



Neighbourhood Management Policy

Policy:	Neighbourhood Management Policy
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Policy Owner:	Head of Operations (South)
Policy Author(s):	Head of Operations (South)
Accountable Executive:	Director of Housing
Approved by:	Director of Housing and Executive Director of Corporate Services
Equality Assessment:	Yes
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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 Printed versions may quickly go out of date – the latest version will be on the Policy Hub, or contact the Governance Team.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
Gentoo Developments	
Gentoo Genie	

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
Stock managed by Gentoo on behalf of a third party	X
Garages and outbuildings	X
Remote plant (district heating, electrical pumps etc)	
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 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.

2.7 This Policy operates within our Vision and Values and links to the Gentoo Business Plan, Neighbourhood Management Toolkit, Community Involvement and Engagement Policy, Community Safety Policy and Toolkit, Hoarding Toolkit, Repairs and Maintenance Policy, Fire Safety Policy, Chargeable Repairs Policy, Mobility Scooter Procedure, Tree Management Policy and Toolkit, Allocations Policy and Procedure, CCTV Code of Practice, Customer Complaints Policy and Toolkit and Tenancy Management Toolkit.

3.0 Regulation and Legislation

3.1 The Director of Housing will ensure this policy has regard to all legislation, regulation and best practice. This policy helps to fulfil the RSH Regulatory code, in particular the Neighbourhood and Community Standard. The regulation and legislation applicable to this policy is attached at Appendix 1.

4.0 Definitions

4.1 In this policy, 'tenants' 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 'residents' 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.

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 residents 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 tenants and external organisations and our commitment to keeping neighbourhoods and communal areas clean and safe.
- 5.4 We aim to put residents 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 Community Involvement and 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 and with fairness and respect. An Equality Assessment has been completed with regard to this Policy and is attached in Appendix 2.

6.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibility
Director of Housing	Is accountable for ensuring effective implementation of this Policy
Head of Operations (South)	Is responsible for adequate resourcing and having effective processes in place to implement this Policy
Neighbourhood Operations Manager	Is responsible for ensuring that this Policy is adhered to and that all staff are appropriately trained
Housing Management Staff	Should have an awareness of this Policy and act accordingly.

Shared Responsibilities

6.1 Effective neighbourhood management is built on the success of shared responsibilities of residents and landlords.

6.2 Our responsibilities as landlords include:

- Providing quality services that keep communal and external areas in a good state of repair and cleanliness, safe, free from hazards and fit for use by residents and visitors.
- Ensuring that there are no Health and Safety risks to residents and visitors in our neighbourhoods.
- Making neighbourhood improvements and where appropriate consulting with residents.
- Giving residents 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 'Tenant Involvement and Empowerment' standard.
- Listening and acting on concerns raised by residents about their neighbourhood and having a clear, simple and accessible approach to complaints to ensure they are resolved promptly.
- Partnership working to deal effectively with antisocial behaviour and other neighbourhood concerns or issues.

6.3 Residents' responsibilities include:

- Making sure that homes, gardens and driveways are well maintained and in good condition 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.
- 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, animals 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.

6.4 Landlord and resident responsibilities are fully detailed in the individual tenancy or leaseholder agreement.

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 2023
- 7.2 The accountability for this Policy lies with the Director of Housing and the overall responsibility lies with the Head of Operations (South).
- 7.3 This policy maybe subject to an audit in line with internal audit plan.
- 7.4 This Policy is Grade 3 and changes will need the approval of the Director of Housing and the Executive Director of Corporate Services.
- 7.5 The following Key Performance Indicators are monitored by local Neighbourhood Operations Managers' on a monthly basis:
- The number of Customer survey visits carried out by each Neighbourhood Coordinator
 - The number of estate inspections / Rate Your Estate's carried out by each Neighbourhood Coordinator and their scores
 - The number of inspections of communal low rise blocks carried out by each Neighbourhood Coordinator, in order 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
 - The number and type of customer involvement activities undertaken by each Neighbourhood Coordinator

- Number of tenancy breaches / TINs actioned
- Satisfaction with neighbourhood as a place to live (Star)
- % of fly tipping removed within 7 days.

7.6 The relevant Local Service Offers can be found in Appendix 3.

7.7 The Estate Services KPIs are reported at Gentoo Board every quarter and are at Appendix 4.

8.0 Policy Outcomes

8.1 Our Neighbourhood Management Policy aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- Well-managed neighbourhoods providing a good quality life for our residents, which deter anti-social behaviour, nuisance and crime
- The provision of high-quality services, creating sustainable communities and pride in our neighbourhoods.
- Working in partnership with our tenants and external organisations and providing a commitment to keep our neighbourhoods and communal areas clean and safe.
- Putting residents 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 neighbourhood inspections, including those of shared blocks are kept in the Neighbourhood Coordinator 'Performance and Estate Management' files.

9.2 Referrals to third parties, including those to Fire Brigade and the local authority are also kept in these files.

9.3 All 'Safety & Support Referrals' made within each 4 week cycle are kept in the files.

9.4 All Tenancy Warning Notices (TWNs) served on customers are recorded on Streetwise.

Signed

Signed

Susie Thompson
Director of Housing
Gentoo Group

Louise Bassett
Executive Director
(Corporate Services)
Gentoo Group

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

Appendix 1 – Regulation and Legislation

Neighbourhood and Community Standard

1 Required outcomes

1.1 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.

1.2 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.

1.3 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.

2 Specific expectations

2.1 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.

2.2 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

2.3 Anti-social behaviour

2.3.1 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.

2.3.2 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

Appendix 2 – EA

Equality Assessment

1. What is this Equality Assessment being completed on?

Specify a clearly defined service area – too big becomes too hard to complete.

Neighbourhood Management

2. Does the policy/service/project/process/function outlined above have an impact on people? Please tick relevant box ✓

People means staff, customers and other stakeholders who are either involved in it, in receipt of it or affected by it, either directly or indirectly.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes – High impact (reasonable or significant level of direct impact/contact, requiring a reasonable or significant level of knowledge and understanding of diverse groups)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes – Low impact - (infrequent contact which involves minimal interaction at a level which requires only basic awareness)
<input type="checkbox"/>	No - If you select “no”, add an explanation below to justify your assessment.

If you have selected “no”, then subject to your justification above being validated, there will be no need to complete this Equality Assessment further.

If you have selected “yes”, please continue....

**3. Which groups of people* (“protected characteristics”) is it impacting?
Please tick ✓ relevant box (See notes)**

<input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/>	All groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	Only specific groups
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**The “protected characteristics” are specified by equality legislation. They are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. If you are selecting “All”, you still need to think about whether the “service” may be of greater relevance/ have greater impact for any one or more of those groups, and include details.*

Please detail which groups and why

All groups with protected characteristics are potentially affected by the service as it impacts upon all of our customers.

4. Please justify how you can be confident that this policy/service/project/ process/function is tailored and sensitive to individual needs, that it doesn’t discriminate, and that it promotes equality of opportunity / levels the playing field? (See notes.)

Remember within every group there will be individual and different needs. See attached guidance/things to think about. Please list the measures you have in place to give you confidence.

The Policy/process:-

- Policy is aligned/cross referenced to Gentoo’s Diversity and Inclusion commitment, and also specifically commits to working with local neighbourhood teams to identify vulnerability (which would include individual needs related to protected characteristics) and to respond appropriately.
- User Defined Characteristics (UDCs) hold information about individual customer requirements, for example communication needs, disabilities etc.

This information is accessible on the Orchard IT system and is transferred onto the handheld technology and/or printed works orders utilised by trade staff, so they have this information in advance of going to a customers' home.

- Flexible Appointments – a wide range of flexible appointment times are available to fit around working times and caring responsibilities.
- Training identified in this policy will be delivered having considered accessibility of venues, delivery styles and methods appropriate to individual needs of those attending, in liaison with the Groups dedicated Learning & Development Advisors. (e.g. LMS invite letters specifically enquire about individual needs relating to diversity)
- Letterhead used to communicate with customers advises about availability of information in alternative formats, and of interpretation services.

Staff/3rd Parties implementing it:-

- Staff Training – all Gentoo staff are required to attend mandatory equality and diversity training.
- Staff have access to relevant guidance and information to increase awareness and understanding of Diversity and Inclusion in relation to delivering services, via Diversity and Inclusion staff handbooks, newsletter articles and Diversity and Inclusion intranet section.
- Contractors carrying out work on the Group's behalf are appointed via formal tender process and need to formally commit to Gentoo's Diversity and Inclusion principles as part of that process prior to being appointed.

5. Please detail the checks and balances that you have in place which give you confidence that the above measures are in place and being implemented effectively. (See notes)

If you are unsure about effectiveness, or if as part of completing this assessment you have identified further work that is required in order for you to feel confident, please detail this in section 8 below.

- Business Assurance will audit this policy in line with the audit plan and report findings to Risk and Audit Committee and Gentoo Board – an equality assessment/review will be included as part of this audit.
- The Policy will be reviewed every 3 years in full.
- Close working links between Asset Teams and Neighbourhood teams, in relation to any non-access, which enable identification and sensitive response to vulnerability and individual needs.
- Staff attendance at mandatory Diversity and Inclusion training is recorded.
- Third party's signed Diversity and Inclusion commitment held within Procurement tender records

6. The duty to foster good relations is about tackling prejudice and promoting awareness and understanding between those who share a protected characteristic and those who don't share it. Is this duty relevant to this "service"? Please tick ✓ relevant box. (See guidance notes)

This question will not be relevant to all assessments. See notes.

✓	No - This duty is not relevant to this "service".
	Yes - This duty is relevant to this service. *

*If this duty is relevant, please detail below how the "service" is fostering good relations.

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If you identify further work that is required to comply with this duty, add actions in section 8 below.

7. Are you confident that the checks and balances that you have in place, effectively mitigate the equality and diversity risk to the Group? Please tick ✓ relevant box.

Level of confidence that checks and balances mitigate risks in respect of.....	Very confident	Confident but more work required*	Not confident*
Legislation/legal action in relation to equality & diversity (e.g. harassment or discrimination, or failure to give due regard to all elements of the Public Sector Equality Duty)	✓		
RSH Regulation in relation to E&D	✓		
Reputation in relation to E&D	✓		

(* Use Q.8 to specify your proposed actions to remedy your lack of confidence)

8. Actions to be completed following this EA:

Please detail the actions you will put in place following this EA and the timescales for your next review.

<i>Action</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timescale</i>
None		

Completed by: Alan Duffy

Date: 30/9/2020

Appendix 3 – Local Service Offers

Description	We will:
<p>Neighbourhood Management - to ensure our neighbourhoods are safe, attractive and well maintained places to live.</p> <p>Community Involvement and Engagement – to provide a diverse range of ways for you to work with us to improve neighbourhoods and Gentoo services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide you with regular information specific to your neighbourhood • Ensure all issues affecting the neighbourhood are identified and responded to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a range of opportunities for you to engage with Gentoo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice, support and guidance to empower you to be involved in your community

Appendix 4 - KPIs

Estate Services

Activity	Jobs	Complete	On Target	%
Arboriculture				
Fly Tipping Reactive				
Grounds Maintenance Reactive				
Void Garden Clearance				