



Tendring
District Council

HOUSING NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT POLICY

September 2024

A.5 APPENDIX B



Introduction

Tendring District Council (TDC) recognises that keeping neighbourhoods safe and clean is an important part of providing a better quality of life for residents and can act as a deterrent to anti-social behaviour (ASB), neighbour nuisance and crime. This policy sets out how Tendring District Council will maintain council owned neighbourhoods in accordance with the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) Consumer Standards and Codes of Practice (2024) by working with residents and partner agencies to keep neighbourhoods safe and clean. Many of the areas the Council is responsible for do not have a defined neighbourhood but can include an estate or a group of properties in a street or rural area.

Purpose of this Policy

This policy sets out the Council's approach to maintaining and improving neighbourhoods and providing services to residents which enable them to have safe and secure neighbourhoods they are proud of and quiet enjoyment of their homes.

Policy aims

The Council aim to:

- Develop a pro-active approach to the management of Council properties and neighbourhoods.
- Ensure the grounds and communal facilities the Council manage are well maintained.
- Involve residents and other parties to understand neighbourhood needs and requirements to create sustainable neighbourhoods.
- Ensure that all residents are aware of their respective responsibilities and encourage local initiatives to resolve long-term or entrenched issues impacting individual areas.

Scope of Policy

This policy promotes the effective management of the neighbourhoods around Council homes to ensure they are safe, attractive and well-maintained places to live. It explains the approach the Council will take, and how residents and partner agencies will be involved in planning improvements to the safety, security and appearance of our neighbourhoods.

What is neighbourhood management?

Neighbourhood management is the effective management of the environment around the Council's homes to ensure that neighbourhoods are safe, attractive and well-maintained places to live. The Council aim to deliver high quality estate services and having the support and co-operation of residents is critical to the Council's success. Many environmental problems are costly to tackle and yet are often caused by a minority of people. Examples of neighbourhood management issues include:

- Vandalism and graffiti,
- Abandoned vehicles and other vehicle related nuisance,
- Littering and fly tipping,
- Dog fouling,
- Untidy gardens,
- Communal areas and inspections,
- Grounds maintenance,
- Playgrounds,
- Broken door entry systems,
- Hoarding.

This list is not exhaustive and other types of behaviour may trigger action by the Council.

Working together

In Tendring, neighbourhoods are a mix of both social housing and private owners and neighbourhood management is most effective when residents and landlords work together to make their communities a better place to live. The Council's responsibilities as a landlord include:

- Providing quality services for residents and visitors that keep communal and external areas in a good state of repair, clean, safe, and free from hazards.
- Ensuring that there are no health and safety risks to residents and visitors in our neighbourhoods.
- Providing residents with a range of opportunities to influence and be involved in the delivery of neighbourhood management services and monitor how they are being delivered.
- Listening and acting on concerns raised by residents about their neighbourhood and having a clear, simple and accessible approach to complaints to ensure they are resolved promptly.
- Work in partnership with police and other agencies to deter anti-social behaviour and neighbourhood issues.

Tenant responsibilities include:

- Ensuring their homes and gardens are well maintained.
- Helping the Council to meet its health and safety responsibility in ensuring that communal areas are kept clean, tidy, safe and not obstructed with personal belongings or other items.
- Promptly reporting any necessary repairs in the property or communal areas.
- Making sure that any animals kept at the property are always under control and are not causing a nuisance.
- Not engaging in anti-social behaviour, nuisance or annoyance to neighbours.
- Not hoarding items, animals, or anything at the property that could cause a nuisance or health and safety risk.
- Not to fly tip or litter.

The Council's approach to tackling neighbourhood management issues includes, but is not limited to;

Abandoned vehicles

All vehicles parked on land owned by the Council must be taxed, insured and in a roadworthy condition. The Council will consider any vehicle which does not meet these requirements to be causing a nuisance and may result in enforcement action being instigated.

Graffiti Removal

Graffiti impacts negatively on the aesthetic appeal and appearance of our neighbourhoods and will be removed, as well as being reported to the police as criminal damage.

Garage sites and parking areas

The Council will maintain all garage sites and parking areas, owned by the Council, as required. The purpose of garage sites and parking areas are for the storage of motor vehicles and should not be used for repairing vehicles or the parking of trailers, caravans or boats unless prior permission has been granted. Where parking areas are provided, the Council will work with residents to ensure they are used considerately. Failure to adhere to these obligations may be viewed as a breach of agreement and legal remedies may be explored.

Communal areas

Residents who pass through an internal communal area to access their home or have use of an external communal area will be responsible for ensuring that they, their visitors and household members use these areas in an appropriate manner. They must not interfere with or cause damage to any door entry system, security or safety equipment.

The Council will operate a zero-tolerance approach to items left in communal areas including personal objects such as pot plants, storage containers and ornaments due to the increased fire risk or restricting a means of escape. If any high-risk items (e.g. mobility scooter, motorcycle or machinery) are found, the resident who owns the items will be contacted and asked to remove it immediately. Failure to keep these areas clear is a breach of tenancy and lease agreements and would be treated as a risk to other residents. A programme of neighbourhood and communal inspections are undertaken by Council staff to ensure that communal areas are safe, clean and well maintained. In consultation with residents the Council will use estate and block inspection data to shape planned maintenance and improvement works in our neighbourhoods.

Communal cleaning

Some Council owned blocks of flats have contracted communal cleaning that is paid for by tenants and leaseholders via a service charge. In the remainder of the blocks tenants and leaseholders are expected to keep communal areas clean and free of personal items. The Council will inspect these blocks regularly to ensure contract compliance and value for money for residents.

Environmental Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

Environmental ASB affects the Council's ability to maintain and improve neighbourhoods. We aim to respond promptly when incidents occur of:

- Vandalism,
- Fly tipping,
- Fly posting,
- Littering.

The Council will investigate all instances of Environmental ASB and encourage those residents who witness incidents to report them. Where an offender can be identified, the Council will work with partner agencies to take appropriate enforcement action in conjunction with our Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Policy. The Council will undertake any appropriate-action to rectify the result of environmental ASB, which is not the responsibility of a resident. Residents are

responsible for the cost of making good damage caused by deliberate acts of vandalism by themselves, a member of their household or a visitor to their home.

Gardens

Untidy and overgrown gardens can negatively impact the appeal of neighbourhoods and can also be an indicator of poor property condition. In instances where gardens are found to be in poor condition, the Council will provide advice and signposting to the resident. Persistent failure by a tenant to rectify the condition of the garden may lead to action being taken in conjunction with tenancy conditions.

Grounds Maintenance

The Council will maintain external communal grounds. This will include:

- Cutting the grass (between April and October),
- Trimming and shaping shrubs and hedges (generally twice per year, but species dependant),
- Herbicide application to hardstanding's and beds,
- Clearing litter.

The Council will not maintain grass, shrubs or hedges in adopted, private or individual gardens. This will be the responsibility of the tenant, leaseholder or owner occupier as detailed in their tenancy/ leasehold agreement.

Tree Management

The Council will ensure that all trees and woodlands in Council owned neighbourhoods are maintained through a proactive and risk-based approach. All tree stock will be surveyed using an asset management system, in line with The National Tree Safety Group's Guidance, and a geodatabase of these assets will be developed and maintained. All arboricultural works will be carried out in accordance with good arboricultural practice, and in a safe and sustainable way, whilst also developing and increasing biodiversity and seasonal character in trees for the benefit of wildlife, residents and visitors. The Council will not maintain trees in private or individual gardens, this is the responsibility of the tenant, leaseholder or owner occupier as detailed in their tenancy/leasehold agreement.

The Council will not maintain or fell trees to:

- Deter birds roosting,
- Prevent wind-blown pollen, blossoms, petals, seeds or leaves,
- Abate falling fruit, berries, nuts or sap,
- Improve access to natural daylight or for aesthetic views,

- Remove arboreal insects,
- Improve television reception to non-communal systems.

The Council usually support the planting of trees on our land; however, prior consent must be granted to ensure the trees are suitable for the location. The Council are unlikely to grant permission for fast or large growing species, i.e. Eucalyptus and Leylandii, in domestic gardens.

Playgrounds

The Council will ensure that playgrounds in our Council owned neighbourhoods are managed and maintained as safe places for residents and their children. Play areas will be regularly inspected, based upon the recommended guidance for each site.

Waste Management

The Council will encourage residents to comply with the local arrangements for the collection of waste and to store it appropriately and securely, until collection day, in designated areas. The Council will work in partnership with its waste management team to support and encourage residents to recycle their household waste and where possible provide locations for recycling facilities. Residents are responsible for arranging the disposal of larger items such as household furniture.

Partnerships

The Council manage homes in neighbourhoods where there is a mix of both social housing and privately owned housing and the Council will work collaboratively with other organisations, agencies and stakeholders to ensure that services delivered outside of the Council's responsibility, positively contribute to maintaining our neighbourhoods. This includes, but is not limited to:

- The maintenance and improvement of footpaths and roads,
- The maintenance of lighting,
- The maintenance of open spaces,
- Refuse collection and recycling arrangements.

Safeguarding

Concerns for children, young people and vulnerable adults will be handled in line with Tendring District Council's Safeguarding Policy which sets out how officers should respond to a report of abuse or neglect to a child, young person, or adult with unmet care and support needs. It is not uncommon for safeguarding concerns to arise at the initial report stage or during an

investigation. The requirements of the Council's Safeguarding Policy take primacy over this policy.

How the Council will monitor the success of the service

The Council will conduct surveys of users of the neighbourhood management service to rate their satisfaction with the service, and act on any feedback in order to improve the service where appropriate.

Complaints Procedure

The Council's Housing Complaints Policy is also available to any resident who is dissatisfied with the handling of their issue.

Data Protection and Confidentiality

All reports that include identifiable personal information will be processed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulations. The Council will only disclose or share personal information where required to do so by law or where a lawful exemption applies; for example, for the purposes of a prosecution, a safeguarding concern, where it is in the public interest, or with the person's consent. Personal information is processed by Tendring District Council for a number of purposes. These can be found in the Privacy Notices which are available on the Council's website at www.tendringdc.gov.uk/privacy or on request at public reception areas.

Equalities Statement

The Council is committed to treating all customers fairly and with respect and professionalism. To this end the Council will ensure that no individual is discriminated against on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (including political opinions), sex or sexual orientation and that, in the application of this Housing Neighbourhood Management Policy, the Council will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and specifically the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149) under which a public authority must work consciously to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people with differing characteristics..

To enable customers to have clear information and equal access to the Council's neighbourhood management service, information will be made available in a range of appropriate languages and formats, when requested.

Legal and regulatory context

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 Housing requires all registered providers to publish a policy, setting out how, in consultation with their tenants, they will maintain and improve the neighbourhoods associated with their homes.

One aim of the legislation is to ensure that providers of social housing keep their properties and estates safe and clean. These new standards aim to give tenants a stronger voice and ensure they feel safe and secure in their homes, can get problems fixed before they spiral out of control, and see exactly how well their landlord is performing. Of the seven chapters within the Act, several are particularly relevant to the aims of this policy:

- To be safe in your home (Chapter 1),
- To know how your landlord is performing (Chapter 2),
- To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly (Chapter 3),
- To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in (Chapter 6).

The Regulator of Social Housing has introduced 22 mandatory Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's) creating a new system for assessing social housing landlords in England. These measures include building safety, as well as tenant perception surveys of landlord performance including responsibility for neighbourhood management.

The TSM measures linked to neighbourhood management include:

- TP10: Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained,
- TP11: Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods,
- TP12: Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour,
- NM01: Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord.

References

Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and 1987
Housing Act 1985, 1988, 1996, 1998 and 2004
Equality Act 2010
Data Protection Act 2018 and subsequent Regulations
Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999
Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993,
(Section 121)
Housing and Regeneration Act 2008
The Environment Protection Act 1990
Local Government (Miscellaneous provisions Act) 1976
The Charter for Social Housing Residents
Legislation as detailed in TDC's Housing ASB Policy
Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023

Related Documents

Tendring District Council Introductory and Secure Tenancy Agreement
Tendring District Council Non-Secure Tenancy Agreement
Tendring District Council Corporate Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
Tendring District Council Housing Complaints Procedure (2024)
Tendring District Council Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Policy (2024)

Review of policy

This policy will be reviewed every two years in consultation with tenant representatives, staff, other stakeholders, and the Portfolio responsible for Housing, unless there are any reasons, such as legislative or regulatory changes, requiring that it be reviewed earlier.