



ORE VALLEY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

ESTATE MANAGEMENT POLICY

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ORE VALLEY HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

ESTATE MANAGEMENT POLICY

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AIM OF POLICY

The aim of the Estate Management Policy is to ensure that all areas in which the Association has properties are maintained to a standard acceptable to all tenants and residents and which create a pleasant environment for the people to live in.

The aim of the policy will be achieved by:

- i. Ensuring that all tenants adhere to tenancy conditions relating to garden maintenance and care of property. The Association will take prompt action as appropriate against tenants who do not comply.
- ii. Accepting responsibility for dealing promptly with problems in open space areas.
- iii. Dealing promptly with problems with properties which are owner-occupied.
- iv. Liaising with other agencies (e.g. Police, Environmental Health, Cleansing, Roads, Dog Warden) as required.
- v. Dealing promptly with neighbour dispute, if required in accordance with the separate Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

AREAS COVERED

a) Garden Ground

Tenants will be expected to keep garden areas tidy. Grass is to be cut on a regular basis. Other areas are to be kept tidy and be free from rubbish and litter.

The Association operates a subsidised garden maintenance scheme for tenants who are either of pensionable age or who have a disability preventing them from maintaining their garden. Applications for inclusion in the scheme can be made to the Association at any time.

The current charge for the scheme is £36.00 per annum for 14 visits per year, tenants can make monthly or weekly payments if they choose. Charges for the scheme are reviewed annually and provision is made for the Association's contribution within the ground maintenance budget.

b) **Rubbish and General Untidiness**

Tenants will have to ensure that all rubbish is placed in the bin provided in an appropriate manner and left out for collection by Fife Council.

Tenants will be expected to contact Fife Council or OVE to arrange special uplifts where this is required.

Where rubbish has been dumped on open space areas, The Housing Officer will make initial enquiries with local residents.

If the rubbish is not removed within 24 hours the Housing Officer will make a referral to Fife Council so that they can arrange for the rubbish to be removed.

This action will also give Fife Council the opportunity to conduct an investigation with a view to issuing a fixed penalty notice or making a referral to the Procurator Fiscal.

c) **Ore Valley Enterprises**

OVE provide a flexible uplift service for community use.

This service is available to OVHA and the Housing Officer can make a referral for a special uplift where a tenant is identified as requiring additional housing support

d) **Abandoned Vehicles**

Where an abandoned vehicle is identified the Housing Officer will make initial enquiries with local residents to have the vehicle removed.

If the owner of the vehicle is not identified the Association will make a referral to Fife Council so that they can serve an Abandoned Vehicle Notice. Thereafter the Housing Officer will liaise with Fife Council to monitor the outcome.

e) **External Repairs to Association Properties**

In most cases, repairs will be reported by a tenant, however The Housing Officer will complete regular estate management inspections to identify unreported problems with roofs, chimneys, gutters, downpipes, fencing, footpaths and common areas.

f) **Open Space and Parking Areas**

The Association will ensure that grass cutting of open space areas is carried out on a regular basis.

The Association will maintain open space and parking areas to an acceptable standard and will make every effort to ensure that there is no danger presented to members of the public e.g. pot-holes, uneven slabs, damaged fencing.

Over the last five years OVHA have worked with our ground maintenance contractors to improve the standard of the open spaced areas in Cardenden and Lochgelly. This improved service includes litter picking, weeding, thinning, re-planting, in-fill planting, bulb planting and weed control in all areas.

The Association is also responsible for maintaining 76 planted barrels which are located throughout Cardenden and Lochgelly.

If particular areas are identified as presenting a significant problem the Association will consider various options to make improvements.

Options may include the following:

1. Alternative soft landscaping
2. Hard landscaping
3. Conversion for parking
4. Disposal to adjacent tenants or owners

The above list is not intended to be exhaustive. Any alternative identified for an area of open space will be subject to Committee approval.

g) **Animal Nuisance**

Tenants will be expected to keep all pets under control and to ensure that they do not foul gardens, common areas or paths and do not cause nuisance or annoyance to neighbours or their visitors.

In accordance with the conditions of the tenancy agreement, tenants are required to seek permission from the Association to keep more than one pet.

The Association will not unreasonably withhold permission.

Where problems with the control and supervision of pets are confirmed the Association reserves the right to instruct the tenant to remove the pet(s) on a permanent basis within 14 days.

The Association intends to introduce a separate Pet Policy with effect from 1 April 2011.

h) **External Structures including satellite dishes**

Tenants should seek the prior consent from the Association before erecting any garages, greenhouses, sheds, kennels, satellite dishes or any other external structure. All requests must comply with planning or other statutory regulations applicable.

The Association will not unreasonably withhold permission to erect any structures, but will take into account the appearance of the area and how neighbours will be affected.

i) **Drive-ways**

Tenants will have to seek prior consent from the Association before putting in a driveway. Our Building Surveyors have provided a specification for driveway upgrading works. All approved work is expected to comply with this specification and those seeking consent will also be required to seek appropriate permissions from Fife Council in respect of lowering kerbs, crossing pavements, etc.

The Association will not unreasonably withhold permission, however due consideration will have to be given to the impact on local residents as well as any other road safety issues.

Where access is taken for a driveway without prior consent the Association can instruct the tenant to re-instate the fence and garden to its original status. Any costs relating to this remedial work will be recharged to the tenant.

In certain areas parking is a particular problem. The Association will review these on a regular basis and will consider the provision of additional parking space where circumstances allow.

j) **Fences**

The Association has a mixture of tension wire fencing, metal railings and wood fences. The age and condition of our fencing is variable and regular estate management checks needs to be carried out to make sure that this fencing is safe and secure. The Housing Officer will instruct work for any fencing that is deemed to be unsafe. Any other repairs will be recorded on the planned maintenance register so that fencing work can be completed as part of our planned maintenance program.

If a tenant or owner makes a request to erect a fence this work must be completed in accordance with our own specification. We will also consult any neighbouring tenants or owners prior to granting permission. We will not refuse permission unreasonably.

k) **Reviews and Estate Management Inspections**

With the introduction of the Housing Scotland Bill (2010) and the development of the Scottish Social Housing Charter, OVHA intends to develop a more tenant focused approach to estate management.

The Association aims to empower tenants by using walkabouts to develop an estate management matrix for estate management and investment issues.

This information will then be used to develop and improve the estate management service that is being provided by the Association.