

Group Estate Management Policy

Our Commitment

The Argyll Community Housing Association Group is committed to providing equal opportunities across all services and to avoid discrimination. This policy is intended to assist ACHA and AHFA in putting this commitment into practice. Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

This policy can be made available in other formats, for example in large print, audio-format or Braille: the document may also be available in other languages, in full or summary form, as appropriate

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Section 1 Context

1.1 The Estate Management policy refers to the physical upkeep and use of the common parts of each development or estate and also to individual garden areas. An estate is defined as:

- *A collection of properties usually with shared internal or external areas.*

We believe that Estate Management is a vital part of our Housing Management function.

1.2 This policy which is supported by a procedure manual seeks to ensure that we offer the highest standard possible in both the service we provide to our tenants and other residents, and the quality of living conditions and environment we offer.

1.3 The Scottish Social Housing Charter (SHR) sets standards and outcomes that describe the results that our customers can expect. The relevant standard for Estate Management is Charter Outcome 6:

- *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.*

Section 2 The law and good practice

2.1 In order to effectively deliver the aims and obligations of this policy, ACHA will meet the requirements of:

- The Housing Scotland Act 1987, 1988, 2001 and 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Property Factors Scotland Act
- GDPR
- Human Rights Act 1988

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- The Performance Standards for Registered Social Landlords in Scotland as detailed within the Scottish Housing Charter.
- The terms of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement and any other lease or agreement in place.

Section 3 Our policy objectives

3.1 The Association will ensure that our estates are managed and maintained in order to provide a safe, secure and pleasant environment for our customers and provide opportunities for our customers to participate in the management of our estates. We will make tenants and other residents living on our estates aware of their responsibilities in relation to estate management

Section 4 Implementing our policy objectives

4.1 We will undertake Estate Inspections of all our estates to identify potential issues and improvements and liaise with internal and external colleagues and organisations, tenants and residents to resolve issues and enforce tenancy conditions. Special attention will be paid to safety defects on our estates. We will keep clear auditable records of all inspections undertaken and report and record any repairs in terms of health and safety defects and follow these up to ensure that they are completed within target.

4.2 We will provide an Estate Action Plan for each area, which sets out annual targets for the area.

4.2 We will inspect our play parks on a regular basis. Play parks in high population town areas will be inspected weekly and those in low population villages will be inspected monthly. Records will be kept of all inspections carried out and staff carrying out play park inspections will be appropriately trained. Any defects will be reported, recorded and followed up to ensure the repair is completed within timescale. The frequency of play park inspections will be reviewed annually taking into account any risks highlighted. The frequency of inspections will be increased if specific problems arise and increased inspections will remain in place until the identified issues have been addressed.

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4.3 We will provide tenants, residents and the Your Voice Scrutiny Group the opportunity to be involved in Estate Inspections and walk-about. This will allow them to give their views and ideas for improving our estates, which ACHA will action where possible.

4.4 We will provide good quality information and advice on the Estate Management service. This will include:

- Providing information to our tenants when they sign their new tenancy
- Undertaking visits to new tenants following the start of their tenancy
- Production of an Estate Management newsletter/insert for our tenants and residents which will report progress against the estate action plan. It will also provide information on when estate inspections are due to be carried out and encourage tenants & residents to become involved. We will encourage feedback on the service we provide.
- Where tenants and residents reside in a property within a close, we will record the date the Estate Inspections are carried out on our close notice boards and any action being taken where relevant
- Publishing information and advice on our website and social media platforms
- Publishing feedback on our website and social media platforms from tenants and residents that we receive regarding the Estate Management service

4.5 All staff have a duty in the course of their day to day work to note and report any repairs and issues which pose a threat to health and safety.

4.6 We will improve our Estates by:

- Carrying out a grounds maintenance service throughout our areas during the grass cutting season
- Carrying out non seasonal ground maintenance work when required
- Through the use of the Estate Management Action Plan (EMAP) budget which is managed by ACHA's Area Committees.
- Utilising the Exemplar Estates budget to make improvements to the external environment.
- Providing close cleaning and drying green cutting services

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- Exploring partnership working with other organisations

4.7 We recognise that there are significant areas of land within our geographical areas of operation which will be in common ownership. Every effort will be made to update and maintain accurate records of assets and information for those carrying out inspections regarding ACHA responsibilities. We will consult with co-owners on the maintenance of common areas of land and seek to promote our Factoring Scheme with the aim of engaging with the community, increasing choice and fairly apportioning costs.

Section 5 Performance management

5.1 We carry out a satisfaction survey which measures our tenants' levels of satisfaction with their neighbourhood and the way it is managed. Outcomes are reported to all our customers and to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

5.2 The following indicators require to be collected, collated and reported in relation to Estate Management, in line with the requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulators Technical Guidance For Landlords`:

- Indicator 13 – percentage of tenants satisfied with the management of the neighbourhood they live in
- Indicator 32 – percentage of gypsies/travellers satisfied with the landlord's management of the site

5.3 We will monitor annual targets detailed on the Estate Action Plans for each area.

5.4 We will closely monitor contractor performance regarding the grounds maintenance contract and where we provide a close cleaning service and drying green cutting service.

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Section 6 Development and training

6.1 ACHA is committed to training and developing staff in order that they have a good knowledge of the procedures and systems in place for Estate management that meets the expectations of its stakeholders.

6.2 Awareness sessions are made available to Governing body members on request as part of their development plan.

6.2 All staff responsible for inspecting play parks will receive regular ROSPA training every 3 years.

Section 7 Dealing with complaints

7.1 We value complaints and endeavour to use information from them to help us improve our services. Complaints relating to Estate Management are dealt with in line with our complaint handling procedure. Complaints can be made if we fail to apply this policy properly or do not meet our organisational standards

Section 8 Consultation and review

8.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if required due to substantive changes in legislation or regulatory requirements. As part of the review process formal consultation will take place with relevant stakeholders, who include:

- Tenants
- The Feedback Forum
- The Tenants Panel
- The Your Voice Scrutiny Group
- Staff

The outcome of the review process will be made available via our tenants' newsletter, website and social media platforms.

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Section 9 Confidentiality and data protection

9.1 All information provided by tenants and residents will only be used for the purpose provided. We will ensure that we meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2002 and the General Data Protection Regulation GDPR 2016. We will process and retain personal information in compliance with current data protection legislation and regulations.