
Sanctuary Scotland

Title: Housing Management of Estates - Sanctuary Scotland Policy

Business Function: Sanctuary Scotland
Sanctuary Homes (Scotland) Limited

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Other Contributors: National Residents Review Panel
Sanctuary Scotland Housing Managers and Area Managers
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Authorised by: Executive Committee
Sanctuary Scotland Board of Management

Sanctuary Scotland:
Sanctuary Scotland Housing Association Limited is a subsidiary of
Sanctuary Housing Association, an exempt charity.

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Sanctuary Scotland Housing Association.

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1. Policy statement

- 1.1 Sanctuary Scotland Housing Association Limited (Sanctuary Scotland) views estate management as a vital part of the Housing Management function.
- 1.2 Effective estate management ensures that customers enjoy a peaceful, secure, safe, clean, and tidy environment.
- 1.3 Customers are at the heart of Sanctuary Scotland's estate management services and are actively encouraged to be involved in the setting, monitoring and measurement of estate standards. In setting and monitoring standards for estate management, regard is given to value for money and the most effective use of resources.
- 1.4 Sanctuary Scotland adopts a preventative approach to estate management recognising that prompt action must always be taken to ensure estates are not subject to deterioration. Where relevant, Sanctuary Scotland works in partnership with other organisations to ensure issues are addressed correctly and in a timely manner.
- 1.5 Sanctuary Scotland's mission is to build affordable homes and sustainable communities where people choose to live. This policy supports the mission by ensuring that the housing stock and the surrounding environment that Sanctuary Scotland is responsible for (Sanctuary Scotland-owned land) is managed and maintained effectively to the highest possible standard.
- 1.6 Below are the policy commitments in relation to estate management, ensuring customers:
 - live in well managed and well maintained housing, in an environment that is attractive, safe, and secure, free from nuisance, annoyance, intimidation and harassment;
 - are made aware of and accept their responsibilities in relation to the upkeep of their property, gardens, and the surrounding environment;
 - are made aware of our responsibilities in relation to estate management;
 - are satisfied with the estate management service provided by Sanctuary Scotland;
 - are given opportunities to influence and participate in decision making relating to estate management; and
 - are aware that Sanctuary Scotland endeavours to reduce the time it takes to re-let a property by aiming to manage attractive and well maintained estates where people want to live;
 - are aware that Sanctuary Scotland will meet its legal duties, obligations and responsibilities and that Sanctuary Scotland will ensure tenants also fulfil their tenancy obligations.
- 1.8 This policy and associated procedure is applicable to the housing management services delivered by Sanctuary Scotland to general needs, sheltered, factored and mid market rent customers.

2. Roles and responsibilities

- 2.1 The Director - Sanctuary Scotland is responsible for ensuring the overall adoption of, and adherence to, this policy and its associated procedures relevant to their operation.
- 2.2 All relevant Directors, Heads of Housing, Housing Managers, and Area Managers are responsible for ensuring that effective training is provided to all staff, and that this is applied consistently throughout all areas of operation.
- 2.3 All staff working within Sanctuary Scotland are responsible for ensuring adherence to this procedure.
- 2.4 Any best practice identified that is not already documented in this procedure, must be shared via Area Managers to cascade.
- 2.5 Guidance is reflected on [KnowledgePoint](#) under the relevant processes to ensure that all staff can access information in an easy and timely manner.

3. References and sources

- 3.1 The following legislation is relevant to the content of this procedure and may be referred to for further information and context:
 - [Abolition of Feudal Tenure \(Scotland\) Act 2000](#) and [Tenements \(Scotland\) Act 2004](#): carry out maintenance to common parts and open spaces in order that the said common parts and open spaces are fit for use by the tenant and other occupiers.
 - [Antisocial Behaviour and Harassment - Scotland Policy and Procedure](#)
 - [Civic Government \(Scotland\) Act 1982](#): describes the process for dealing with lost or abandoned property.
 - [Equality Act 2010](#)
 - [Fire Safety Management - Group Policy and Procedure](#)
 - [Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcome 6](#): Estate management, anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and tenancy disputes which encourages Registered Social Landlords to take steps to ensure that tenants and other customers live in well maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe.
 - [Personal Safety - Group Procedure](#)
 - [Tenancy Management - Scotland Policy](#)
 - [Waste Management - Group Policy and Procedure](#)

4. Impact on diversity

- 4.1 This policy applies to the Housing Management of Estates as outlined above.
- 4.2 Sanctuary Scotland demonstrates its commitment to diversity and promoting equality by ensuring that this policy is applied in a manner that is fair to all sections of the community, with due regard to the protected characteristics identified under the [Equality Act 2010](#) and in accordance with its '[Fairness for All](#)' Single Equality Scheme.

4.3 All customers are asked to provide diversity details which are used to monitor the services provided. For example, customers are asked to provide details on their communication needs so that where possible customers can be informed about estate management activities such as inspections, in their preferred format.

5. Resident consultation

5.1 Resident feedback regarding the provision of an effective estate management service has been accounted for in the development of this policy through many channels, including:

- satisfaction survey results from Tenants and Residents (2018/2019);
- complaints around the appearance of our estates and services provided on estates;
- resident involvement in estate inspections; and
- feedback on our estates and properties obtained from our allocations processes.

6. Monitoring and compliance

6.1 Period of review

6.1.1. Until a new policy is formally adopted this document will remain in force and operational.

6.1.2. This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the policy review programme agreed by Executive Committee.

6.1.3. If there are significant changes to legislation or regulation or there are found to be deficiencies or failures in this policy, as a result of complaints or findings from any independent organisations, the Director - Sanctuary Scotland will initiate an immediate review.

6.1.4. Where appropriate, key stakeholders, residents, clients, customers and interested parties will be consulted as part of any review of this policy.

7. Approval

7.1 This policy is approved by Sanctuary Group's Executive Committee and Sanctuary Scotland Housing Association Board of Management.

8. Operational arrangements

8.1 Estate Inspections

8.1.1 In addition to maintenance contracts and/or work completed by Estates Services, Housing Management teams will carry out estate inspections to ensure housing stock and surrounding environments are kept clean, tidy, and safe. Regular inspections of estates and communal spaces within housing stock will be completed by the designated Housing Officer. These can take place with or without customers. Any issues identified during an inspection will be recorded and follow-up actions scheduled. Actions will be completed within a reasonable timescale depending on the nature and severity of the issue and before any re-inspection is due.

8.1.2 If issues are identified during an inspection, these must be recorded, and follow-up actions scheduled. Actions must be completed within a reasonable timescale depending on the nature and severity of the issue and before any re-inspection is due. For example, a re-inspection may be due within one month if the overall rating is 'poor' but if there is dangerous waste such as sharps left in communal areas these should be cleared immediately (or as soon as practically possible if a specialist cleaning contractor is required) and the area re-inspected within one working week.

8.1.3 To manage estates effectively, the Housing Officer will work in partnership with relevant internal teams such as the Customer Service Centre, Case Management Team, Property Services, and external agencies such as the Police Scotland and Local Authorities. Specific details on how Sanctuary Scotland will deal with issues and the scope of the Housing Management teams' responsibilities is set out in the [Housing Management of Estates - Scotland Procedure](#) which includes:

- vandalism and graffiti;
- fly tipping or dumped rubbish and litter;
- pets;
- abandoned, untaxed, and un-roadworthy vehicles and parking;
- signage;
- bin stores;
- landscaping and gardening and damaged trees;
- the exterior of buildings;
- maintenance of paths and stairwells;
- play areas and ball games - misuse or damage;
- management of garages;
- boundary queries;
- lost or stolen keys/fobs;
- security of schemes and properties;
- infestations; and
- fire safety including storing goods in communal areas.

- 8.1.4 Where issues are identified that relate to a tenant breaching the conditions of their tenancy, appropriate action must be taken in accordance with the [Tenancy Management - Scotland Policy](#). Tenants should receive a written warning or a visit to ensure that the issue is understood and that they are aware of the action they need to take to rectify the issue.
- 8.1.5 Where estate management issues relate to persistent behaviour that causes nuisance or annoyance to tenants, the Housing Officer should also follow the [Antisocial Behaviour and Harassment - Scotland Procedure](#). Where issues such as vandalism and graffiti are considered to be hate crime incidents, this should be reported to the police.
- 8.1.6 Housing Officers are the 'responsible person' for fire safety as detailed in the following policies, procedures, and guidance documents:
- [Fire Safety Guidance for Housing Management: Red Boxes](#)
 - [Fire Safety Management - Group Policy and Procedure](#)
 - [Fire Risk Assessments](#)
 - [Fire Risk Assessments - Managed by Managing Agents](#)
 - [Fire Evacuation Routes guidance](#)
 - [Dry and Wet Riser checks](#)
 - [Technical notes on Fire Safety](#)
- 8.1.7 Estates Services will also assist with compliance checks in Scotland, for example for emergency lighting, communal fire doors and communal fire alarms.
- 8.1.8 Where Housing Officers need to move items from communal areas because they are not tolerated, the following principles apply:
- The Housing Officer must attempt to establish ownership of items first. This can be done verbally (for example through door-knocking) but in every instance, tenants must receive a written notice. The written notice must include a request that any items belonging to the tenant are removed to a safe space by a specific date or the tenant will risk losing them (either into dedicated storage where this is provided or inside the tenant's property).
 - If ownership cannot be established, or items are not removed as requested, the Housing Officer must clearly inform tenants in writing that the unclaimed/unmoved items will be removed and stored for up to six months before being regarded as 'abandoned goods' and disposed of. This communication must also include details of how tenants can retrieve their items if they claim ownership after the removal has taken place.
 - The items will be stored for a reasonable period of time which is defined by Sanctuary Scotland as six months. No goods should be disposed of before this time period has passed.
 - If six months pass and items are not claimed within this period of time, they will be deemed abandoned and disposed of.