



Neighbourhood and Communities Policy

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Our role as a Registered Provider (RP) of social housing extends beyond managing homes. The importance of sustainability of place within our neighbourhoods and communities is a significant part of our Plan A 2022/25.

2.0 Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to:

- o Ensure that our employees, contractors, and tenants contribute to delivering and supporting sustainable places;
- o Ensure our homes and communal spaces are maintained to a safe and acceptable standard as set out within the tenancy agreement;
- o Provide a framework to:
 - Maintain, develop and deliver close partnership working with our statutory partners (local authorities, Police, etc.) and neighbourhood and community partners (community groups, tenant's groups, local charities etc.).
 - Outline a collaborative approach to supporting sustainable neighbourhoods with a focus on improving lives through strong neighbourhood engagement and community activities.

2.2 Through the application of this policy we will continue to maintain and develop our vision of improving lives through sustainable places.

3.0 Principles

3.1 This policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- o We will take a proactive approach to responding to the needs of our neighbourhoods, by continually reviewing feedback and data from our tenants, residents, and partners, to identify themes, trends, and opportunities to improve our places.
- o We will work together with our partners to ensure that the best outcomes are achieved from our collective work in neighbourhoods to keep them clean, safe and accessible.
- o We will establish and maintain trust and co-operation with our tenants and relevant partners.

- o We will engage with tenants and our partners with respect, empathy, honesty, integrity and work together to deliver sustainable improvements to our neighbourhoods and places.

3.2 This policy has been shaped by tenants and residents, using local transactional and amplified customer voice, aligned to the Regulator of Social Housing’s Neighbourhood and Community Standard.

4.0 Definitions

4.1 The key terms used in this policy are defined below.

Communal areas and lounges	These are indoor spaces owned by Livin (stairwells, entrance ways, lounges areas) that we have legal responsibility for and need to ensure acceptable standards are maintained.
Open spaces and shared spaces	These are spaces around tenants’ homes and within the neighbourhoods where we have homes, that both we and our partners have legal responsibility for.
Tenancy Agreement	The legal document signed by the tenant(s) and Livin upon which the tenancy exists. It sets out the respective rights and responsibilities of both tenants and Livin.

5.0 Scope

5.1 This policy applies to all employees, contractors, and tenants and residents working or living within neighbourhoods.

- o Employees are responsible for reporting any issues that will adversely affect a place’s cleanliness and accessibility and the safety of its residents.
- o Contractors are responsible for delivering on their contract duties relevant to this policy.
- o Tenants will be impacted by this policy according to the terms of their tenancy agreement along with work we undertake within this policy to support residents of our neighbourhoods.

6.0 Contribution to Plan A

- 6.1 Our Plan A 2022-25 business strategy is viewed through the prism of place with six complementary, joined-up delivery strategies focussing sustainable delivery actions within our communities and places.
- 6.2 The policy supports the delivery of Objective 9 (Create climate resilient places and natural environments) through embedding sustainability into place-based projects, including supporting resident training on environmental and energy improvements and supporting projects that contribute to biodiversity within our neighbourhoods.
- 6.3 The policy supports a range of Plan A objectives, including Objective 13 (Deliver place-based economic, social and physical regeneration to balance and sustain places), Objective 14 (Enable the delivery of projects that maximise social capital in places, making them sustainable, connected, and inclusive), Objective 15 (Deliver employability and upskilling interventions to improve economic sustainability of places and financial inclusion of tenants and residents) and Objective 16 (Deliver and enable environmental initiatives that improve our neighbourhoods and support places to be more environmentally sustainable). The policy contributes to delivering physical regeneration projects. It enables the direct delivery of community projects through targeting our activity and providing resources (including targeted supportive and enabling funding) towards projects that improve physical environment, social capital, economic wellbeing and enhanced linkages between neighbourhoods and partner agencies. This facilitates services that are appropriately and effectively targeted to those in need.
- 6.4 The policy supports the delivery of Objective 17 (Provide tailored interventions to sustain tenancies, improve health and wellbeing and maintain independence) through supporting partner agencies (Local Authority, Police, Fire Service, etc) in delivering services within our neighbourhoods, including services relating to community safety, personalised interventions to vulnerable tenants (e.g. social care services, financial inclusion support) and supporting strategic partner priorities (e.g. local housing strategies, community safety partnerships).
- 6.5 The policy supports delivery of Objective 21 (Provide homes that are safe, exceed the needs and meet the aspirations of our tenants) through contributing to the safety and upkeep of our wider communal spaces within neighbourhoods, including communal areas such as stairwells, parking areas and other communal facilities we own and maintain.

7.0 Legislative and regulatory framework

7.1 The Neighbourhood and Community Standard sets out the following required outcomes which social housing providers must deliver:

- o Safety of shared spaces:
Registered providers must work co-operatively with tenants, other landlords and relevant organisations to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of shared spaces.
- o Local cooperation:
Registered providers must co-operate with relevant partners to promote social, environmental and economic wellbeing in the areas where they provide social housing.
- o Anti-social behaviour and hate incidents:
Registered providers must work in partnership with appropriate local authority departments, the police and other relevant organisations to deter and tackle anti- social behaviour (ASB) and hate incidents in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.
- o Domestic abuse:
Registered providers must work co-operatively with other agencies tackling domestic abuse and enable tenants to access appropriate support and advice.

7.2 The Standard seeks to create safer neighbourhoods through registered providers working in partnership with appropriate local authority departments, the police, and other relevant organisations to deter and tackle anti- social behaviour (ASB) and hate incidents. The standard also specifically requires registered providers to work with partner agencies to co-operate in tackling domestic abuse and supporting tenants experiencing domestic abuse.

7.3 Both of the required outcomes relating to ASB and Domestic Abuse are supported via the local co-operation arrangements set out within this policy and, in addition, each have an explicit policy framework which sets out in greater detail the approach to tackling ASB and Domestic Abuse.

8.0 Policy statements

Sustainable Neighbourhoods

8.1 We will work with our partners to maximise our collective contribution to sustaining places and supporting sustainable tenancies which keeps places safe, clean, and accessible.

- 8.2 We will ensure the safety and cleanliness of all our internal and external communal areas and work with partners in our wider neighbourhoods through conducting regular inspections to ensure they are well maintained, tidy and free from vandalism and obstruction. Where issues are identified which are not within the land or homes we own, we will work with our partners and the responsible agency to tackle these issues, making appropriate referrals where necessary.
- 8.3 We will communicate to our tenants and residents about landlord and tenant responsibilities, issues our tenants have reported and we will encourage residents to help to maintain standards by, for example, keeping communal areas tidy, reporting communal repairs and disposing of waste properly.
- 8.4 We will create, maintain, manage and keep safe our open spaces and associated shrubs and trees to support the improvement of shared public realm.
- 8.5 We will train our employees to identify and report any concerns regarding poor maintenance and safety of our neighbourhoods in a timely and appropriate manner, including where those concerns relate to areas of responsibility for our partners.
- 8.6 We will ensure tenants are aware of and adhere to the terms of their tenancy agreement which ensures their neighbourhoods are clean, well maintained and safe, ensuring our tenancies are sustainable.
- 8.7 Where we deem it necessary, we will utilise legal enforcement powers and tools to enforce the Tenancy Agreement.

Collaboration with partners

- 8.8 We will work in collaboration with a range of partners at a neighbourhood level to contribute to the delivery of sustainable places and sustainable tenancies within our communities. This will include working with our statutory partners, stakeholders, community groups, tenants and residents via engaging in local partnerships to support local initiatives to tackle long-term and entrenched issues within our neighbourhoods.
- 8.9 We will develop our local offers (interventions within neighbourhoods) using transactional data and feedback, including tenant perceptions, gathered via a continuous conversation with neighbourhoods, using internal and external data. This includes monitoring and using the customer voice to direct action, jointly with our partners where responsibility is shared.

- 8.10 We will provide targeted support (including targeted funding) to our neighbourhoods and communities in collaboration with partners to collectively tackle issues aimed at improving their safety, health, economic wellbeing and environment.
- 8.11 We will ensure that tenants, residents and partners influence our place-making interventions and our local offers.

Community Safety

- 8.12 We play a significant role in contributing to safer neighbourhoods and will work in partnership with our local authority, police and other statutory agencies to contribute to wider community safety initiatives in the areas we work. To further support this work, we have developed a specific ASB policy which defines how we work with relevant partners to deter and tackle ASB and hate crime.

Domestic Abuse

- 8.13 We play a significant role in supporting those experiencing domestic abuse, working collaboratively with the local authority and partners. To achieve this, we have a specific Domestic Abuse policy which indicates how we respond to cases of domestic abuse whilst working with appropriate partner agencies.

Complaints

- 8.14 Customers are able provide feedback about the services they have received in respect of this policy. If a customer is dissatisfied with the service they have received from us, they can make a complaint to us in line with our Complaints, Compliments and Feedback Policy.

Specifically, we define a customer complaint as:

“Any expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own employees, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or groups of residents.”

Communication

- 8.14 We are committed to the provision of seamless, responsive and convenient services and as such are a digital first organisation. We encourage and support our tenants to engage with us via the most efficient and effective method, suitable to their needs, and will assist tenants or their advocates to engage with us digitally. Digital copies of this policy and related guidance are available on our website and hardcopies are available to any tenants who may not be able to access services digitally, on request.

9.0 Roles and responsibilities

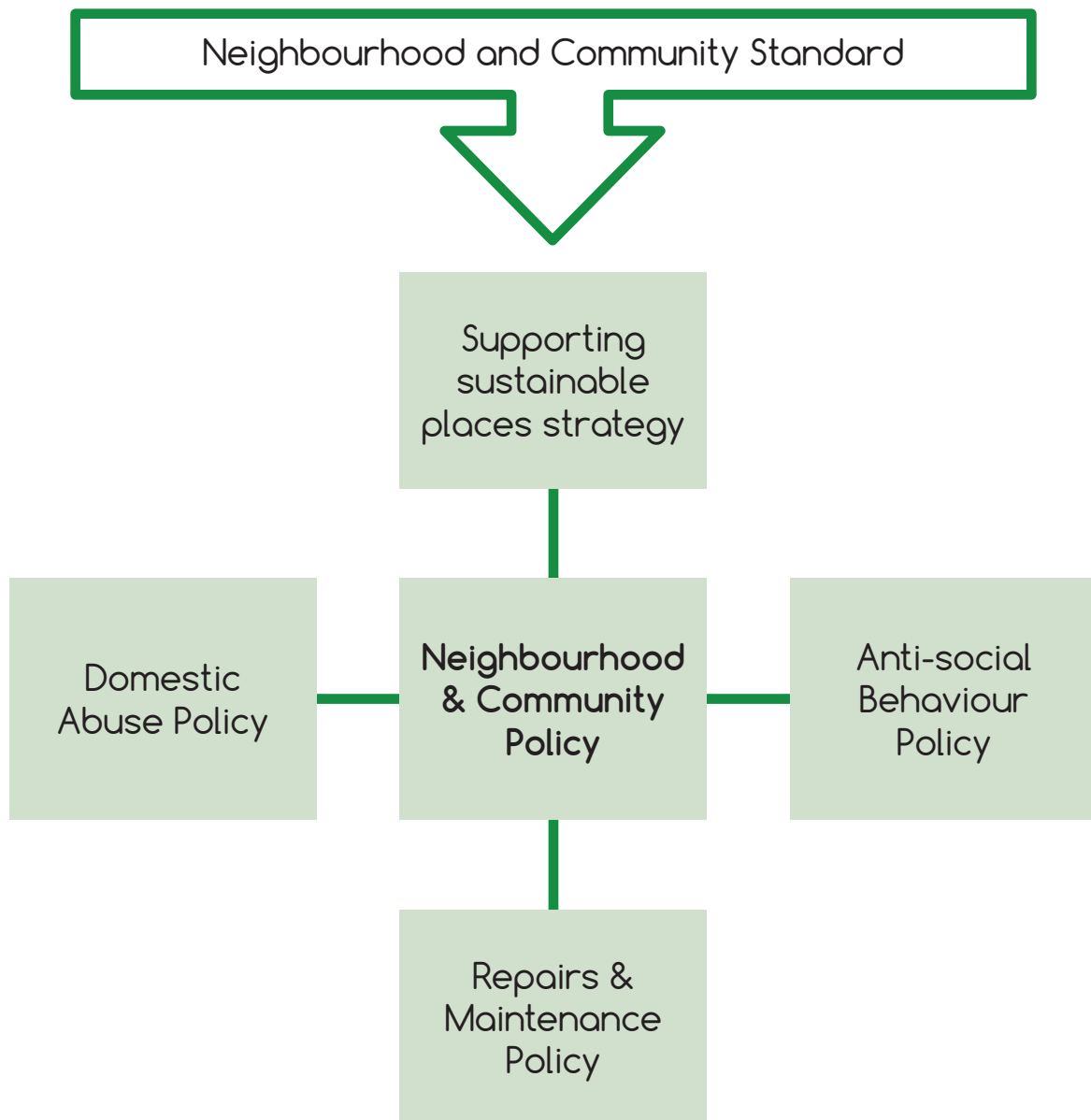
9.1 Roles and responsibilities under this policy are outlined below.

<p>Housing and Communities Committee</p>	<p>The Housing and Communities Committee (H&CC) has overall governance responsibility for this policy. H&CC will formally approve this policy, assure itself that the policy is effectively delivered and review it at least every three years, or earlier if there is a relevant change in legislation or regulation.</p>
<p>Director of Housing and Communities</p>	<p>The Director of Housing and Communities has strategic responsibility for the services which deliver this policy. They will oversee the implementation of this policy.</p>
<p>Head of Housing</p>	<p>The Head of Housing is responsible for joining up the strategic and operational actions to monitor and (where required) delivery of compliance including the effective delivery of the policy.</p>
<p>Community Regeneration</p>	<p>Manager Responsible for the day-to-day delivery, management, and to monitor and ensure compliance and effective delivery of the policy the departmental procedural framework.</p>
<p>Livin Futures Manager Community Investment Manager Housing Manager Development Manager Compliance and Cyclical Works Manager Cyclical Works and Facilities Manager Assets Manager Repairs and Maintenance Manager Corporate Health and Safety Manager Customer Experience Manager</p>	<p>Responsible for the performance management framework associated with the various aspects of the policy to demonstrate the positive impact on place and sustainability.</p>

9.2 This policy will be communicated to our employees via our intranet, our contractors as part of the induction process and tender pack, to our tenants via our website and through their tenancy induction, and our partners through the website and local partnership arrangements.

10.0 Related policies and procedures

10.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:



11.0 Monitoring and review arrangements

- 11.1 We report on key performance measures in relation to our work in neighbourhoods and communities, through our performance management framework. This includes monitoring and assurance reporting at operational, departmental and organisational (to Executive and Board) level. Tenants can find out how we are performing at an organisational level via the website and the Annual Report to Tenants. This includes reporting of Tenant Satisfaction Measures (as required by the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard).
- 11.2 This policy will be communicated to employees and training will be provided to en-sure understanding of the policy requirements. Employees will be supported in delivery of the policy within an appropriate procedural framework that provides management oversight and assurance that actions undertaken are delivered within this procedural framework.
- 11.3 This policy will be reviewed every three years, unless there is significant development that would require a more urgent review e.g. new legislation or regulation.