent loss due to voids.

## **5. Equality and Human Rights**

5.1 The Association’s Equality and Human Rights policy, which was approved by the Committee in April 2021, outlines our commitment to promote a zero tolerance to unfair treatment or discrimination to any person or group of persons, particularly on the basis of any of the protected characteristics<sup>1</sup>. This includes ensuring that everyone has equal access to information and services, and, to this end, the Association will make available a copy of this document in a range of alternative formats including large print, translated into another language or by data transferred to voice.

5.2 We are also aware of the potential for policies to inadvertently discriminate against an individual or group of individuals. To help tackle this and ensure that it does not occur, best practice suggests that organisations carry out Equality Impact Assessments to help identify any part of a policy that may be discriminatory so that this can be addressed (please see section 6 of the

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<sup>1</sup> The Equality Act 2010 identifies the “protected characteristics” as age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, gender reassignment and sexual orientation.

Equality and Human Rights policy for more information).

- 5.3 In line with section 6 of the Equality and Human Rights Policy, the Association carried out an Equality Impact Assessment on this policy and no remedial action was identified as necessary. The full assessment is appended at the end of this policy.

## **6. Responsibility & Delegated Authority**

- 6.1 It is the responsibility of the Housing Management Team to implement this policy as delegated by the Senior Housing Officer.

- 6.2 The Senior Housing Officer has responsibility for:

- Monitoring performance.
- Monitoring the operation and implementation of the policy.
- Key aspects of day to day service delivery.
- Review of the policy.
- Monitoring of cases at legal action stages.
- Reporting to the Operations Sub Committee on any legal action taken.

- 6.3 The Depute Director retains overall responsibility of the implementation of this policy. The Operations Sub Committee hold responsibility of approval of this policy as delegated by the Management Committee.

## **7. Housing Management – Setting Standards**

- 7.1 A clean and tidy estate means a lot to residents. Well maintained trees, shrubs, grassed areas and other forms of soft landscaping, keeping on top of graffiti, rubbish and litter not only achieves an attractive and safe environment, but also proves to residents that the Association takes a pride in their estate.

- 7.2 Whilst the Maintenance Officer is responsible for monitoring the performance of the landscape maintenance contractor, Housing Officers have a role to play in monitoring the condition of the landscape common areas and taking prompt action to remedy the situation by alerting the Maintenance Officer immediately any instances of suspected non conformance of the Contractor becomes apparent.

- 7.3 It is the Associations responsibility therefore to ensure that the appearance and cleanliness of each property on the estate is maintained to as high a standard as possible, and that Conditions of Tenancy and Deeds of Conditions are adhered to. An attractive well cared for estate is only possible if residents also take responsibility for looking after it. Partnership and co-operation with residents is of paramount importance. To achieve consistently high standards it is essential that there is close co-operation between tenants, owners and staff.

- 7.4 Residents therefore have their part to play in ensuring the estate is kept at its best. Tenants have certain responsibilities under the tenancy agreement to take care of their homes and estate and they can contribute ideas, views and experiences to help with service planning and delivery.
- 7.5 Housing staff should make regular inspections of the communal bin store areas to ensure that they are kept tidy and clear of rubbish and take appropriate intervention action if found to be unsatisfactory.
- 7.6 Housing staff should identify tenants who neglect their garden, investigate the reasons for this, and enforce tenancy conditions or arrange practical advice and assistance where appropriate for tenants who are infirm or disabled. This could include referral to landscape contractors to provide service at direct cost to the tenant.

## **8. Housing Management Staff Responsibilities – Maintaining Standards**

- 8.1 Cernach Housing Association believes problems can be prevented from arising by ensuring that tenants are fully aware of their obligations as tenants.
- 8.2 The basis of the Tenancy Agreement is that tenants have specific responsibilities, which are made clear to them at the commencement of their tenancy. This will be done in a number of ways:

### **8.2.1 New Tenants**

- (a) Inform people at an accompanied viewing and again at time of signing for their tenancy what their specific responsibilities are in relation to close cleaning, gardens etc.
- (b) New tenants will be issued with a tenancy agreement that is written in plain English or in their preferred language.
- (c) Tenants will also be given a Good Neighbour Management Agreement for signing and adopted as a Codicil to the Tenancy Agreement at their Settling In Visit.
- (d) They will also be given a Tenants Handbook which will give more detailed information about their tenancy, what is expected of them and what they can expect from their neighbours.
- (e) The Housing Officer will carry out a new tenant/sharing owner visit once the tenant/sharing owner has moved into the property and explain in detail their responsibilities. This is an opportunity for the Housing Officer to identify and deal with any problems being experienced. These visits must be carried out within six weeks of date of entry, during which the Housing Officer will reiterate responsibilities, encourage membership of the Association and answer and note any other points requiring clarification. The settling in visit will be recorded in SDM.

### 8.2.2 General

The Housing Officer should note and act upon problems and issues through actively listening to tenants' complaints and concerns about issues that affect the quality of life locally. The key approaches to effective estate management are housing led but also need input from other agencies such as the Police and Council Departments. This will be done in a number of ways:

- (a) Dealing promptly and efficiently with relatively minor problems that have the potential for escalation such as litter within a close.
- (b) Taking early action to deal with graffiti.
- (c) Co-operation with partners including community police and community wardens on addressing crime related issues such as vandalism, and car abandonment.
- (d) The use of newsletters to highlight the impact of estate management,
- (e) Garden competition to encourage tenants to make improvements.

### 8.2.3 Property Inspection - Internal

- (a) All tenants will be visited at home by the Housing Officer every five years. If a house is found to be in a poor condition internally action will be taken in an effort to remedy the problem.
- (b) Where a poor standard of cleanliness is revealed which is likely to cause deterioration in the condition of the property action will be taken to ensure that the tenant complies with the terms of their tenancy agreement. Where a tenant is deemed to be incapable of doing so, referrals to appropriate agencies to assist the tenant in complying with their conditions of tenancy will be made.
- (c) In cases where there is no improvement, and the Association has adequate grounds, action will be taken to remedy the situation. This may include an action for eviction.
- (d) Any damage to a property or to the fixtures and fittings which is caused by carelessness, neglect or vandalism must be remedied by the tenant at their expense. If necessary the Association will carry out the work and invoice the tenant accordingly.
- (e) Housing and maintenance staff should, during complete routine Housing Management or Maintenance visits, identify tenants who fail to take reasonable care of the property and/or fail to keep the property in a reasonable standard of internal decoration and cleanliness.

### 8.2.4 Estate Management Visits

- (a) All common closes and backcourts, and common gardens, and private gardens will be inspected on a quarterly basis by the Housing Management Team. A record of inspection will be kept. Where a problem is identified, prompt action will be taken to remedy the situation.
- (b) Proper records of all action taken will be kept i.e. inspections, rotas, letters and

photographs which will be recorded in SDM.

#### 8.2.5 Gardens

- (a) Landscape areas and grassed areas designated as communal will be the responsibility of the Association where Glasgow City Council have not adopted them. A contractor will be employed to cut the grass, and tidy these areas fortnightly during the growing season.
- (b) Where a property has its own garden the resident will be responsible for maintaining that area to a satisfactory standard. If a garden is unsatisfactory due to infirmity or disability the Association will provide advice in relation to any schemes of assistance the tenant can apply to.
- (c) The Association has an annual garden competition and prizes are offered as well as a trophy for the overall winner. The competition will also include prizes and recognition for balconies. The Housing Management Team should promote the garden competition as an incentive to encourage tenants to look after the garden. With this in mind, no tenant can be awarded prizes two years in a row.

#### 8.2.6 Backcourts

- (a) Glasgow City Council's cleansing Department is responsible for removal of domestic refuse and bulk uplift.
- (b) This does not absolve the residents from their responsibilities in terms of ensuring that the backcourt and bin stores are kept in a tidy condition and action will be taken to resolve problems where tenants are identified to be responsible for poor back court conditions.

#### 8.2.7 Pets

- (a) The main responsibility for keeping and controlling pets lies with the tenant. All tenants must have written permission to keep a pet(s) (maximum of one pet) and permission will not be withheld unreasonably. Full information on the keeping of pets and the pet register is outlined in the Association's Pet Policy.

### **9. COMPLAINTS**

- 9.1 The Association has a published Complaints policy & procedure, which can be used where there is dissatisfaction with this policy or the operation of this policy. Any tenant who feels aggrieved by their treatment under this policy can ask for a copy of the Association's complaints policy, which is available at the Association's office and on the website [www.cernachha.co.uk](http://www.cernachha.co.uk).
- 9.2 As with all our service policies, the complaints policy can be made available in large print, translated or on tape. Tenants also have the right to complain to

the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman if they are not satisfied with our stage 2 response.

## **10. Staff Training**

- 10.1 Cernach recognises that it is extremely important that the resourcing and training of staff is adequate to meet all the needs of its tenants. The Association is committed to making training relating to effective tenancy and estate management is available to staff. Training should be updated as appropriate. Staff will be encouraged to network with other RSLs in order to share best practice in dealing.

## **11. Policy Review and Tenant Consultation**

- 11.1 The opinion of local residents on estate management issues will be sought on a regular basis. The main method for seeking comments will be through the newsletters, the Residents Panel and property inspections. Newsletters are issued to all residents and this will assist in raising tenants' awareness of the Association's policies and objectives.
- 11.2 The Association has developed this policy in consultation with tenants and the resident participation group and take account of representations made.
- 11.3 The Operations Sub-Committee will review the Estate Management Policy every three years. This review will be brought forward if there is need to respond to new legislation and/or policy guidance.

## Cernach Housing Association Equality Impact Assessment Tool



Name of the <b>policy / proposal</b> to be assessed	Estate Management Policy	Is this a <b>new policy / proposal or a revision?</b>	Revision
Person(s) responsible for the assessment	Laura-Jane Richards		
1. Briefly describe the <b>aims, objectives and purpose</b> of the policy / proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that stock and surrounding environments are managed and maintained to high standard.</li> <li>• Provide a direct housing management service, ensuring that tenancy conditions are adhered to and providing advice and support where required.</li> <li>• Develop positive partnership working with external agencies to utilise resources already available to achieve lasting change.</li> <li>• To ensure all tenants are aware of their responsibilities under the terms of the Tenancy Agreement</li> <li>• To ensure that all tenants are treated equally and that no groups are discriminated against in the operation of this policy</li> </ul>		
2. <b>Who is intended to benefit</b> from the policy / proposal? (e.g. applicants, tenants, staff, contractors)	Tenants, residents, owners, staff and contractors		

<p><b>3. What <b>outcomes</b> are <b>wanted</b> from this policy / proposal ? (e.g. the benefits to customers)</b></p>	<p>To work with partnership agencies to ensure that tenants and other customers live in a well-maintained area where they feel safe. To provide value for money in the services tenants and other customers receive.</p>
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**4. Which **protected characteristics** could be **affected** by the proposal? (tick all that apply)**

Age      X Disability       Marriage & Civil Partnership       Pregnancy/Maternity  
 Race

Religion or Belief       Gender       Gender Reassignment       Sexual Orientation

**5. If the policy / proposal is not relevant to any of the **protected characteristics** listed in part 4, state why and end the process here.**

	Positive impact(s)	Negative impact(s)
<p><b>6. Describe the <b>likely positive or negative impact(s)</b> the policy / proposal could have on the groups identified in part 4</b></p>		<p>Race – there could be barriers to participation based on language formatting of consultations.</p> <p>Disability – there could be barriers to accessing physical services for disabled people, or in reading or writing written communications</p>

**7. What actions are required** to address the impacts arising from this assessment? *(This might include; collecting additional data, putting monitoring in place, specific actions to mitigate negative impacts).*

To address race related barriers, written and oral materials can be provided in translated formats.

To address disability related barriers, written materials can be provided in alternative format and our venues are accessible.

Signed:           *Laura-Jane Richards*           (Job title): Senior Housing Officer

Date the Equality Impact Assessment was completed: 29/07/2022

***Please attach the completed document as an appendix to your policy / proposal report***