

gentoo



**Neighbourhood
Management Policy**

Policy:	Neighbourhood Management Policy
Version number:	4.0
Date effective from:	May 2024
Policy Owner:	Director of Customer
Policy Author(s):	Head of Neighbourhood
Accountable Executive:	Executive Director of Housing
Approved by:	Executive Director of Housing
Equality Assessment:	Yes
Next review of policy due:	May 2027
Policy Grade:	3
For the full version history of this policy, see the back page	

Please avoid referring to printed versions of this policy. Printed versions may quickly go out of date – the latest version will be on the Policy Hub or contact the Governance Team. For support and advice regarding the Policy, please contact the Policy Owner.

1.0 Introduction and Scope

1.1 This document covers our policy on Neighbourhood Management and how we will meet our responsibilities and duties as a landlord.

1.2 The scope of this policy covers:

Gentoo Group	X
Gentoo Homes	X

1.3 It applies to:

General Needs rented properties	X
Supported Housing	X
Sheltered Housing	X

Leasehold/Shared ownership	X
Rent to Buy properties	X
Market rented properties (domestic)	X
Temporary Accommodation	X
Stock owned but not managed by the Group	X
Communal Areas, including those relating to Leasehold/Shared Ownership properties	X
Commercial Property (offices, depots etc)	X
Garages and outbuildings	X
Curtilage	X

2.0 Our core purpose and vision and priorities

Our core purpose is to provide safe and decent homes for our customers of today and tomorrow.

Our vision is to provide great homes, strong communities, and inspired people for Sunderland.

The safety of our customers and colleagues will always be our number one priority.

We have identified six further priorities which will guide the delivery of our services. We live our values in everything we do from the boardroom to the front room, to deliver our priorities for our customers.

- We know our customers.
- We provide great homes.
- We help communities to thrive.
- We are a great place to work.
- We spend our money wisely.
- We are well governed.

Our values

Our values are what we stand for and what we want to be known for. They are what makes us, us.

- We care about people.
- We take accountability.
- We shape the future.
- We bring leadership.
- We deliver.

Consumer Standards

Version 4.0

We are guided by the Consumer Standards, which describe ways to improve things for people living in Social Housing.

- The Safety and Quality Standard (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safety-and-quality-standard>)
- The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/transparency-influence-and-accountability-including-tenant-satisfaction-measures>)
- The Neighbourhood and Community Standard (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/neighbourhood-and-community-standard>)
- The Tenancy Standard (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tenancy-standard>)

3.0 Regulation and Legislation

- 3.1 Our Regulator sets out the Neighbourhood and Community Standard which we must meet. Failure to properly discharge these responsibilities could lead to a serious detriment or other judgement from the Regulator if we breach the Standards in place at the time.

4.0 Definitions

- 4.1 In this policy, 'customers' and 'leaseholders' are those who have signed the tenancy or lease agreement. They will usually be responsible for the actions of the occupants in their homes.
- 4.2 Where the terms 'customers' is used this refers to not only tenants and leaseholders, but also to all occupants of a tenant's or leaseholder's household.
- 4.3 'Leaseholder' for the purpose of this policy includes leaseholders and shared owners. The lease agreement will always take precedent over this policy unless there is an over-riding legal or regulatory requirement.
- 4.4 'Shared spaces' are those spaces associated with a registered providers' homes and used by their tenants that are not the responsibility of the landlord, as opposed to communal areas where landlords have direct responsibilities for ensuring their safety and maintenance
- 4.5 'Neighbourhood' an area within physical boundaries where customers live and connect with each other as part of a wider community

- 4.6 'Neighbourhood Management' registered providers should keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with home clean and safe. They should work in partnership with their tenants and other providers and public bodies, where appropriate to do so.

5.0 Our Policy Statement

- 5.1 Neighbourhood management is integral to realising our vision of "Great Homes - Strong Communities - Inspired People". To support this, we will ensure our neighbourhoods are safe, attractive and well-maintained places to live.
- 5.2 Well managed neighbourhoods provide a better quality of life for our customers and can act as a deterrent to antisocial behaviour, neighbour nuisance and crime. We aim to provide high quality services, create sustainable communities and promote pride in our neighbourhoods.
- 5.3 We will comply with the Regulator's Neighbourhood and Community Standard through partnership working with our customers and external organisations and our commitment to keeping neighbourhoods and communal areas clean and safe.
- 5.4 We aim to put customers at the heart of their neighbourhood by encouraging active customer involvement and consultation on all aspects of neighbourhood management and we have consulted with customers across Gentoo in developing this policy. For further information on customer consultation please see our Customer Engagement Policy.
- 5.5 We are committed to the principles of diversity and inclusion throughout the organisation and aim to:
- Meet the needs and choice of people from all backgrounds.
 - Ensure that our services are relevant, responsive and sensitive to the needs of our existing and future customers.
 - Ensure that all sections of the community in which we work have equal access to our services.
- 5.6 Our Neighbourhood Management Policy will ensure that customers will be treated as individuals, with fairness and respect. An Equality Assessment has been completed regarding this Policy and is attached in Appendix 2.

6.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibility
Director of Customer Service	Is accountable for the effective implementation of this policy and ensuring colleagues involved in its delivery understand their roles and responsibilities
Head of Neighbourhoods	Is responsible for the resourcing, embedding and delivery of the policy
Director of Property Management	Is responsible for the adequate resourcing, delivery and management of maintenance for open and shared spaces.
Neighbourhood Colleagues	Should have awareness of the policy, act accordingly and help in resolving customer and neighbourhood issues.
Direct of Asset	Is responsible for supporting teams and leading investment work to improve neighbourhoods

6.1 Effective neighbourhood management is built on the success of shared responsibilities of customers, landlords and relevant partners.

6.2 Our responsibilities as landlords include:

- Registered providers must work cooperatively with customers, other landlords and relevant organisations to contribute to the upkeep and safety of shared spaces associated with their homes.

Clean and Safe Shared Space

- Working cooperatively with customers and relevant partners and organisations to contribute to the upkeep and safety of shared spaces associated with their homes.
- Providing quality services that keep communal areas in a good state of repair and cleanliness, safe, free from hazards and fit for use by customers and visitors.
- Ensuring that there are no Health and Safety risks to customers and visitors in our neighbourhoods.

Local – cooperation

- Undertaking of regular/periodic neighbourhood inspections on shared external spaces and customer gardens to ensure that the neighbourhood is maintained to a good standard.

- Making neighbourhood improvements and where appropriate consulting with customers.
- Giving customers a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in how neighbourhood services are delivered, how performance is monitored and how satisfaction is assessed in accordance with the Regulators 'Transparency, Influence and Accountability' standard.
- Engaging with customer through local cooperation and act on their concerns raised by customers about their neighbourhood and having a clear, simple and accessible approach to complaints to ensure they are resolved promptly.

Neighbourhood Safety – (Anti-social behaviour and hate crime)

- We recognise the impact of anti-social behaviour within neighbourhoods. When reports are received our teams will investigate and work to resolve issues in line with our approach for dealing with anti-social behaviour.

6.2 Our customers have a shared responsibility for the upkeep of neighbourhoods responsibilities as landlords these include:

- Making sure that homes, gardens and driveways are well maintained, in good condition and in line with their tenancy/ lease agreement.
- Promptly reporting any repairs or disrepairs for which we are responsible.
- Helping us meet our health and safety responsibility in ensuring that communal areas are kept clean, tidy, safe and free from obstruction and to not use them to store personal belongings or other items.
- Making sure that pets are kept under control, are not used in a threatening manner and do not defecate/urinate in communal areas.
- Pets are kept in accordance with the guidance set within the Tenant Handbook.
- Not engaging in anti-social behaviour, nuisance or annoyance to neighbours and reporting any concerns. See our Community Safety Policy and Toolkit.
- To not hoard items or anything at the premises. See our Hoarding Toolkit.
- In communal residences, to dispose of all rubbish and unwanted items responsibly by placing in the correct bin or storage area. This includes disposal of large or bulky items by arranging collection or by taking to the household waste facility.
- Reporting known neighbourhood issues in timely manner.

6.3 Landlord and customers responsibilities are fully detailed in the individual tenancy, leaseholder agreement and customer handbook.

7.0 Monitoring and Review

- 7.1 This Neighbourhood Management Policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or in line with business need. Gentoo will continue to review the appropriateness of the policy and respond to changes such as legislation, demand and supply and other strategic issues. We will fundamentally review this Policy in 2027.
- 7.2 The accountability for this Policy lies with the Director of Customer and the overall responsibility lies with the Head of Neighbourhoods
- 7.3 This policy may be subject to an audit in line with the internal audit plan.
- 7.4 This Policy is Grade 3, and changes will need the approval of an Executive Director.
- 7.5 The following Key Performance Indicators can be used by local Neighbourhood Operations Managers to monitor and ensure that the aims of the policy are fulfilled:
- The number of estate inspections carried out by each Neighbourhood Coordinator with Repairs and Maintenance colleagues, Local Ward Councillors, customers, and partners.
 - The number of inspections of communal low-rise blocks carried out by each Neighbourhood Coordinator, to comply with fire safety regulations and to resolve any Fire Risk Assessment actions.
 - The number of communal cleaning checks carried out by each Neighbourhood Coordinator
 - Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained (TP10).
 - Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods (TP11).
 - Satisfaction with the landlord approach to handling anti-social behaviour (TP12).

8.0 Policy Outcomes

- 8.1 Our Neighbourhood Management Policy aims to achieve the following outcomes:
- To ensure our neighbourhoods are safe, attractive and well-maintained places to live.
 - Provide customers with regular information specific to your neighbourhood.
 - Ensure all issues affecting the neighbourhood are identified and responded to

- The provision of high-quality services, creating sustainable communities and pride in our neighbourhoods.
- Deliver effective partnership working with our customers and external organisations to improve and keep our neighbourhoods and communal areas clean and safe.
- Putting customers at the heart of their neighbourhoods by encouraging active customer involvement and consultation on all aspects of neighbourhood management.
- Committing to the principles of diversity and inclusion by treating customers as individuals and with fairness and respect.

9.0 Records

- 9.1 All records and documents relating to neighbourhood management will be stored in the relevant document management system.

Version	Reason	Issuer	Date
1.1	Amended format.	Alexandra Gibson	01/03/2017
2.0	Approved Michelle Meldrum and Louise Bassett	Sarah Treadwell	04/04/2017
2.1	Amended names to job titles, added accountable Exec Director and amended review period from 4 years to 3 years	Sarah Treadwell	02/09/2019
3.0	Approved by Susie Thompson and Louise Bassett	Susie Thompson	16/10/2020
3.1	Updated core purpose and vision and priorities	Catherine Loftus	31/08/2023
3.2	Policy Reviewed	Steven Gordon	23/01/2024
4.0	Policy approved by CEO	Chloe Appleby	28/05/2024

Appendix 1 - Regulation and Legislation

Neighbourhood and Community Standard

Neighbourhood management

Registered providers shall keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with the homes that they own clean and safe. They shall work in partnership with their tenants and other providers and public bodies where it is effective to do so.

Local area co-operation

Registered providers shall co-operate with relevant partners to help promote social, environmental and economic wellbeing in the areas where they own properties.

Anti-social behaviour

Registered providers shall work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhoods where they own homes.

Specific expectations

Neighbourhood management

Registered providers shall consult with tenants in developing a published policy for maintaining and improving the neighbourhoods associated with their homes. This applies where the registered provider has a responsibility (either exclusively or in part) for the condition of that neighbourhood. The policy shall include any communal areas associated with the registered provider's homes.

Local area co-operation

Registered providers, having taken account of their presence and impact within the areas where they own properties, shall:

- (a) identify and publish the roles they are able to play within the areas where they have properties

(b) co-operate with local partnership arrangements and strategic housing functions of local authorities where they are able to assist them in achieving their objectives

Anti-social behaviour

Registered providers shall publish a policy on how they work with relevant partners to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) in areas where they own properties.

In their work to prevent and address ASB, registered providers shall demonstrate:

(a) that tenants are made aware of their responsibilities and rights in relation to

ASB

(b) strong leadership, commitment and accountability on preventing and tackling ASB that reflects a shared understanding of responsibilities with other local agencies

(c) a strong focus exists on preventative measures tailored towards the needs of tenants and their families

(d) prompt, appropriate and decisive action is taken to deal with ASB before it escalates, which focuses on resolving the problem having regard to the full range of tools and legal powers available.

(e) all tenants and residents can easily report ASB, are kept informed about the status of their case where responsibility rests with the organisation and are appropriately signposted where it does not

(f) provision of support to victims and witnesses

Legislation and Guidelines

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999

The Housing Act 1996

Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003

The Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Offences against the Person Act 1861

Criminal Damage Act 1971

Public order Act 1986

Protection from harassment Act 1997

ROSPA Guidelines

Any other specific legislation mentioned in other relevant policies