

Estate Management Policy

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1.0 Introduction

This document presents a series of policy statements to inform staff and residents about the council's commitments for managing services on our Estates. The policy outlines our objectives to maintain common areas to ensure they are safe and clean. The policy is also focused on working as 'one organisation', ensuring we involve residents, report on how we perform and measure resident satisfaction.

2.0 Aims of this Policy

This policy helps Lambeth to fulfil the Regulatory code, set by the Regulator for Social Housing, in particular, the Neighbourhood and Community Standard. This policy aims to:

- keep our neighbourhoods and communal areas safe, clean and maintained, and to ensure the provision of high-quality services.
- work in partnership with our stakeholders to create neighbourhoods and communities that residents are proud of.
- support the council's Climate emergency and environmental sustainability in the provision of services and contracts.
- support active resident participation, through involvement and consultation on all aspects of neighbourhood management, ensuring that our residents are treated fairly and with respect.
- work with internal and external partners to ensure our neighbourhoods are well-managed and cultivate quality environments for all of our residents, that help to deter anti-social behaviour and crime.
- ensure that equalities and tackling inequality is a part of everything we do and aligns to our Borough Plan.

3.0 Who is this Policy for?

This document applies to all of the officers and teams in the council involved in the management of communal areas, or that deliver services on our estates. This policy also acts as a guide for tenants and leaseholders that reside in housing stock owned by Lambeth, external organisations and our delivery partners.

4.0 Estate Management Policy statements

4.1. Keeping communal areas in a safe condition

We will comply with the Neighbourhood and Community Standard, set by the Regulator of Social Housing and as part of our commitment to keeping neighbourhoods and communal areas clean and safe. We will do this by providing high standards of caretaking, estate cleaning, repairs and grounds maintenance services and will work in partnership with our residents and delivery partners.

Fire safety in communal areas

The management of communal areas in and around residential blocks is to ensure that fire safety is not compromised. In enclosed communal areas it is essential that all escape routes are kept entirely clear as set out in the Fire Safety in Communal Areas Policy. Lambeth's approach is zero tolerance to items left in communal areas, and based on specific criteria, there is a managed approach in some areas.

Communal areas will be checked at least monthly, using the safety hazard assessments to identify items for removal such as furniture, buggies, mobility scooters, plant pots, facilities to dry clothes, rubbish, bicycles, electric bikes or scooters, mopeds etc, this list is not exhaustive.

Repairs and maintenance of communal areas

We will work to the agreed Lambeth Housing Standard for individual homes, the standard also sets out the minimum standard for the immediate environment such as, shared and communal spaces, the estate as a whole and servicing areas.

We will;

- ensure the communal areas of blocks such as stairways, lifts, landings and corridors are well maintained and safe.
- carry out regular inspections on play areas and ensure that repairs are carried out.

The council is responsible for repairing and maintaining the external structures we own. We will maintain a holistic communal repair programme to address compliance and component replacement alongside major external renewals, which will also tackle day to day problems and ensure that our stock does not deteriorate.

We will;

- ensure that estate roads, walls, fences and external areas are well maintained and safe
- maintain communal entrance doors
- carry out water quality risk assessments for communal water services
- update our annual programmes to improve and enhance our estates

As well as maintaining our communal areas, Lambeth has an ongoing programme of major works to improve our estates, the improvement works include:

- fire door replacements

- landlord's electrics
- door entry or CCTV
- lift replacement
- structural external and internal improvements in communal areas
- replacement of communal water tanks

We aim to be responsive to tenants' needs in a fair and transparent way and we will continue to work closely with leaseholders to ensure that the charges they incur for expenditure on fire safety and compliance, communal areas and the wider environment represents a fair deal for everyone.

External structures

With the exception of adapting homes, or external areas for older or disabled tenants, all residents wishing to change the structure or outside of their home will need written permission from the council and if approved, the resident will be responsible for maintaining improvements made, for example:

- walls
- pigeon loft
- greenhouse or shed
- garage
- driveway or parking space
- transmitting antenna i.e. television aerial or satellite dish

Where changes to structures were made without first getting written permission, the council may:

- obtain an order from the court requiring the resident to put the property back to its previous state
- return the property to its original state and charge the resident for the cost of doing this, including the cost of repairing any damage caused (we will not be responsible for any damage our contractor's cause when removing any unauthorised improvements)
- in very serious cases, obtain an order from the court to end a tenancy

4.1.2. Measuring the quality of service

To ensure we are providing a high standard of service we will measure our performance in line with the council's performance management framework, report on resident satisfaction with repairs, estate caretaking, cleaning and grounds maintenance in a proactive way, to ensure that residents can hold us to account for the services we deliver.

Caretaking

Caretaking services, include general day to day cleansing activities, physical checks, some minor repairs and reporting findings for action.

Ground maintenance

Lambeth Landscapes is responsible for the maintenance of open spaces and communal areas on housing estates, primarily maintaining grass, hedges, flower beds and naturalised areas. Lambeth Landscapes aim to increase areas managed for biodiversity in consultation with residents and stakeholders. The provision is managed by the Estates Services team, through a service level agreement with performance monitoring indicators.

The council recognise the importance of green and open space to encourage play, leisure and relaxation and the positive impact it can have on the health and wellbeing of residents. In response to this, Lambeth Landscapes have published *Our pledges for landscaping*, the pledges will enable:

- residents to collaborate and agree a landscaping plan for their estate, so that it is maintained to the agreed standards
- residents to be informed of our vision for green and open space and to improve their skills
- the creation of areas that reflect biodiversity, where appropriate, in line with the borough's biodiversity action plan, as well as environmental benefits for air quality and flood risk
- access to pursue external funding and external accreditation for the provision of support for residents to set up and maintain food growing spaces, community gardens and associated facilities

Trees on estates

- Trees on estates are subject to an inspection schedule to check the health of the tree and to ensure that the tree is not causing a health and safety risk. Outside of the inspection regime any requests for tree works will be referred to the tree team
- the council will provide extra services to vulnerable tenants such as the elderly in line with the respective, Vulnerable Tenants and Vulnerable Residents policy.

Homes with gardens

Residents are expected to be responsible for the upkeep of gardens associated with their home, including street properties with shared gardens, by maintaining grass and hedges ensuring they do not cause a nuisance to neighbours, as set out in the respective Tenancy and Leasehold agreements.

Residents must not cut down, remove, relocate, plant or significantly alter any tree connected with their home unless we have given you our written permission in advance.

4.2 Working as one organisation

The council will work effectively with all departments, as one organisation, to cohesively deliver services on estates, protecting residents, maintaining our assets and cleanliness as well as enhancing our estates and the borough.

Estate services team

Partnerships and collaborative working is critical to improving services on estates and the Estate Services team have a key role and will work closely with colleagues in Parks, Environment, Repairs, Community Works (Lambeth's Direct Labour Organisation), as well as with Housing Management. The new neighbourhood working model will enable the Estate Services team to work more closely with residents and to encourage those who are not usually involved to become more involved with their estates to ensure we deliver the service residents want.

Our Estates services teams will contribute to the climate change emergency, improved air quality and maximising green space in line with Lambeth's Biodiversity Action Plan' (Lambeth BAP) 2019-2024. Estate Services will also contribute to, better traffic management, creating secure cycle areas and new garden areas for socialising and play.

The Estate Services team role includes the following:

- managing playground areas
- increasing biodiversity
- providing a flexible and responsive estate landscaping service
- installation of bicycle stands
- installation of electric vehicle charging points on estates
- contributing to our flood risk response
- managing estates and S106
- managing CCTV cameras owned by housing
- managing roll out of fibre broadband services
- managing all estate contracts and service level agreements to ensure residents and leaseholders get value for money

Recycling

We strongly encourage residents to play a part in protecting the environment by recycling household waste. The recycling service is delivered alongside the council's waste services. We provide large communal recycling bins on the ground floor areas with regular collections, for residents who live on estates.

- when recycling residents should put items for recycling such as paper, glass, and plastic products straight into the bin and note which items are non-recyclable.
- recyclable items should not be placed near or close to the communal recycling bins and must not be in black bags or any kind of bag

Lambeth residents can use our Reuse and Recycling centres to dispose of a wide range of reusable and recyclable items for free.

Waste collection service

Lambeth has a dedicated contract providing waste services and the collection days will be publicised locally, or on our website.

We regularly inspect our streets for fly-tips, and we also rely on residents to give us information about people that are dumping rubbish so we can prosecute. If we can identify the offender, financial penalties will be issued and if necessary, we will refer more serious issues for prosecution via the local magistrates' court.

Residents will be expected to:

- dispose of all domestic rubbish in containers provided on their estate.
- to use where possible, the local recycling points and the reuse and recycling centre, or other initiatives that reduce the pressure on landfill sites.
- to organise and pay for personal bulk refuse (or large) items that cannot be recycled

Parking

To park on Lambeth estates with a Traffic Management Order (TMO), residents are required to meet the permit criteria, before permits will be issued.

The parking controls on estates within TMO's are to ensure that:

- residents or their visitors with valid permits can park within the designated TMO and spaces are not misused by non-residents or businesses
- access to the limited parking is fair
- access to service roads, garages, rubbish chutes and chambers are not blocked
- vehicles that are not being used, a nuisance, abandoned, or may be a danger to the public are removed, supporting the identification and control of anti-social behaviour, crime and criminal activities

To prevent potential misuse we will monitor the number of annual and visitor permits per household. Parking permits will be refused if the council has taken a legal action for nuisance and if there are rent, or service charge arrears against the property (one week for tenants and one month for leaseholders).

Parking enforcement

Parking on estates is restricted to:

- marked bays
- vehicles with a valid permit on display, or a valid virtual permit
- vehicles that display a valid tax disc, or a Statutory Off-Road Notice only with prior written permission from the Neighbourhood Housing Manager

Abandoned vehicles

Housing Management services, will make initial enquiries where vehicles appear to be a danger, abandoned, a nuisance, or not being used. Issues will be referred to our parking contractors who are responsible for investigating and arranging removal of abandoned vehicles.

4.3 Resident participation

As well as working as one organisation, we aim to put residents at the heart of their neighbourhoods and policymaking by encouraging active customer involvement and consultation, so they can continue to shape all aspects of neighbourhood management and we have consulted with residents in developing this policy.

Communication

We will provide general information and our performance information in newsletters, emails, on our websites, and as agreed locally. Notice Boards may also be used to provide estate specific information such as, contacts numbers and cleaning times etc.

We are committed to the principles of diversity and inclusion to:

- consult and engage with residents and advocates for community organisations or forums, by listening to their views, taking notice of the issues they raise and recognise their contribution to the neighbourhood
- meet the needs and choice of people from all backgrounds
- ensure that our services are relevant, responsive, and sensitive to the needs of our existing and future customers
- ensure that all sections of the community in which we work have equal access to our services

Lambeth will work in partnership with residents, stakeholders, and external organisations to achieve well-managed neighbourhoods and to deliver environmental improvements which also deter antisocial behaviour and crime.

- we will work with residents to identify issues on estates and where applicable, develop Estate Action Plans (EAPs), by utilising funds where it is available.
- improve communal and green spaces, access to green space and support for wellbeing
- enhancing the communal areas and green spaces on estates to make the areas safer and more biodiverse

Virtual and physical walkabouts

We will provide a responsive approach to managing estates and identifying improvements through walkabouts on estates with resident groups and relevant staff, to complement the existing regular estate checks and inspections of equipment.

- the aim of the walkabout is for the group of residents to raise issues affecting estates to the attention of relevant stakeholders for resolution

4.4 Working with external stakeholders

The Lambeth Housing Partnership (LHP) aims to strengthen partnership working with other agencies that link our work at the local level as well as fulfilling the

strategic aims, of reducing anti-social behaviour and promoting community sustainability.

The LHP has an agreement with the ten largest registered providers of social housing operating in the borough, we will work to strategically address the needs of residents including new workstream priorities for Community Safety and Health and Resilience.

Anti-social behaviour on estates

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) on estates such as noise, vandalism, graffiti, and harassment will not be tolerated. As part of the remit of Safer Lambeth Partnership is the primary partnership as includes PPARS, Police, us, LFB and the LHP we aim to work together to address the impact of ASB on the community. The council will investigate issues and will use its powers where necessary to address incidents.

The council will hold tenants responsible for anti-social behaviour caused by members of their household, pets, and their visitors. Repercussions will be considered against tenants who breach the council's ASB policy and the terms in their respective Tenancy and Leasehold agreements.

Keeping estates safe

The council provide external and internal lighting and fences to open spaces, to improve estate security. We will enhance safety by delivering additional measures so that:

- individual homes will be made more secure by providing better-secured doors and windows through the relevant repair programmes
- road safety and estate road layout and traffic on estates is made safer
- on the estates where community warden services are provided, the service will support residents to report nuisance, anti-social behaviour, vandalism or crime
- on estates where concierge services are provided (usually in medium and high-rise buildings) they include the provision of a 24-hour controlled entry and closed-circuit television surveillance.

5.0 Related policies

- Anti-social behaviour policy
- Tree management policy
- Fire Safety policy in communal areas
- Fire Safety policy
- Lambeth Biodiversity Action Plan' (Lambeth BAP) 2019-2024
- Leasehold agreement
- Parking policy

- Tenancy agreement

Useful links

- [How to become a Neighbourhood Champion](#)
- [Lambeth Housing Standard](#)
- [Climate change and sustainability](#)
- [Rubbish and recycling](#)
- [Report dumped rubbish on a housing estate](#)
- [Communal services on estates](#)
- [Regulatory standards - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)