



Estate Management Procedures – November 2019

Final version

Estate management procedures

These procedures are designed to complement the Estate Management Policy. The procedures below centre on the tasks/service/ethos involved in providing an effective estate management service for the benefit of staff and customers. Procedures were drafted in conjunction with Clydebank Housing Association's Tenant Panel (TP) who met on several occasions between summer and autumn 2016. As part of their exercise, the Tenant Panel accompanied the Estate Caretaker on two occasions during his visit.

Please note that a set of Radnor Park specific procedures exist and staff working from that area should ensure that these procedures are read in conjunction with the Radnor Park specific document. This procedure still applies to Radnor Park with any specific references to the Radnor park procedure referenced.

Departmental setup

Within the Housing Management section, the Housing Team are directly responsible for the day to day operation of the estate management service and the effective operation of these procedures, however all members of staff within the Housing Services Department must be aware of the procedures in order to provide effective customer service.

The Housing Officer (HO) is responsible for overall supervision of the Housing Assistant (HA) and Estate Caretaker (EC), as well as ensuring the function as a whole operates in line with this procedure. The whole function is overseen by the Housing Services Manager (HSM) and/or the Head of Housing Services. The Clerical Assistant (CA) for Radnor Park, The Housing Assistant (HA) for all other areas provides admin support as required.

Within the Maintenance section, the point of contacts would be the routine/reactive (RR) team or the major/cyclical (MC) team depending on the issue.

Communication & information

As estate management issue can lead to a breach of tenancy warning or legal action, it is essential that all information is communicated and logged effectively as it may be relied on at court. To this end all issues, actions and instructions should be logged using email in order to provide a clear audit trail.

On return to the office following inspections, the EC will update the estate management database with any findings and action taken. Any photographs taken should also be downloaded to the P Drive.

Where information is gained offsite, e.g. at Radnor Park, suitable IT solutions will be put in place to ensure that required information can be updated directly or indirectly.

Estate Management Inspections

Estate inspections will primarily be carried out by the Estate Caretaker (EC) on an ongoing rotational basis across the housing stock, except for Radnor Park (RP) which has a dedicated daily caretaking service. The standard rota is subject to change depending on scale of problems or priority issues and can be found in the Estate management folder within the Housing management folder on the F:Drive. Any updates to this rota should be made by the Estate Caretaker in conjunction with the Housing Officer for the housing team. Any changes to the rota should be communicated to all staff by the Housing Officer via email.

On noting any Estate management issues, the EC should approach tenants by chapping their door for information (including the tenant responsible) and/or where possible, put a card through the door of residents who may be responsible or who may hold information asking for contact. The EC will also take photographs of issues and note any evidence.

As well as the rota, the EC is expected to carry out additional inspections for estate management issues reported by customers, contractors, CHA staff or as instructed by the HO/HA/HSM/HHS/Maintenance staff.

In order to provide the best possible service, it is essential that the EC is able to be as fluid as possible with the rota. This will enable a timeous follow up of any issues noted. **As well as the rota above, the following timescales apply to estate management inspections:**

- Issues reported out with inspection cycle – the EC will endeavour to inspect this within **1 working day of report and no later than 3 working days of report** (timescales may not apply during periods of annual leave or sickness, this should be explained to the customer in all applicable cases).
- Follow up inspections for issues noted – **by timescale indicated on letter, if applicable or within 5 working days**. As required, The EC should adjust the scheduled inspection rota in conjunction with the HO to accommodate any additional/follow up inspections. Follow up inspections should not be left until the next rota day except for minor/timescaled issues. In certain emergency/serious scenarios, a re-inspection will be required more quickly, in these cases the EC should liaise directly with the HA for a timescale.

The EC will report directly to the HA for estate management issues noted during inspection, with the HO providing direct supervision of the function and staff. The HA, in the first instance, is expected to provide guidance/clarity to the EC.

In order to provide a clear audit trail, all discussions, issues and instructions must be confirmed via email. All letters, where not backed up on Kypera should be copied to the house file.

Monitoring of closes, landings, common areas and stairwells

As part of the proactive inspection process the EC will inspect each close to ensure that the stairs and common areas have been adequately cleaned and swept clean of rubbish/debris, the common windows have been cleaned on the inside etc. It is imperative that as far as is possible, all floors of tenement/flats are inspected regularly and that assessment is not simply based on the condition of one or two floors.

Where, on inspection, a close requires cleaning the EC should initially put out the first letter via the Kypera system or email the HA within 1 working day to send out the first close cleaning letter. Full address and landings details of those requiring letters should be included in the email if applicable. Letters should not be sent to any landings where the standard of close cleaning is acceptable. The HO & HA should be included in the email.

The HA should send out the first close cleaning letters as requested within 2 working days of receipt of the email from the EC. Where applicable, the HA should confirm via email to the EC that the requested letters have been sent (copying in the HO)

The EC, on receipt of the email from the HA should diarise a timeous follow up inspection in order to ascertain if the close has been cleaned.

If improvement is noted, the EC should email the HA (copying in the HO) to send the standard letter thanking residents for their co-operation. The HA should send out the letters within 2 working days of receipt of the email from the EC and confirm this by email to the EC (copying in the HO).

If no improvement is noted, the EC should email the HA (copying in the HO) to send the second close cleaning letter and close cleaning rotas to the residents concerned. The HA should send these letters within 2 working days and email the EC (copying in the HO) to confirm. The HA should print off a separate copy of the cleaning rotas and leave on the desk of the EC. The EC should then put each rota in a polypocket and revisit to display these on the walls of the appropriate landing(s) and diarise accordingly to reinspect.

If, following the rota's no improvement is noted, the EC should email the HA & HO advising the action that has already been taken and the fact that residents are not cleaning the close. On receipt of this email the HO should make a decision on whether or not a warning for breach of tenancy is required. If so, this should be discussed with the HA and a breach of tenancy warning issued to the tenant by the

HA. The wording of any letter should reflect the severity of the issue and fully outline the consequences to the tenant as a result of the breach of tenancy. This should be documented through email between the HO and the HA. The HO should also email the EC to carry out a further inspection within 5 working days. The EC should email and discuss findings directly with HO.

If no improvement is noted following the breach of tenancy letter and the EC follow up inspection, the HO should discuss directly with the HHS the start of legal action and progress this as required.

The above procedure applies to the Estate Caretakers at the MFSs. The only difference is it will be the CO (Clerical Officer) who sends out any letters required. Caretaking staff will pick up any rubbish, cigarette ends, bottles, cans etc. and clean up any spillages they find when carrying out their daily inspections. This list is not definitive and all common areas, fixtures and fittings should be cleaned regularly. Any health and safety issues found during inspections should be raised with the line manager. Photographs of the items should be taken before they are picked up and sent in to the HA (copying in the HO). The CO will email the HA once the letters have been sent. The HA will confirm via email to the EC that the requested letters have been sent (copying in the HO).

The EC will clean external doorways and canopies and clean any internal close windows where required. Cobwebs will be cleared off internal or external close lights. The EC will clean any other areas such as binstore or landings with no tenancies on the ground floor i.e. Kilbowie Road and Alexander Street **after discussion with the HO.**

Bulk Items in close or common areas

As part of the inspection process, the EC will look for and note any bulk items in close or common areas. It is essential areas are kept free of such items to avoid any fire or associated trip hazards as well as maintain a pleasant environment. Tenants are required to keep all bags/bins used for recycling or similar in their flat, except for the day of uplift; however bags/bins must be timeously removed from the close and stored indoors.

Where, on inspection, bulk items are noted, the EC should initially make enquiries to try and ascertain who is responsible (chap doors, put cards through doors etc). If who is responsible cannot be ascertained then, only if safe to do so, the EC should look through any items to see if any kind of identification can be found. If identified, a verbal request should be made to the resident, by going to their door, to remove the items themselves or ascertain if an uplift has already been requested and paid for from the Council (EC should phone WDC for confirmation in all cases). If any personal details are found then these details should be taken directly to the person's door and given to them. If they are not in then the items have to be put through their letterbox with a card asking them to contact.

Opening bags of rubbish which are on our land to try to identify who is responsible should only be done if safe to do so. Any bag which has been opened must be re-bagged and secured.

If any personal items have to be photographed it is only ever the name and address on any letters that are photographed.

For manageable items, the EC will clear away any bulk items noted.

If the items are dumped in a location that could be a fire risk, the EC should move the items to a safe location, or get the person responsible to do this (if known). It may be necessary for the EC to liaise with the maintenance department should the item(s) be too large or bulky to move. If the resident refuses to move the items, the EC should record this and advise they may be charged.

The EC should initially email the HA within 1 working day to send out the first standard bulk items letter. Full name and address details of those requiring letters should be included in the email. Letters should not be sent to any residents where evidence exists that they are not responsible. The HO should be included in the email.

The HA should send out the first letter(s) as requested within 2 working days of receipt of the email from the EC. The HA should confirm via email to the EC that the requested letters have been sent (copying in the HO).

The EC, on receipt of the email from the HA should diarise a timeous follow up inspection in order to ascertain if the items have been removed.

If the item(s) have been removed, the EC should email the HA (copying in the HO) to send the standard letter thanking residents for their co-operation. The HA should send out the letters within 2 working days of receipt of the email from the EC and confirm this by email to the EC (copying in the HO).

If the items are not removed following the first letter, the EC should email the HA (copying in the HO) to send the second standard Kypera bulk letter to the residents concerned. The HA should send these letters within 2 working days and email the EC (copying in the HO) to confirm. The EC should diarise accordingly to reinspect.

If, following the second letter the items remain, the EC should email the HA & HO advising the action that has already been taken and the fact that residents have not removed the items. On receipt of this email the HO should make a decision on whether or not a warning for breach of tenancy is required and recharges for removal of the items by maintenance is required. If so, this should be discussed with the HA and a breach of tenancy warning issued to the tenant(s) by the HA. The HA should also email maintenance at this stage asking for removal of the items and specifying who should be recharged. This should be documented through email between the HA & maintenance (including HO). The HO should also email the EC to carry out a further inspection within 5 working days to ensure the items have been removed. The EC should email and discuss findings directly with HO who should then discuss with the maintenance department if the items have not been removed.

If this is the second or more time a tenant has been warned and recharged, the HO should discuss directly with the HSM the start of legal action and progress this as required.

At Radnor Park or any other areas covered by CCTV, evidence of those responsible may be available via the CCTV. In these instances, the EC should contact the CCTV monitor by email to arrange a suitable time to review the evidence in order to try and identify those responsible. Appropriate letters and action should take place in keeping with procedures above should the person be identified and action possible (i.e. a tenant or member of a tenants family etc).

Abandoned Cars/Illegal Parking/Parking issues

As part of the proactive inspections, the EC will look for abandoned or illegally /dangerously parked vehicles on CHA grounds. These may represent a fire or health and safety hazard as well as take up parking spaces that are designed for use by residents. Parking in yellow zones is prohibited at all times as these areas must be kept clear for emergency vehicle access.

In all cases, photographs should be taken and saved/mailed as appropriate.

It can be difficult to tell whether a car is abandoned or not. The EC should make use of the appropriate government website, taking note of the vehicles registration number, make and model. The web address is <https://www.gov.uk/check-vehicle-tax>

Where, on inspection, an abandoned or illegally/dangerously parked car is noted, the EC should initially make enquiries to try and ascertain who the car belongs to (chap doors, put cards through doors etc). If identified, a verbal request should be made to the resident to remove the car themselves. If the owner of the vehicle refuses, it should be explained that the car may end up being disposed of and the Police involved, with the owner having to foot the costs of removal.

On return to the office/within one working day, in all cases the EC should email the HA to print off a windscreen vehicle notice and where an address is known, a letter should be sent advising the owner of the requirement to move the vehicle etc (there is no standard letter here and the EC or HA should liaise directly with the HO to get wording for the letter. The EC should provide the HA with the make, model and registration of the vehicle (copying in the HO). The HA should do this within 5 working days and confirm by email to the EC, also leaving the windscreen notice on the EC's desk.

Within 1 working day, the EC should place the notice on the car windscreen and schedule a follow up inspection.

If the vehicle remains at follow up inspection, the EC should put in place arrangements via the Police and/or council to have the vehicle removed. This should be discussed in full with the HO who will instruct the EC on the appropriate steps to take.

In the case of illegally/dangerously parked vehicles in yellow box zones, a card should be left on the windscreen straight away. If it is known who the vehicle belongs to the EC should go to the persons door and ask them to remove the vehicle (put card through door if not in asking them to remove the vehicle). Update to the database should also be made either directly or via email to the Housing team.

Dog Fouling/Dogs in multistorey flats

The EC will actively look for and note any dog fouling on Association land. As well as being an obvious health and safety risk, dog fouling inhibits children playing and contractors from cutting the grass properly etc.

Where, on inspection, dog fouling is noted, the EC should initially make enquiries to try and ascertain which resident's dog is responsible (chop doors, put cards through doors etc). If identified, a verbal request should be made to the resident to clean the dog mess themselves (letter as backup would still go out).

In all cases the EC should email the HA within 1 working day to send out the standard dog fouling letter to all appropriate residents. The HA should send out the letter within 2 working days, confirming by email to the EC that this has been done. The EC should schedule a follow up inspection.

If the dog owner cleans up the mess, a thank you letter should be sent (as instructed by the EC to the HA).

If no one owns up or CHA are unable to identify who is responsible, the EC should speak to the HA who should inform the maintenance department by email (including the HO & EC) and request that a contractor be arranged to clean up the mess. Where the identity of the dog owner is known, this information should be included in the email and recommendation made that the dog owner be charged. The EC should also liaise with the dog warden at the Council and disclose owner details etc to them. This may result in the dog owner being fined.

The Association operates a tenancy condition whereby no dogs are allowed in multistorey flats (MSF). During estate management inspections or reports staff may become aware of tenants keeping a dog within a MSF. In this instance, the EC should approach the tenant directly to confirm whether or not they are keeping a dog (carding them if they are not at home). If this is found to be the case, the EC should reported findings by email to the HA. The HA should then write to the tenant advising that no dogs are allowed. This should be treated as and followed through as a breach of tenancy by the Housing Team.

Binstores/Bin chutes

The EC, as part of routine estate management inspections, will monitor binstores/bin chutes to ensure that no blockages exist bins are not overflowing and that all bins are being put out for collection and returned to the proper binstore areas afterwards. The binstore areas will also be checked for tidiness. The EC will also ensure that bins are clearly marked with one bin for each flat present. This is essential for health and safety as well as aesthetic grounds.

On noting an issue with a bin or binstore, the EC will initially make enquiries to try and ascertain which resident is responsible (chop doors, put cards through doors etc). If identified, a verbal request should be made to rectify the problem (letter as backup would still go out).

For manageable issues, the EC will clear away any rubbish or items within binstore areas.

In all cases the EC should email the HA within 1 working day to send out the standard binstore letter to all appropriate residents. The HA should send out the letter within 2 working days, confirming by email to the EC that this has been done. The EC should schedule a follow up inspection.

In cases where we are struggling to identify those responsible or obtain relevant information, checks must be made with West Dunbartonshire Council's Cleansing department to ascertain if a resident has already contacted for a paid uplift.

Likewise any uplift issues should be discussed with WDC at the earliest opportunity to avoid any fire or health and safety risks.

If no one owns up or if CHA are unable to identify who is responsible, the EC should speak to the HA who should inform the maintenance department by email (including the HO & EC) and request that a contractor be arranged to clean up the mess. Where the identity of the resident is known, this information should be included in the email and recommendation made that the resident be charged. The HA should also take action for breach of tenancy conditions at this stage.

A separate procedure exists for the bin chute areas at the MSF and staff working at Radnor Park should refer to this separate procedure.

Graffiti/Vandalism

During inspection, the EC will identify any vandalism or graffiti inside or outside Association property or on property belonging to another landlord which may directly or indirectly affect CHA property. Timescales are important for this function as graffiti can be offensive in nature and a quick turnaround for removal is therefore necessary.

On identification of vandalism or graffiti, where applicable, the EC should make initial enquiries with any residents during the inspection process as to who may have been responsible.

For offensive graffiti, in all cases, the EC should telephone the maintenance department straight away and request an emergency repair line to remove any offensive graffiti. Photographs should also be taken and forwarded to the Police for information.

Where it has been ascertained that a tenant is in any way responsible, the EC should speak with the HO on return to the office. The HO should instruct the HA to commence immediate action for breach of tenancy (where applicable) and make contact with the Police (where applicable) advising of the findings. Timescales for this should be in line with the seriousness of any issues found.

A separate procedure for graffiti applies to staff working at Radnor Park. The procedure outlines action to be taken on graffiti removal over and above the information contained above, which should still be adhered to.

Grounds Maintenance

During inspection, the EC should note any issues in respect of grounds maintenance work by the Association's contractors. Examples include grass cuttings not having been collected, litter in shrub beds not having been removed during pruning, patches of grass not having been cut properly etc. All items noted should be reported to the Maintenance department via email by the EC. The EC should copy in the HA & HO's in any email.

Likewise, any observed issues that need addressed during future grounds maintenance or as one off items should be noted. Examples include overgrown trees, shrubs or grassed areas over and above the standard growth state of surrounding areas. Issues should be reported to the Maintenance department via email by the EC. The EC should copy in the HA & HO's in any email.

Litter

During inspection, the EC will carry out a litter pick of visible litter where possible on Association land. This should take place daily at Radnor Park.

If, on inspection, it is clear that a tenant has been dropping litter, the procedure as per bulk items should be followed and appropriate action taken.

Any litter noted on land that does not belong to CHA will be reported on return to the office by the EC to the relevant land owner, e.g. WDC. This is imperative to keep, as far as is possible, surrounding areas to our housing stock looking in good condition.

Communication of issues/promotion of initiatives

The Association will promote positive management of its estates through all of communications and publications. To this end, all association staff visiting estates, irrespective of reason, will ensure that any estate management issues are noted and communicated to the Housing Team.

The Association will ensure that all publications such as our Chit Chat magazine, our website etc contains regular or permanent articles on estate management. We will also utilise these outlets to publicise any estate management initiatives or provide information/educational information to our residents and customers.

Partnership working

Utilising and staying in touch with our partner agencies is crucial to our Estate Management function operating correctly. Agencies such as the Police, Council, Fire service etc are involved on a regular basis. Below are contact details for agencies who may become involved in estate management issues:

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	<u>Email address</u>
Police Scotland	Clydebank Police Station, Montrose Street, Clydebank G81	01389 822014	brian.marsland@scotland.pnn.police.uk
Scottish Fire & Rescue Service	Clydebank Fire Station, 2 Kilbowie Road, Clydebank G81 6QT	01389 385999	W.EWDABHFSVReferrals@firescotland.gov.uk
WDC Environmental Health Department	WDC Offices	01389 737000	
WDC Cleansing Department	WDC Offices	01389 738282	
WDC Estates Department	WDC Offices	01389 737000	
WDC Housing Management	WDC Offices	01389 737000	
Trafalgar Housing Association	430A Dumbarton Road, Clydebank, G81 4DX	0141 952 4676	paul.mcshane@trafalgar.co.uk
Cube Housing Association	65 High Street, Dumbarton G82 1LS	0800 027 3456	talk@cubehousing.co.uk
Y Sort-it!	5 West Thomson Street, Clydebank G81 3EA	0141 941 3308	info@ysortit.com

Estate Management Useful Telephone Numbers

West Dunbartonshire Council

Dog Warden – 01389 7378290

Dog Waste Bags – 01389 772059

Contact Centre for Bulk Uplifts – 01389 738282

Litter Control – Kevin Ward – 07507 561121 – kevin.ward@west-dunbarton.gov.uk . Jim Kyle – jim.kyle@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Waste Services – 01389 738282

Scottish Fire and Rescue – 01389 385999

Police Scotland:

Brian Marsland, ASB Liaison Officer - 01389 822014 -
Brian.Marsland@scotland.pnn.police.uk

PC Laura Bradley, Youth Engagement Office, Clydebank High School –
0141 532 3336 – Lauren.Bradley2@scotland.pnn.police.uk

PC Julie Ann Wreford, Youth Engagement Officer, St Peters – 0141 532
3336 – Julie.Wreford@scotland.pnn.police.uk