

MILNBANK HOUSING ASSOCIATION

ESTATE MANAGEMENT POLICY

PH/REF P21/MAY 2010

1. AIM OF THE POLICY

The aim of the Estate Management Policy is to allow all residents of Milnbank Housing Association to live in well managed and maintained housing.

The Association will ensure that the Estate Management services are planned, implemented, regularly inspected and maintained to the highest possible standard and that Estate Management issues are acted upon promptly.

The Association will also ensure that residents are made aware and accept their responsibilities in relation to Estate Management.

The Services Committee will delegate the responsibility of dealing with Estate Management issues to the appropriate staff member(s) who will report on a regular basis to the committee.

2. ESTATE MANAGEMENT FUND

In recognition of the Association supporting a zero tolerance stance in issues surrounding estate management and complaints of an anti-social nature an Estate Management Fund has been established.

3. TARGET INDICATORS

Milnbank Housing Association will ensure that prompt and appropriate action will be taken to deal with Estate Management problems arising from either regular staff inspections or from direct complaints.

Estate Management issues of a serious nature (e.g. graffiti, suspected drug use, vandalism) will be dealt within 1 working day.

All other complaints reported by residents will be responded to within 3 working days.

4. ESTATE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

In an attempt to minimise Estate Management problems, the Association will ensure that residents are informed of what their, and the Association's, responsibilities and obligations are in relation to Estate Management.

(a) Tenants

- (i) The Tenancy Agreement is explained to everyone at the signing-up interview.
- (ii) The Tenants Handbook details Estate Management issues.
- (iii) During the post allocation visit, a summary of Estate Management responsibilities are outlined.

(b) Owner Occupiers

When a change of ownership occurs, details of all aspects of the Association are given via the Owner Occupier or Sharing Owners' Handbook.

The Association's newsletter and website will also be used to disseminate Estate Management information to all residents.

5. WORKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES

The Association identifies and prioritises problems within the area and works in partnership with other agencies. Examples include:- Crime Prevention Officers, Community Police and Environmental Protection Service etc.

6. REGULAR INSPECTIONS

The Association accepts it has a responsibility to regularly inspect the area and take prompt action where problems are found.

In order to make best use of the resources available and to target the properties that require more attention the Association has moved to a system of categorising closes which would reflect the frequency of inspections based on identified issues.

Three categories of inspections have been set up and each property put into one of the categories. These categories are:

1. Intensive Inspections (continually problem closes/residents) – these properties will be inspected at least three times each week.
2. Frequent Inspections (aware of issues/problems) – these properties will be inspected at least once per week.
3. Periodic Inspections (no known issues) – these properties will be inspected on a quarterly basis

The properties within these categories are not static and it is expected that there will be movement between the categories as closes improve/deteriorate.

These inspections are designed to highlight a number of issues (e.g.) repairs required to common areas, maintenance required to the property, action required by other agencies, residents failing to maintain their property.

Inspections to property are also carried out at the request of individual residents.

Estate Management records are maintained for all common areas and each individual house.

The Association provides an Estate Caretaking service covering landscape maintenance to all Association properties. In addition the Estate Caretakers will provide an enhanced

estate management service in support of the housing management function by assisting with the quarterly property inspections as well as dealing with issues such as bulk removal etc. Where items of bulk are not disposed of in the proper manner, the Estates Team will remove the items, following which the Housing Management staff will investigate and recharge the cost of uplift to the person(s) identified, in addition to taking whichever action is deemed necessary against any tenant for breach of the tenancy conditions or owner in breach of the factoring agreement.

7. ACTION

Appropriate action for Estate Management problems will vary dependant upon the nature of the incident (e.g. cases may involve the Association; others may involve an external agency, and on occasion a combination of both may be necessary). Housing management staff will as much as possible carry out visits and speak to residents face to face to deal with complaints.

Residents are encouraged to lodge their complaints through the Association office. All complaints will be treated in confidence.

All complaints will be treated in a professional manner and appropriate action taken. The action may take the form of

- (a) Noting the complaint with no action required
- (b) House visit/interview
- (c) Letter supporting house visit
- (d) Removal of items (bulk etc.)
- (e) Involving other agencies - Mediation, Police, Social Work, Health Service
- (f) Close/Committee Meetings
- (g) Issue warning letters
- (h) Legal action

In terms of the individual Estate Management problems, the Association will apply the following series of action points:

Staircleaning

- The Association will issue a staircard, conduct a house visit, provide information on the stair cleaning service and a formal warning letter.

During the financial year Milnbank Community Enterprise Company employed 2 x staircleaners to undertake a staircleaning service for Milnbank Housing Association residents. Participating residents pay for this service themselves.

In cases of persistent non-compliance, the Association will use the services of the staircleaners and recharge the resident.

Refuse

Disposal/Litter

-The Association will ensure that guidance is given to residents

concerning the disposal of household refuse and bulk items by the Environmental Protection Services.

- The Association may impose a charge or financial penalty on residents for the removal of any waste item(s) disposed by any resident other than by use of the bins provided or any bulk or other item(s) deposited anywhere, at any time, other than at the agreed collection point and date, where the Association have removed the item(s) from the site of disposal.

Close Entry Systems

- All common front controlled entry door latches automatically lock. It is the duty of every resident to ensure both common close doors are kept closed at all times. Failure to adhere to this will be addressed by the Association via a housevisit.

Satellite Dishes -

The Association will not permit individual satellite dishes to be erected on the front elevation of its property and in accordance with local planning rules as determined by Glasgow City Council. Any satellite dish sited inappropriately will be removed and the costs recharged to the tenant, owner or resident. The Association will, however, facilitate the installation of communal dishes or cable systems.

Pest Control

- The Association will respond to cases of vermin and pest infestation within its stock in a prompt and appropriate manner and will consult with the relevant agencies such as Environmental Protection Service on the residents behalf.

Pets

- The Association will deal with pet issues where the animal is causing a nuisance either within the house or common property.

- In relation to dog fouling, all residents are bound by the Local Government Byelaw whereby a fine can be imposed on dog owners who allow their dog to foul in non-specified areas (e.g. pavements). In this situation, in the first instance, residents should contact their local police office or Environmental Protection Service to report the incident.

Children

- The Association will deal with issues relating to children damaging Association property or causing a disturbance within their own home or the common close by reference to the Dealing with Anti Social Complaints Policy.

- Where children are a source of annoyance to other resident's outwith the above (e.g. playing football in the street), residents should contact the local police to lodge their complaint. The Association will then liaise with the police should further action be required, in accordance with the Anti-Social Complaints Policy.

Security

- The Association will provide residents with advice about home security and contents insurance liaise with the appropriate agencies to ensure that street and communal lighting is maintained and in good working order.

- Where a tenant has absconded appropriate action will be taken to repossess the house. Any furniture will be removed and the property will be made secure.

Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMO)

- Where the Association suspects that a property is being used as a House in Multiple Occupancy (HMO), initial enquiries will be made thereafter, the appropriate agency shall be contacted to investigate.

Neighbour Disputes

-In non-serious neighbour disputes, the Association will normally encourage both residents to try and resolve the problem themselves without the formal involvement of the Association.

- Advice on mediation is also available from the Association.
- In more serious cases of neighbour disputes, reference should be made to the Association's Anti-Social Complaints Policy.

Noise Level

- Infrequent complaints in relation to noise levels will be dealt with by the Association. Residents should always report excess noise levels to the police in order that the Association can request a report of the incident. In the case of persistent excessive and nuisance noise levels, this will be dealt with under the Anti-Social Complaints Policy.

Vandalism

- Milnbank Housing Association will take firm action against residents who are found to be responsible for vandalism within the house, common close or common areas of any property where the Association has responsibility.

- In the first instance, all forms of vandalism should be reported to the local police. Where the Association has proof, repairs resulting from acts of vandalism will be recharged to the perpetrator, this may involve a written statement from the resident who reported the vandalism.

Graffiti

- All forms of graffiti will be removed within 1 working day, dependant upon resources.

Drug Related Issues

- The Association will either remove or contact Environmental

Protection Service to uplift discarded needles and syringes within 1 working day.

- Drugs and solvent misuse are dealt with in accordance with the Dealing with Anti-Social Complaints Policy.

Harassment

-In all instances the police should be contacted where harassment of any nature takes place. The Association will then liaise with the police to seek guidance in appropriate circumstances. Harassment of a more serious nature is dealt with in accordance with the Harassment and Racial Harassment Policies.

8. MONITORING & POLICY REVIEW

The Services Committee shall monitor the Estate Management function on a monthly basis. The policy shall be reviewed annually, or otherwise if deemed necessary. The review will take account of legislative changes, guidance from SFHA/Scottish Housing Regulator, changes in other relevant policies and resident feedback.

ESTATE MANAGEMENT FUND POLICY

1. Policy Statement

The Estate Management Fund has been established in recognition of the Association supporting zero tolerance stance in issues surrounding Estate Management and complaints of an anti-social nature.

2. Implementation Of Policy

The Association accepts that this fund will only be used for specific issues and in situations where all other Housing Management tools have been exhausted.

Where it would be inappropriate for the Association to act, in it's role as landlord, other agencies will be consulted.

3. Process

Where an issue has been identified as appropriate to target and use the funding, confidentiality is of the utmost importance.

Knowledge of the use of the fund is therefore restricted to the chair of the Services Committee the local Councillor and the Housing Co-ordinator. In all cases where the fund is used, a request for Estate Management Fund Form (Appendix A) shall be completed.

4. Monitoring

The Estate Management Fund Policy shall be monitored by the Services Committee on a monthly basis and shall form part of the annual review of the Association's Estate Management and Anti Social Policies.

REQUEST FOR ESTATE MANAGEMENT FUND

In accordance with the Estate Management Fund Policy, funding shall be used in the undernoted incident.

DATE _____

NATURE OF INCIDENT _____

WHAT ACTION HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED TO DATE _____

WHY IS IT APPROPRIATE TO USE THE ESTATE MANAGEMENT FUND _____

HOW WILL THE FUND BE USED TO ADDRESS THIS INCIDENT _____

WHAT WILL THE APPROXIMATE COST BE _____

THE ABOVE ACTION HAS BEEN AGREED BY:-

_____ SERVICES COMMITTEE CHAIR
_____ HOUSING CO-ORDINATOR
_____ LOCAL COUNCILLOR

OUTCOME OF ACTION _____

NOTES _____
