

1. Background and objectives

- 1.1 This policy only applies to Alliance Homes. The management of estates and neighbourhoods covers a wide range of activities that contribute to the upkeep of the physical environment around our properties. It covers the services that we provide to open spaces and in the shared parts of buildings that we own and manage.
- 1.2 The Regulatory standards state that registered providers must keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with their homes clean and safe. This policy aims to ensure Alliance Homes meets this regulatory standard.
- 1.3 The effective management of the neighbourhoods where we own homes also helps us to meet our vision of building stronger communities.

2. Policy detail

Service charges

- 2.1.1 The cost of providing regular services that maintain the environment around peoples' homes is met principally through variable service charges and notified to tenants and leaseholders annually by means of a charging certificate. (Some customers remain on a fixed service charge regime).
- 2.1.2 Through consultation with residents who pay a variable service charge, we may vary the nature and standard of services that we provide and explain the implications for the amount of service charge payable.

Obligations of Tenants, Leaseholders and Licensees

- 2.2.1 Areas that look untidy or strewn with litter give a poor impression and create a negative image. We believe it is everyone's responsibility to help prevent this and expect residents within a neighbourhood to help with minor issues of litter, dog-fouling and overgrown paths and gardens.
- 2.2.2 Our tenants, leaseholders and licensees also have contractual obligations covering their behaviour in and around their home. We seek to enforce these obligations taking legal action where necessary to allow people to feel safe and enjoy their local environment.

Grounds maintenance

- 2.3.1 We are responsible for maintaining open grassed areas and other open spaces including work as necessary to trees and shrubs situated on land in our ownership.

- 2.3.2 Some residential blocks or groups of properties may be specifically designated (e.g., by a local letting agreement) for occupation only by older/more vulnerable people. Where such properties have enclosed communal gardens, our grounds maintenance responsibility extends to these areas.

Cleaning and window cleaning

- 2.4.1 We are responsible for keeping clean the communal internal parts of residential blocks designated for occupation by older/more vulnerable people and also in blocks where a significant majority of residents have collectively requested that a cleaning service is provided (see 2.1.2).

Fire safety

- 2.5.1 The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 places a legal duty on Alliance Homes to manage the risk of fire in the communal areas of a block and to make sure tenants can escape safely in an emergency.
- 2.5.2 We have a team of Community Wardens who are responsible for carrying out regular fire safety inspections in residential schemes and blocks.
- 2.5.3 We recognise that the safest approach is zero tolerance but for reasons of balance, practicality and cost, a 'managed use' approach is adopted which restricts 'use' to defined boundaries and is proportionate to the risk associated with fire.
- We will remove high risk items such as petrol, solvents and oil-based paints immediately and inform tenant/s accordingly where possible.
 - Items which are combustible and/or could be a hazard to anyone escaping a fire or to the emergency services when responding to a fire will not be permitted to be kept or stored in the communal areas without permission.
 - Tenants will be asked to remove items which are considered to be a hazard and if they do not co-operate the items will, after appropriate warning, be removed by us.
 - Items of high value will be stored for a short period of time so the owner can recover them on payment of the removal and/or storage costs.
 - Fire safety policy can be found here [Fire Safety Policy - Home \(interactgo.com\)](https://www.interactgo.com).

Environmental awareness

- 2.6.1 We also carry out informal visual checks / ad hoc patrols around areas where Alliance Homes manages property and/or land. Supported by our environmental operatives, and liaising with the local authority as necessary our Community Wardens seek to resolve problems such as:
- Unsafe / untidy aspects of communal areas in and around our residential blocks
 - Fly-tipping
 - Overgrown gardens, footpaths and communal open spaces/facilities
 - Abandoned vehicles

- Vandalism and graffiti
 - Nuisance dogs.
- 2.6.2 Reported issues are identified, logged, tasked and resolved and problems categorised so as to build a picture of where 'hot-spots' of environmental nuisance exist enabling resources to be targeted to those areas accordingly.
- 2.6.3 Where issues are known to exist that lie beyond the scope of Alliance Homes acting independently, we invite other agencies to try and resolve any identified problems and provide feedback as appropriate to those affected by them.
- 2.6.4 We have designated a specific budget to fund minor improvements to the common parts of buildings and other shared areas that benefit residents and/or enhance the quality of the environment. This kind of work will normally be carried out following our analysis of the numbers, types and/or locations of the issues that have been identified.

3. Monitoring, consultation and review

- 3.1 Key targets and Performance Indicators include:
- Compliance with regulatory standards
 - Tenant satisfaction with the neighbourhood in which they live
 - Contract compliance in terms of grounds maintenance and other maintenance/cleaning contracts
 - Budgetary spend in relation to minor improvement work
 - Local authority requirements for environmental cleanliness, refuse collection and re-cycling
- 3.2 In line with our Involvement Policy, tenants, leaseholders, and stakeholders are included in:
- Monitoring our performance
 - Reviewing this policy, to reflect their needs and priorities.
- 3.3 The Tenancy Manager is responsible for implementation and revision of the policy.
- 3.4 This policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

4. Equality and diversity

- 4.1 This policy is subject to a periodic Equality Impact Assessment ('EIA').
- 4.2 The purpose of such an assessment is to consider the effect of the policy with regards to the recognised protected characteristics of equality and ensure that it does not unfairly impact any individual or group. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity or other grounds set out in our Equality and Diversity Strategy and Single Equality Scheme. Remedial action will be undertaken if a detrimental effect is identified.
- 4.3 The EIA also requires the policy author to consider whether the policy is likely to negatively impact on a person's Human Rights.
- 4.4 This policy and any other related Alliance Homes publications can be provided in other formats for those with visual, literacy or language difficulties.

5. Complaints

- 5.1. If you would like to raise a complaint in relation to this policy, you can do this by calling us on **03000 120 120** or emailing us at **act@alliancehomes.org.uk**.
- 5.2. All complaints will be handled in line with the latest Alliance Homes Complaint Handling Policy.

6. Associated documents

- 6.1 This policy also has key links to some of our other policies and documents, including:
- Street Pride – our Community Warden service
 - Rent and Service Charge Setting policy
 - Untidy Gardens procedure
 - Fly-tipping flowchart
 - Fire Safety Policy and Fire safety in communal areas procedure
 - Mobility scooters - guidance for ownership in Alliance Homes properties.

7. Version control and approval dates

Approval stage	Date completed
SLT review / approval	21 July 2022

Board or Committee approval	N/A
Minor amend made to insert standard complaints section and format for external publication	June 2025
Next review date	21 July 2024

8. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 1

Equality Impact Assessment

1. Name the Strategy, Policy, Procedure or Function (SPPF) being assessed and name of author.

Estate Management Policy

2. Aims of the SPPF being assessed.

- *Whose need is it designed to meet?*
- *Are there any measurable elements such as time limits or age limits?*

This policy sets out our approach to the management of communal outdoor areas and shared parts of buildings used by tenants and residents. There are no specific limitations imposed by what we do to keep these areas clean and presentable.

3. Who has been consulted in developing the SPPF?

- *Make reference or links to consultation/evidence documents*

Tenancy Services team, Community Wardens Service, Area Housing Manager and Corporate Compliance Manager

4. Identify potential impact on each of the diversity “groups” by considering the following questions (the list is not exhaustive but an indication of the sort of questions assessors should think about):

- *Might some groups find it harder to access the service?*
- *Do some groups have particular needs that are not well met by the current SPPF?*
- *What evidence do you have for your judgment (e.g. monitoring data, information from consultation/research/feedback)?*
- *Have staff/residents raised concerns/complaints?*
- *Is there local or national research to suggest there could be a problem?*

Protected Characteristic		No impact	Negative impact	Positive impact	Information source/s **	Comments/evidence
Race	x					No evidence to support a positive or negative assessment
Disability				x		Agreement that we will continue to clean the windows of ground floor properties to ensure a consistent level of service and that those living in ground floor accommodation, but that are not able to undertake such works are not excluded from the service provided.
Gender	x					No evidence to support a positive or negative assessment
Transgender	x					No evidence to support a positive or negative assessment
Sexual orientation	x					No evidence to support a positive or negative assessment
Religion or belief	x					No evidence to support a positive or negative assessment
Age				x		Groups of properties designated for occupation by older or vulnerable people benefit from grounds maintenance and internal cleaning of shared parts
Marriage & Civil Partnership	x					No evidence to support a positive or negative assessment

Pregnancy and Maternity	x					No evidence to support a positive or negative assessment
Rural issue	x					No evidence to support a positive or negative assessment
Social mobility	x					No evidence to support a positive or negative assessment

**** Possible information sources for assessing impact or understanding issues related to target group, such as:**

- demographic data, studies of deprivation, statistics on health etc.
- results of consultations, results of equality monitoring data, complaints, customer feedback
- information collected from partner agencies and groups, support groups, professional expertise, 'peer review', project leads/teams, inspection reports etc.

5. Does the SPPF promote equality of opportunity?

See examples identified

Was there a negative impact identified in question 4? If yes go to question 6. if not go to question 7.

6. If "negative impact" identified in table (4) above is it?

Legal –

What is the level of impact? –

YES	NO
HIGH	LOW

If it is not legal and/or high impact – (i.e.: if you have highlighted **NO** to legal and **HIGH** to impact, then the document should be referred to E&D Champions Group)

7. If positive impact has been identified in table 4 above, how can it be improved upon or maximised, either in this SPPF or others?

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8. Full EIA (or if you decide full EIA is not necessary but some changes should be considered)

- *Are there changes you could introduce which would make this SPPF work better for this group of people?*
- *Is further research or consultation required?*

DETAIL THE ACTIONS PLANNED AND THE OUTCOMES EXPECTED FOR ALLIANCE HOMES CUSTOMERS AND/OR STAKEHOLDERS (These will be fed into CorVu for monitoring)

- *Consider target dates, resources implications, regular monitoring and reviewing of working/progress sheet*

Action/s	Positive Outcome/s	Timescale	Owner
To assess the data of reported incidents through the HUB to identify any trends or patterns in reporting from particular cohorts	To ensure that the service we are providing is open to all and that there are not any excluded groups or patterns in reporting from a particular cohort, which may identify a gap in the service delivery	Jan 2016	Tenancy Manager/ Community Warden Supervisor