

FORTH HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

ESTATE MANAGEMENT POLICY

Governance:	Housing Management
Code:	HM 07
Approval:	July 2018
Review Date:	July 2021
Cross Reference:	Abandonments HM 02 Allocations HM 03 Anti-Social HM 04 Harassment HM 09 Pets Policy HM 13 Tenant Participation HM22 Tenants Handbook
Guidance:	Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 Forth's Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement



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FORTH HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Estate Management Policy

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Forth Housing Association recognises that Estate Management is a vital part of the Housing Management role of the landlord and a particularly important service from the tenants and residents viewpoint. The purpose of the Estate Management Policy is to ensure a common and consistent approach to the management of Forth's estates

1.2 Estate Management is a general term used to include Tenancy Management and Environmental Management. They are linked to, but separate from the Association's Anti-Social Behaviour Policy. Tenancy Management aims to encourage and support a tenant to keep to the terms of their Tenancy Agreement. Where appropriate and necessary it will involve taking action to enforce compliance. Environmental Management aims to create a safe and secure environment for residents.

1.3 Estate Management encompasses a diverse range of issues such as:

- providing advice and assistance to tenants on tenancy matters and related issues;
- enforcing tenancy conditions and monitoring empty properties;
- providing advice and assistance to tenants and residents on services which enhance the local community, such as initiatives to reduce crime and environmental improvements;
- the management of communal areas and facilities in the Association's ownership;
- respond quickly to complaints received regarding the common areas;
- monitor the standard of contract maintenance to ensure a quality and efficient service and value for money to tenants and residents;
- the management and upkeep of the physical environment in the Association's ownership, and work with other agencies such as the local authority to ensure that areas under their ownership and responsibility are maintained to a satisfactory standard.

2.0 Aims and Objectives

2.1 The aim of the Association's Estate Management Policy is to outline the Association's intentions regarding the management of its estates. The main objectives being:

- tenants and residents are satisfied with the service provided by the Association, both within their home and within their local community;
- good landlord/tenant relationships are developed to encourage tenant interest and involvement within their area for the mutual benefit of both the Association and the local community;
- the upkeep of the housing stock and surrounding environment are managed and maintained to a standard which reduces the duration and level of void properties and makes best use of the Association's rental income.

3.0 Communal Areas and Landscape Maintenance

3.1 Forth will set out high standards in our contract specifications for the maintenance of the common areas. The type of services the Association will provide to tenants and residents are Landscape Maintenance and Close Cleaning. Housing Management staff will liaise with the relevant contractor and ensure a quality service to Forth's tenants and residents. We will endeavour to respond with three working days to any complaints regarding close cleaning or landscape services.

3.2 As part of its policy in respect of Common Areas, including Stairs and Entrances, Bin Stores, Drying Areas, Common Pathways and Parking Areas, the Association will:

- Carry out bi-monthly inspections to check on both the fabric and cleanliness.
- Identify specific source of problems by either visiting individual tenants or holding group discussions with tenants, residents and local groups.
- Confirm action required to remedy problems in writing to the tenants and residents concerned.
- Continue monitoring to ensure improved standards are maintained.
- Arrange for repairs or graffiti removal to be carried out promptly once the need has been identified or reported.

3.3 Bi-Monthly inspections of these areas will be undertaken. In instances where it appears that such areas are being neglected, the Association will arrange a meeting with tenants, residents and local groups.

4.0 Garden Areas

4.1 Bi-Monthly inspections of garden areas will be undertaken but visits may be more often during the summer months.

4.2 Tenants who neglect their gardens will be identified and reasons for this investigated.

4.3 Tenancy conditions will be enforced if appropriate. Alternatively, practical advice and assistance will be arranged where appropriate. This might include referring tenants to services run by other Agencies.

5.0 General Environment

5.1 The Association will regularly monitor general environmental matters such as litter, street cleaning, lighting, abandoned cars, caravan parking, pigeon lofts, abandoned properties, condition of footpaths etc. and notify or liaise with the other Agencies responsible (local authority, Police Scotland etc).

5.2 The Association will investigate complaints received about excessive levels of noise and if required, will liaise with other agencies. Tenancy conditions will be enforced.

5.3 If a tenant wishes to park a caravan, trailer, boat or similar item on land owned by the Association they must first request written permission from the Association. Permission will not be given to park such items in communal parking bays within a development.

6.0 Contact with Tenants and Residents

6.1 As part of its objectives of fostering good landlord/tenant relationships and involving tenants and residents in the upkeep of their community, the Association will encourage tenants and residents to take an active interest and participate in the wellbeing of their community and surrounding environment.

6.2 This is likely to be effected in the following ways by regular communications with individual tenants through newsletters, home visits, focus groups and meetings with organised Tenant and Residents Groups.

6.3 The Association staff will assess each area to determine if the frequency of Estate Management visits requires to increase. The demand from different areas and the Estate Management problems which each present will vary according to the degree of management problems, e.g.:

- High level of vandalism or graffiti
- Poorly maintained environment (tenants' gardens, open spaces, play area, stairs, bin stores, back courts, etc)
- Neighbour disputes
- Parking problems
- Dog nuisance
- Abandoned properties

The required input by the Association staff will vary according to the level of need/demand as indicated by the foregoing factors.

7.0 Neighbour Disputes and Harassment Problems

7.1 The Association has separate Policies for dealing with Neighbour Disputes and Harassment Problems as the Association recognises that these complaints cannot be adequately responded to using the usual actions required for handling general complaints.

8.0 Policy Monitoring, Review and Period

8.1 This policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years by the Management Committee and staff are responsible for ensuring that it meets legal and good practice requirements.