

Estates Services Policy

1. What this policy is about

This policy sets out how we manage our internal and external communal areas and work in collaboration with our partners to ensure the safety of shared spaces and neighbourhoods.

We recognise that neighbourhood management is an integral part of our role as a landlord through the provision of safe, secure and well-maintained neighbourhoods. Which will provide a better quality of life for our residents and can act as a deterrent to anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and crime. We aim to provide high quality services, create sustainable communities and promote pride in our neighbourhoods.

The outcome of this policy will ensure our neighbourhoods and communities remain safe, well maintained, sustainable and inclusive to ensure the satisfaction and wellbeing of our customers.

2. Our approach

The specific objectives of the policy are to:

- Ensure that we fulfil our obligations under the Regulator of Social Housing Safety and Quality Standard and Neighbourhood and Community Standard 2024.
- Outline how we aim to play our part in the areas in which we provide homes.
- Outline our offer to customers in relation to external and communal servicing and maintenance.
- Manage the environment with partner agencies and customers to create sustainable neighbourhoods.

We aim to put residents at the heart of their neighbourhood by encouraging customer involvement in neighbourhood management.

We are committed to working in partnership with relevant partners and external agencies, such as the local authority and the police, to help promote the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of our neighbourhoods.

We will work in partnership with relevant organisations and community safety partnerships, to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour in neighbourhoods as outlined within our Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime Policy.

A decorative footer graphic consisting of a collection of colorful geometric shapes (squares, circles, diamonds, triangles) in yellow, orange, blue, and teal, scattered across the bottom left of the page.

This policy applies from June 2024
This policy applies to: Livv Housing Group, Livv Homes, Livv Maintenance

Our approach to Estates Services is set out within the following:

[2.1 Communal Garden and Green Space Maintenance](#)

[2.2 Tree Maintenance](#)

[2.3 Internal Communal Areas](#)

[2.4 Winter Weather Services](#)

[2.5 Boundaries](#)

[2.6 Environmental Anti-Social Behaviour \(ASB\)](#)

[2.7 Waste Management](#)

[2.8 Infestations](#)

[2.9 Planned Maintenance](#)

[2.10 Walkabouts / Inspections](#)

[2.11 Access Control](#)

[2.12 CCTV](#)

[2.13 Window Cleaning Services](#)

[2.14 Cooperative Working](#)

2.1 Communal Garden and Green Space Maintenance

We will maintain all identified open spaces within our responsibility and ensure:

- Common areas of grass are regularly cut throughout the growing season.
- Shrub bed areas are trimmed and cut back as required and shrubs are not allowed to overhang footpaths.
- Leaf collection is completed three times a year during October, November and December.
- Hedge cutting and base maintenance is carried out throughout the year.
- Grass edging is completed throughout the growing season.
- Litter picking is carried out throughout the year.

2.2 Tree Maintenance

Tree maintenance is currently mostly 'reactive' in nature and conducted in response to reports received by customers or colleagues regularly inspecting communal areas.

It is our aim to continually increase the data we have about trees that are in our communal areas and make assessments to see if any regular maintenance is required.



2.3 Internal Communal Areas

We will provide a caretaking and cleaning service to all our internal communal areas. They will be inspected every four weeks to ensure they are kept clean and tidy. During these visits we will also carry out fire safety checks, arrange for any repairs we find and collect any fly tipped waste that represents a risk to the safety of our customers.

The frequency and level of the cleaning will vary and depend on the requirements of the location. Where we carry out the cleaning of common areas, the costs incurred will be recharged back to customers as a service charge and to leaseholders as part of the annual service charge bill.

Due to the potential dangers of obstructing access or means of escape in the event of a fire, we operate a zero-tolerance approach to items left in communal areas. We will immediately remove any prohibited items found in any communal areas and communicate with customers reiterating the importance of fire safety.

We will investigate all instances of damage and vandalism within our communal areas and work with partner agencies to identify the offender and take the appropriate enforcement action, please refer to the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy for further information.

2.4 Winter Weather Services

We will, so far as is reasonably practicable, maintain safe access to and from our premises. Snow clearing and/or gritting will be carried out for the following premises types:

- Offices belonging to the Livv Housing Group
- Agreed Sheltered and Extra Care Schemes with Independent Living
- Community Centres belonging to Livv Housing Group

The decision to grit will be based on Met Office information and is made prior to expected hazardous weather conditions.

Every effort will be made to deliver these services. However, no guarantees can be given if the adverse weather conditions present a high risk to colleagues or contractors undertaking the works.

2.5 Boundaries

We will keep in good repair existing built boundaries which we own through our responsive repairs service, empty homes team and planned investment programmes.

Responsive Repairs

We will repair and / or replace existing built boundaries in the following priority circumstances:

- To front boundaries on busy roads.
- To boundaries next to open spaces such as fields, railways and streams.



- To protect a significant change in levels. This can be between different gardens or within the same garden area.
- Where a new boundary is required to maintain the safety or security of a vulnerable customer.

Empty Homes

When work is carried out on an empty property we will repair or renew all boundary and dividing fencing if required, as per the Empty Homes Standard.

2.6 Environmental Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

Environmental ASB affects our ability to maintain and improve our neighbourhoods. We aim to minimise the incidents of environmental ASB and respond promptly when incidents are identified. Environmental ASB covers a variety of acts such as:

- Vandalism
- Dog fouling
- Graffiti
- Dropping litter
- Fly tipping

We will investigate all instances of environmental ASB and work with partner agencies to identify the offender and take the appropriate enforcement action, please refer to the Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime Policy. We will encourage residents who witness environmental ASB to report it to ourselves and any other relevant organisation such the police or Environmental Health.

Customers are responsible for making good or paying for damage caused by deliberate acts of vandalism or any results caused by environmental ASB by themselves, any member of their household or visitors.

When we witness the result of environmental ASB on land or property not owned by ourselves, we will report the matter to the landowner and the local authority where appropriate.

We will liaise and work with Environmental Health to ensure that there is collaborative approach taken to addressing issues either in our homes or communal spaces.

2.7 Waste Management

We are responsible for addressing litter and fly-tipping within the boundaries of the properties and land that we own and will arrange clearance accordingly.

Our customers will be notified at the start of their tenancy of arrangements for the removal and recycling of refuse and bulk items.

All customers are expected to take reasonable care to ensure that their household rubbish is properly stored and disposed of. Refuse must be adequately bagged and stored until collection in bin stores or other designated areas. Customers are also



responsible for the disposal of large items such as household furniture and must comply with the local arrangements for the collection of refuse.

We will work in partnership with the local authority to encourage our customers to recycle and re-use their household waste. We will, where possible, provide locations for the positioning of recycling facilities.

Furthermore, we will work with the local authority regarding the provision of litter and dog bins and the disposal of such waste. Where a customer is unable to manage their household waste, we will work with the local authority to provide the necessary support and assistance.

Bins should be stored in the designated areas and regularly cleaned by customers. We will maintain communal bin stores and their surrounding areas.

We will ensure that we have the appropriate Waste Licenses to allow colleagues and partners to remove waste. This will ensure that we correctly manage the disposal of waste in accordance with current regulations.

2.8 Infestations

When a customer reports the presence of vermin, pests or insects within their home, garden or communal space, we will:

- Visit the property within 14 calendar days.
- Raise any works required to seal potential routes of entry into the home.
- If within our customers home, arrange for specialist contractors to eradicate the infestation.
- Provide advice, guidance and support on how to prevent infestations reoccurring.

Where infestations can be directly attributed to a customer's living conditions or habits, we will advise them on how best to address the problem to ensure it does not reoccur. Where a customer fails to meet any of the obligations to rectify any infestation, appropriate action will be taken to encourage adherence to the conditions of their tenancy. Support and advice will be offered when required.

We will ensure that all empty properties are free from infestations before being re-let which includes all external areas. Please refer to the Lettings Policy, Empty Homes Standard and infestations framework.

2.9 Planned Maintenance

Programmes of planned maintenance will take place when financial resources allow and will include:

- Roofs
- Roofline (fascia, gutter, soffit, rainwater pipes)
- External / internal painting
- Flooring
- Fencing
- Groundworks/ Flagging/ drainage



- Windows/ Doors/ Door entry systems/ intercoms
- Compliance/ Fire doors/ LED lights/ rewires etc
- Internal upgrades / Handrails/ Stairs and nosing's
- Brickwork/ repointing of structure/ boundary walls/ Chimneys/ copings
- Gates/ metal /wooden- Front rear side entrance

Priority for these programme will be given to areas where stock condition data has identified they are at the end of their serviceable life.

2.10 Walkabouts / Inspections

We will work with the local authority and will, as appropriate, attend walkabouts or estate inspections where an area has been identified as a cause for concern.

The outcomes concluded from all the different inspection formats will drive the focus of our neighbourhood management services.

2.11 Access Control

We will ensure the safety and security of all homes which contain an internal shared space. We will do this with the provision of a convenient and efficient door entry system to restrict access to our internal shared spaces.

We will achieve this by ensuring our access systems are properly maintained and repairs or upgrades are promptly addressed to minimize any potential security risks. The proper use of our door entry systems will be shared with customers upon the start of their tenancy.

We will also ensure that access to our internal shared space is available to emergency services and for routine maintenance and repairs.

2.12 CCTV

We operate a CCTV management system which is monitored 24/7. Its aim is to maintain the safety and security of our properties, whilst respecting the privacy rights of our customers.

Our CCTV systems are only installed and used for legitimate purposes, such as deterring crime, preventing vandalism, and promoting the safety of our customers. The use of CCTV for any other purpose is strictly prohibited.

CCTV cameras are strategically placed in buildings considered to be higher risk. They provide effective coverage of common areas, entrances, exits, and other high-risk locations. Areas where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy are not monitored.

CCTV footage is securely stored and accessible only to authorised personnel. The retention period for recorded footage is limited to a reasonable timeframe, generally not exceeding 31 days, unless required for legal or investigative purposes.

Please see our CCTV Standard for further information.



2.13 Window cleaning services

Our estates offering also provides a window cleaning service for some of our communal properties. This is to enhance their overall appearance and to provide a clean and pleasant living environment for our customers.

Windows are cleaned on a fortnightly, bi-monthly or quarterly basis dependent upon the type of property and location.

2.14 Cooperative Working

We are committed to complying with the Neighbourhood and Community Standard 2024, which mandates that we work collaboratively with our customers, other landlords, and relevant organisations to ensure the safety of shared spaces. In line with this policy, we prioritise the implementation of reasonable measures to maintain the safety and security of communal spaces within our properties.

We actively engage with our customers and encourage their participation in reporting any concerns or potential risks within a shared space. By fostering a partnership approach and adhering to the Neighbourhood and Community Standard, we strive to create a safe and welcoming environment for all our customers.

We also work collaboratively to effectively deter and address anti-social behaviour and hate crime. We encourage our customers to report any incidents promptly, and we take immediate action to investigate and address such issues in a fair and impartial manner. By working in partnership with the relevant organisations, we aim to foster a strong sense of community, promote respect, and ensure the well-being of all customers.

Our Domestic Abuse Policy outlines how we respond to and support customers experiencing domestic abuse. We prioritise the safety and well-being of our customers and we strive to create an environment where they feel supported and empowered to seek the assistance they need.

Our commitment lies in enabling our customers to access the necessary support and advice, fostering a culture of empathy, and standing against domestic abuse in our communities.

3. Responsibilities

All colleagues are responsible for carrying out their work in line with this policy and associated procedures. The Director of Assets is responsible for overall implementation of this policy. Specific responsibilities are set out below:

Role	Responsibility
Executive Director Property	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Executive Director Property has the responsibility for final sign off of the policy.Act as nominated Health & Safety Lead under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023.
Director of Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Operational implementation of this policy.
Head of Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Operational oversight of service delivery.



Head of FM & ES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operational service delivery
Manager – Advisory Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oversee the management of Environmental ASB.

4. **Monitoring and review**

To ensure that the policy is effective and delivering the intended impact, regular customer satisfaction surveys will be taken to provide feedback on how we are performing in our neighbourhoods. The survey will focus on the following:

- Estates services
- Block cleaning
- Grounds Maintenance
- ASB

We will review this policy every 3 years, or sooner if our monitoring of the policy identifies that changes are required, for example because of changes to law, regulation or related Livv strategies and policies.



Control framework

Compliance

This policy supports compliance with:

- Regulator of Social Housing Safety and Quality Standard 2024
- Regulator of Social Housing Neighbourhood and Community Standard 2024

Document control	
Version	1.0
Policy applies from	June 2024
Policy applies to	Livv Housing Group
Approved by	Executive Director Property
Approved on	20 June 2024
Replacing	Estate Services Policy 2021 – 2024
Next review due by	June 2027
Responsible Executive Director	Executive Director – Property
Policy author	Director of Assets Head of Compliance & Legal
Equality Analysis	26 April 2024
Environmental Impact Assessment	N/A
Circulation	Intranet; Livv Housing Group website

Version control		
Version	Date of Review	Summary of changes made
1.0	June 2024	Revised policy following full three-year periodic review

