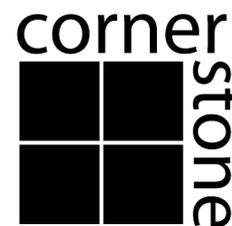


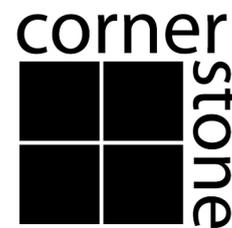
# Neighbourhood Management Policy



<b>Section;</b>	Housing & Property Services
<b>Policy name;</b>	Neighbourhood Management Policy
<b>Executive responsible;</b>	Head of Housing & Head of Property Services
<b>Review by;</b>	Head of Housing, Senior Housing Officer, Head of Property Services & Customer Performance Panel (pending)
<b>Type of review;</b>	Full – new policy
<b>Authority to amend;</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Frequency of review;</b>	Every three years
<b>Last review;</b>	November 2022
<b>Next review;</b>	November 2025
<b>Responsibility for delivery;</b>	Housing Team
<b>Strategy;</b>	Customer Strategy, Asset Management Strategy
<b>Supporting Documents;</b>	Anti-social behaviour policy and procedures Tree management policy Parking management policy
<b>Associated risk;</b>	Risk 8 Inadequate and ineffective customer service and/or engagement Risk 9 Health and safety failure or neglect
<b>Equality &amp; diversity</b>	We cross reference satisfaction with neighbourhood as a place with a number of diversity criteria.
<b>VFM &amp; benchmarking;</b>	We benchmark satisfaction with neighbourhood as a place to live on an annual basis.

VERSION CONTROL			
Version Number	Sections Amended	Date of update	Approved by
1.0	Full review	November 2022	Chief Executive

# Neighbourhood Management Policy



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## INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out how we will manage neighbourhoods and communal areas associated with the homes that we own. Neighbourhood management refers to the effective management of the environment around our properties and any common areas.

### 1. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The aims of this policy are to:

- Provide neighbourhoods where people want to live now and in the future
- Ensure our neighbourhoods are well maintained, safe and secure places to live
- Meet the requirements set out by our regulator.

To achieve this we will:

- Be clear with our residents about the standards of service they can expect
- Listen to and act upon feedback from our residents
- Work with relevant external partners to help us resolve neighbourhood issues
- Ensure Cornerstone provide opportunities for collaborative interaction in both our online and neighbourhood communities

### 2. LEGAL & REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

We will comply with the Regulator's Neighbourhood and Community Standard through partnership working with our tenants and residents and external organisations and our commitment to keeping neighbourhoods and communal areas clean and safe.

This will include gathering information on customer satisfaction set out in the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's) specifically related to how safe and secure customers feel in their neighbourhoods and they feel about their neighbourhoods as a place to live.

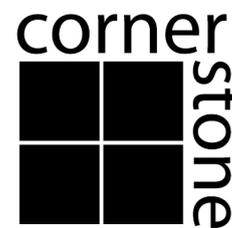
We will comply with other statutory requirements applicable to us as a landowner, in particular those related to environmental issues.

### 3. NEIGHBOURHOOD NUISANCE AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB)

Neighbourhood nuisance and anti-social behaviour can be a blight on a community and we are well aware of the impact that this has on residents. Our approach to managing anti-social behaviour in our neighbourhoods is set out in our separate ASB policy.

Noise complaints may be required to be considered as a neighbourhood management issue that requires support and intervention. However, some noise complaints will be investigated as anti-social behaviour if found to be persistent, malicious or related to behaviour that would be considered a breach of tenancy. Cornerstone will undertake a Noise Assessment Triage

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(see appendix) to ascertain if the noise should be considered a neighbourhood management matter or requires anti-social behaviour investigation.

If noise complaints are found to be a neighbourhood management issue, Cornerstone will if necessary work in partnership with other relevant agencies, including for example the Local Authority Environmental Health Department, and may consider the following reasonable intervention and support to maintain good neighbourhood relationships;

- Mediation
- Establishing neighbourhood agreements
- Information sharing
- Adequate insulation from transference noise

To avoid noise complaints in the first instance Cornerstone will implement, where possible, void standards to ensure that;

- Carpets are not removed unless they are in a poor state of repair
- Hard flooring is removed when there have been reports of noise linked to the property
- Properties have adequate insulation from transference noise
- Anti-vibration mats are fitted into the washing machine space

## 4. MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNAL AREAS

Communal areas include shared entrance ways, staircases and landings, bin stores, drying areas, pathways and parking which are owned and managed by us.

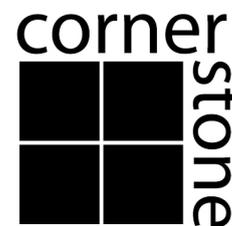
We will ensure that the communal areas within blocks and schemes are maintained, kept clean, safe and secure, promptly repaired, kept clear of items and are adequately serviced and lit.

We will regularly visit and inspect communal areas and where recurring problems arise, we will work in partnership with the Local Authority, Police and other agencies to resolve the problem.

Cornerstone welcomes the involvement of our customers in active management of our communities, through initiatives like our volunteer Estate Champion role. This enables customers to feedback regularly on our neighbourhood management performance.

The cleaning of communal areas will be carried out regularly unless we have an agreement with residents that they manage this themselves. Cleaning schedules are set based on the needs of the individual scheme and costs are recovered by service charges, which we consult on every two years.

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Health and Safety inspections are carried out in our blocks periodically in line with the risks associated at that property. Actions are logged for follow up, these are reported to our Health and Safety Committee which meets monthly.

Fire safety information, including if there is a stay put or evacuation plan, is displayed on notices in the block and information on fire safety is provided to all new customers and in our Tenants Handbook. We are also working on getting fire safety summaries for all our blocks uploaded to our website.

We appreciate that some residents like to make corridors and landings more 'homely' and others may misuse communal areas by using them as storage or for disposing of items. We have a duty to ensure that any items placed in communal areas do not pose a fire risk by being a source of fuel, cause a trip hazard, or restrict escape routes in any way.

To keep our residents as safe as possible we have adopted a firm approach and where personal belongings are restricting an exit or increasing the flammability of a building, the responsible resident will be asked to remove them immediately. Cornerstone will not allow the claiming of any communal area for the use of individual tenants i.e. where a section of common area or garden is restricted for the use of an individual tenant or group.

In some cases, action may need to be taken by us to remove goods and personal items stored in communal areas. If goods do not pose an immediate risk to residents' safety, we will try to ascertain who the owner of the goods/personal items is and if this is possible, they will be asked to remove them. If the owner no longer wants the goods and/or we cannot identify the owner of the goods, we will comply with the relevant provisions of the Torts (Interference with Goods) Act 1977 and will seek to remove them. This may include us removing such items to a safe place of storage whilst the notice is running to ensure any immediate risk is managed.

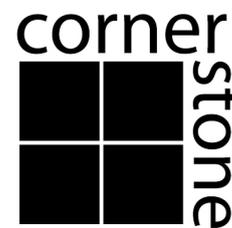
We do not allow the storage and/or charging of any mobility scooter, e-bike, scooter or any other battery operated vehicle in closed communal areas of our properties other than in designated storage areas as they can pose unacceptable health and safety risks to residents. We will take action, including any appropriate legal action, where the storage of these vehicles poses risks for residents, neighbours or staff using the building but will consider providing additional storage facilities where appropriate.

## **5. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE OF COMMUNAL GROUNDS**

Communal grounds include shared grassed areas, shrubs and flower beds which are owned and managed by us.

We will ensure that communal grounds are maintained to a good standard, grass is cut regularly, and flower and shrub beds are kept neat and tidy. Our approach to grass cutting is that we will cut and drop the grass when appropriate.

# Neighbourhood Management Policy



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Regular inspections of communal grounds will be carried out by the Housing Team, and supplemented by our customer voice work where applicable (see customer voices). Where recurrent problems arise, we will work in partnership with the Local Authority, Police and other agencies to resolve problems.

The contract for the maintenance of communal grounds is currently delivered by a combination of our in-house team and an outsourced service, to achieve a balance of quality, cost and value for money.

## 6. TREE MAINTENANCE

We have a dedicated tree management policy which details our approach of active management of our existing tree stock and planting of replacement specimens. We ensure that we follow industry best practice guidelines and legislation which includes making sure that we consider any Tree Preservation Order that maybe in place prior to carrying out works.

### Communal areas

We complete risk assessments of our tree stock at specified timescales as proposed by Cornerstone's 2021/22 base data tree survey program. Works are be prioritised on the outcome of these surveys.

### Individual gardens

We will, on request, inspect trees in individual gardens when we receive a report that a tree is causing damage to a property, is dead, diseased or dangerous. Cornerstone does not permit the planting of invasive species and customers should seek permission before planting anything that could pose a risk to people or property i.e. bamboo, ivy etc.

We will normally only undertake work to trees in individual gardens when it is absolutely necessary. We will not respond to requests to prune or fell trees when there is no justifiable reason.

Where we plan to undertake tree removal, we will consult and involve all residents affected by the works to seek their comments prior to commencing the work. Cornerstone will also inspect gardens when properties become empty and complete any required works before a new tenancy is started.

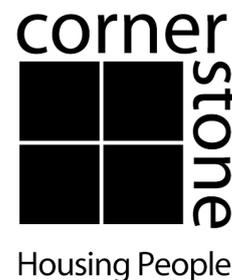
## 7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

We will work with customers and stakeholders to identify environmental improvements to communal areas on our estates and at our schemes.

We will work with residents and appropriate partners to identify solutions to problems.

We will make provision within our budgets, to deliver environmental improvements and seek additional funds from other sources when appropriate.

# Neighbourhood Management Policy



Where we plan to undertake environmental improvement, we will consult and involve all residents affected by the works to seek their comments prior to commencing the work.

## 8. SECURITY

We will work in partnership with residents and other agencies on initiatives to improve security and community safety in areas where we own properties.

We will provide all communal blocks owned and managed by us with door entry systems where practical and ensure all walkways, stairwells and footpaths owned by us are well lit to deter crime and anti-social behaviour.

We don't currently have any CCTV provision in our communal areas but will consult with residents where it is felt this could be useful in effectively managing anti-social or criminal behaviour for example, fly tipping, graffiti and other nuisance behaviour.

We will consider safety and security carefully when developing new estates, where possible designing issues out from the beginning.

## 9. GARAGES

We will let and manage our garages to maximise income whilst ensuring an efficient and effective service for garage tenants. All garage sites are regularly inspected and maintained.

## 10. VEHICLES

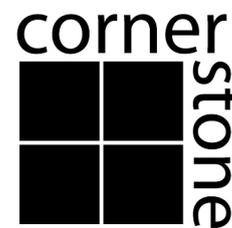
Vehicles are an essential part of many customers' lives. We aim to minimise irresponsible parking and parking related disputes, resolve dumping of illegal vehicles and access problems for emergency and service vehicles in accordance with our parking and abandoned vehicle policies. We will work in partnership with residents, external agencies and other local groups to do this.

## 11. ABANDONED VEHICLES

We recognise the significant impact that abandoned vehicles can have on a neighbourhood, therefore we will seek to take action to ensure all vehicles abandoned on land owned and managed by us are identified and removed. The costs of removal may be recharged to the owner of the vehicle if they can be identified in accordance with our Abandoned Vehicles Procedure.

## 12. CARAVANS, TRAILERS, OVERSIZED VEHICLES

# Neighbourhood Management Policy



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Our approach to caravans, trailers and oversized vehicles within our neighbourhoods will be dependent on the individual situation and will be assessed locally on a case by case basis having regard to any relevant provisions within our tenants' tenancy agreements with us.

Where issues with a caravan, trailer or oversized vehicle arises, we will give consideration to the local environment, parking location, impact on other residents, local planning requirements and terms of the tenancy or leasehold agreement when trying to resolve the situation.

## **13. PARKING SCHEMES**

We may appoint a reputable company to operate a parking scheme, or parking maintenance, in our neighbourhoods to ensure the effective management and/or control of our parking facilities. We have a dedicated policy on parking management.

## **14. PLAY AREAS**

Where we own play areas we will ensure that the area is safe to use, properly inspected and fit for purpose. We currently only own one play area which consists of a flat play surface and no equipment.

We will ensure that all new playgrounds and equipment are designed and installed in compliance with any relevant and applicable statutory requirements, legislation and design standards.

We will carry out or nominate an independent suitably qualified body to regularly inspect and risk-assess play areas and equipment that we own according to any relevant legislation and good practice.

All staff and contractors have a responsibility to report any potential health and safety issues or hazards with play areas or equipment.

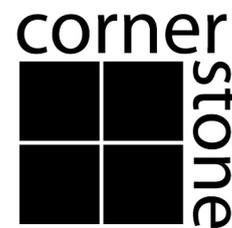
In the event that a defect is discovered, or maintenance is required, we will arrange works based on an assessment of priority. High risk defects or hazards may result in the immediate closure of the play area. All inspections, risk assessments and maintenance information for play areas and equipment will be recorded and held in a central folder/database.

All play areas owned by us will include appropriate signage displayed in a prominent position near the play equipment.

## **15. GRAFFITI**

Graffiti is criminal damage and we will work with Police and Local Authority partners to try and identify and prosecute the perpetrators of graffiti.

# Neighbourhood Management Policy



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We will remove offensive or abusive graffiti in communal areas and empty properties within 1 working day and any other graffiti within 7 working days.

## 16. WASTE MANAGEMENT

We will work with our Local Authority partners to encourage residents to re-cycle and re-use their household waste. We will provide and maintain appropriate facilities for refuse disposal and recycling and have a dedicated resource to remove bulky waste and fly tipping at the earliest opportunity. Cornerstone will support Local Authority action taken regarding households who misuse, or fail to adequately use, the waste collection facilities.

We will advise new residents at the start of their tenancy of the arrangements for refuse and re-cycling collection.

## 17. FLY-TIPPING

Fly-tipping is the illegal dumping of waste. When this occurs on land owned or managed by us, we will use our best endeavours to identify the source of the illegal dumping and will take appropriate action and/or support our Local Authority partners to prosecute the perpetrators.

## 18. UNTIDY GARDENS

We will take steps when a tenant breaches their tenancy agreement by not keeping their garden neat, tidy and free from rubbish. We will be supportive to help our customers to maintain their tenancy and we will be flexible to enable staff to respond to each person's individual circumstances appropriately.

## 19. CUSTOMER VOICES

We encourage customers to take an active role in monitoring our work in their neighbourhoods. We do this through community voices where we ask customers in the community to be champions for their area, regularly providing us with feedback on how we're doing. We have a QR code system on notice boards and web links so that customers can provide us with real time feedback on issues affecting their communal areas.

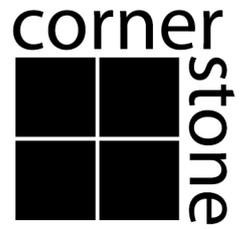
We survey customers annually in our annual tenant survey we ask specific questions about how they feel about their neighbourhood as a place to live, safety and security.

Customer feedback and complaints are another way for us to hear from our customers about how we are doing in their neighbourhoods.

Our customer Performance Panel completes specific reviews on neighbourhood satisfaction and engages proactively with customers in their areas.

## 20. MONITORING

# Neighbourhood Management Policy



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Information on customer feedback and complaints along with outcomes of surveys, involvement of our Estate Champion volunteers and neighbourhood reviews are fed back to our customer Performance Panel and Board so that they can measure how well we are doing in our neighbourhood, they can also ensure that actions are put in place to address areas for improvement.