

CBH NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY 2023

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Policy Owner	Head of Community Services	
Policy Author	Tenancy Services Manager	
Department/Section	Community Services Section	
Contact details	Nicholas.Such@cbh.org	
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1 INTRODUCTION

CBH recognises that there is a clear relationship between the quality of the local environment and our customer's overall quality of life.

It is important to have strong, cohesive, and connected communities with access to open spaces and neighbourhoods that are well maintained, attractive and clean for our customers to live in.

The vision for our neighbourhoods and properties is to ensure that they are safe, secure and well-maintained areas where customers can thrive.

2 PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

This policy sets out how we will effectively manage our neighbourhoods and communal areas to help create and sustain, safe and pleasant neighbourhoods for our customer's.

It explains what you can expect from CBH, as a landlord regardless of tenure type, when maintaining and improving our communities, and clarifies our approach to the management of our neighbourhoods. This includes, how we will involve tenants in neighbourhood works projects, and how we will work in partnership with other agencies concerned with the safety, security and appearance of our neighbourhood environment.

This policy is operated and published in compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing Neighbourhood and Community Standard, which requires registered providers of social housing, to publish a policy for maintaining, managing, and improving the neighbourhoods associated with their homes.

3 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy identifies how CBH will effectively manage the neighbourhoods around CBH owned and managed homes and shared communal areas.

This includes the planning, monitoring, management, and delivery of services relating to but not limited to:

- Communal gardens, open spaces and grassed areas
- Communal pathways, parking areas and garage sites
- Communal bin stores and bike sheds

- Communal Play equipment and other communal facilities
- Communal entrance doorways and windows
- Communal stairs, hallways, passages and lifts
- Communal services to flats e.g., lighting, fire alarm systems, communal door systems and TV aerials

Our neighbourhoods are diverse and can be defined as estates, blocks, singular, or groups of homes with shared external or internal areas.

The way we manage these different neighbourhoods will be influenced by their individual characteristics and management requirements.

4. HOW WILL WE MAINTAIN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

We have a flexible approach to improving neighbourhoods and delivering positive sustainable outcomes.

We will inspect communal areas in and around flats and maisonettes to identify and address any maintenance and cleaning issues of concern. This includes, but not limited to:

- Bin stores
- Grassed areas and shrubs
- Walkways, stairwells, and corridors

We will carry out tenancy audits to identify whether our customers are adhering to their tenancy conditions in respect of their homes and gardens and agree appropriate actions where breaches of tenancy are identified.

We will liaise with Ubico and Cheltenham Borough Council and Gloucestershire County Council services on issues such as grass cutting, pest control and fly tipping to help keep our neighbourhoods tidy.

Some of the other ways in which this is done includes:

Tackling Anti-social behaviour – Our ASB Team use a range of tools to proactively tackle anti-social behaviour, which can stop problems from escalating. We work closely with partners, for example the Police and Social Services to tackle these issues and encourage victims of crime and anti-social behaviour to engage with us.

We have a separate policy and procedures on anti-social behaviour and associated terms set out in Section 6 of our tenancy conditions.

Removing graffiti/rubbish removal – graffiti and rubbish is an eyesore which can make our estates look untidy and unwelcoming. Rubbish can also be a fire risk and attract vermin. Where the graffiti is on our buildings and it is offensive, we will aim to remove it within 24 hours of it being reported. Where rubbish has been fly tipped on our estates, our Estate Services Team, working in partnership with Cheltenham Borough Council's Neighbourhood Team will arrange removal of the rubbish. Where the perpetrator is known, proportionate action will be taken, and they will be re-charged for this service.

Parking & vehicles – we do not permit any abandoned or untaxed vehicles on CBH managed land, and it is important to keep sites free from these. This is to maximise the parking capacity and to keep our estates safe. It is illegal to abandon a vehicle on a road or any other land. The same law applies to abandoned caravans, trailers, or parts of motor vehicles.

CBH cannot enforce parking on non-managed land such as highways but will liaise with appropriate authorities.

Neighbourhood Works Budget – each year this budget from the Housing Revenue Account is used to deliver environmental improvements on our estates. These projects have made significant contributions to improving the overall image, appearance, and general quality of life within our estates.

Resident Involvement and Engagement

- We encourage all tenants and residents to report issues, so these can be investigated thoroughly, and appropriate action taken when necessary
- We support the work of local tenants and residents groups and seek their views on what needs to be improved in their neighbourhood and what the priorities for improvement are
- We will invite tenants' representatives to take part in organised estate walkabouts with local councillors and CBH colleagues
- When we are reviewing our services or identifying improvements, we will provide information and consult with tenants and leaseholders in a variety of ways. This can include:
 - Meetings with local tenants and residents groups
 - Consultation events with local tenants and residents in their communities
 - Surveys (online, telephone or postal)
- Provide tenants with information on neighbourhood community groups and forums.

When making decisions on major neighbourhood works project, we require 60 percent resident agreement with the proposals before commencing any works.

Partnership Working

Keeping our estates clean and tidy requires joint working with customers, other residents, Cheltenham Borough Council and Gloucestershire County Council services and other agencies. To do this we:

- Ensure local tenant representatives and local councillors are invited on estate walkabouts with CBH staff
- Work together with our partners, including our local councillors, the police, Ubico and Highways to make neighbourhoods a safer place to live in
- Support local initiatives to improve neighbourhoods
- Work with neighbourhood community groups to identify local priorities and improvements

Monitoring, reviews and evaluation

As this is a newly introduced policy, it will be reviewed after 12 months and then every two years going forwards, and amended accordingly to reflect any changes in legislation, standards, and guidelines in relation to the role of social landlords in addressing issues on our estates.