
Leicester City Council
Maintaining and Improving Neighbourhoods Policy

1. Purpose

This document sets out how our Housing Service intends to effectively manage council housing estates and communal areas to help create and sustain, safe and pleasant neighbourhoods for our local communities.

It explains what you can expect from us, as a landlord regardless of tenure type, when maintaining and improving council estate neighbourhoods, and clarifies our approach to the management of our neighbourhoods. This includes, how we will involve tenants in estate improvements, partnership work with other agencies concerned with the safety, security and appearance of our neighbourhood environment.

2. Regulatory Standard

This policy is operated and published in compliance with the [Regulator of Social Housing Neighbourhood and Community Standard](#), which requires registered providers of social housing, to publish a policy for maintaining, managing, and improving the neighbourhoods associated with their homes.

3. Policy Objectives

The Council recognises that there is a clear relationship between the quality of the local environment and our tenant's overall quality of life.

The recent Covid 19 Pandemic has demonstrated how important it is to have a strong, cohesive, and connected communities with access to open spaces and neighbourhoods that are well maintained, attractive and clean for tenants to live in.

The vision for our neighbourhoods and properties is to ensure that they remain safe, secure, and have maintained areas where tenants who make up our vibrant and diverse communities, have an environment that they can happily live in.

4. How will we maintain your neighbourhood

We have a flexible approach to improving neighbourhoods and delivering positive outcomes.

We will inspect communal areas in and around flats and maisonettes and report any maintenance and cleaning issues of concern. This includes:

- Bin stores
- Grassed areas and shrubs
- Walkways, stairwells and corridors
- Waylighting
- Laundries

We will regularly inspect garage and parking sites for maintenance issues.

We will ensure our tenants comply with their tenancy conditions and look after their homes and gardens.

We will also liaise with other council services on issues such as grass cutting, pest control and fly tipping to help keep our neighbourhoods tidy.

Some of the other ways in which this is done includes:

Estate inspections – we will regularly inspect communal areas to ensure that they are clean, tidy, well maintained and safe.

Tackling Anti-social behaviour – we use a range of strategies designed to tackle identified anti-social behaviour early on, which can stop problems from escalating. We work with others, for example our Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Unit and the Police to tackle these issues and encourage victims of crime and anti-social behaviour to engage with us.

We have our own published policy and procedures on anti-social behaviour and associated terms set out in our 'Conditions of Tenancy'.

Removing graffiti/rubbish removal – graffiti and rubbish is an eyesore which can make our estates look untidy and unwelcoming. Rubbish can also be a fire risk and attract vermin. Where the graffiti is on our buildings and it is offensive, we will aim to remove it within 24 hours. Where rubbish has been dumped on our estates, our Neighbourhood Housing Officer with the assistance of our City Wardens will arrange remove of the rubbish. Where the perpetrator is known, action will be taken against them accordingly and they will be re-charged for this service.

Parking & vehicles – we do not permit any abandoned or untaxed vehicles on our land and it is important to keep sites free from these. This is to maximise the parking capacity and to keep our estates safe. It is illegal to abandon a vehicle on a road or any other land. The same law applies to abandoned caravans, trailers or parts of motor vehicles.

Environmental Budget – each year the environmental works and communal areas fund from our Housing Revenue Account help deliver significant environmental improvements on our estates, such as landscaping, new security measures, community facilities, pocket parks, fencing and communal area improvements. Tenants and ward councillors help decide where this money should be spent, based on their local needs and priorities. These schemes have made significant contributions to improving the overall image, appearance and general quality of life within our estates.

5. Resident Involvement and Engagement

- We encourage all tenants and residents to report issues, so these can be investigated thoroughly and action taken when necessary.
- We will support the work of local Tenants and Residents Association (TARA's) and will ask their views on what needs to be improved in neighbourhoods, what the priorities for improvement are and consult on how we should spend money available to us.
- Invite tenants' representatives to take part in organised patch walks with councillors and housing staff.
- When we are reviewing our services or identifying improvements, we will provide information and consult with tenants and leaseholders in a variety of ways. This can include:
 - Meetings
 - Consultation with local TARAs
 - Surveys (Online, Telephone or Postal)
 - Discussions at local Ward Community meetings
 - Formal consultations through our online Consultation Hub
- Provide tenants with information on neighbourhood community groups and forums.

For a full list of Leicester City Councils involvement opportunities, please visit the following link; [Consultation with tenants \(leicester.gov.uk\)](https://www.leicester.gov.uk/consultation-with-tenants/)

6. Partnership Working

Keeping our estates clean and tidy requires joint working with yourselves, other council services and other agencies. To do this we:

- Ensure local tenant representatives and councillors are invited on patch walks with housing staff.

- Work together with our partners, including our local Councillors, the Police, Highways and TARA's to make neighbourhoods a safer place to live in.
- Support local initiatives to improve neighbourhoods
- Work with neighbourhood community groups to identify local priorities and improvements

7. How will this policy be communicated to staff

This policy will be communicated to employees internally during team meetings, quality conversations and via our internal systems. It will be published on our in-house interface system 'SharePoint' webpage to make sure it is easy for staff to access it.

Should staff identify any concerns with the effective operations of this policy, they should report this to their Neighbourhood Housing Team Leader.

Staff will be provided adequate and appropriate training to ensure that they are able to deliver the objectives and aims as stated in this policy.

8. Monitoring, reviews and evaluation

This policy will be reviewed every two years, kept up to date and amended accordingly to reflect any changes in legislation, standards and guidelines in relation to the role of social landlords in addressing issues on our estates.