

## Neighbourhood Management Policy

**Our policy to help maintain and improve neighbourhoods as a place where customers can enjoy their homes in a safe and secure environment they can be proud of.**

### The basics

The **Neighbourhood Management Policy** covers a range of services that we provide, this includes:

- Estate inspections
- Abandoned vehicles and car parking
- Garden management
- Pests and vermin
- Keeping Communal spaces safe
- Security grilles
- Good Neighbourhood Management

### Our approach

In addition to the basics covered in this policy, we are also developing a **Community Based Approach**. This means that we will be consulting with all of our customers within each neighbourhood and using the information that we gather to work towards setting achievable goals to improve neighbourhoods and communities.

Once we have heard from our customers, we will create a plan, which we will work towards and regularly update on how things are progressing.

Plans may be very different from one neighbourhood to another, but they will be based on the feedback provided by our customers who live there, so we are making sure that they are at the heart of shaping their community and neighbourhood.

### Estate inspections

We commit to carrying out regular **estate inspections** on a planned routine. The aim is to check the **health and safety** of the **communal areas and spaces**. The communal spaces may be inside blocks of flats, or they may be outside spaces such as communal gardens or community rooms in our sheltered schemes. It is important that you continue to report things to us as soon as you notice them and not wait for our inspections.

We like to try and have a presence in our neighbourhoods so that our customers can speak to us whilst we complete these checks. We try to keep to a set timetable of inspections so that you know when to expect us. In our larger areas, this may be monthly. Where we have fewer properties or they are more spread out, this may be less often. We can tell our customers when these are, if they wish to join us.

As we work with our customers on our **Community Based Approach**, we will publish the timetable of inspections within the **Neighbourhood plan** which will be available on our website.

Where we work in areas where other landlords also have homes, we may carry out joint inspections. We may also invite the police, fire brigade, local council, partners or agencies to come along if we think that this will help in an area.

Some of the things that we check during our inspections are:

- External repairs issues
- Internal repairs issues to communal areas
- Gardening or cleaning actions
- Fly tipping or graffiti
- Unroadworthy or abandoned vehicles
- Abandoned homes
- Welfare concerns

*(This list is not exhaustive)*

### Abandoned vehicles and car parking

Our approach to **abandoned or unroadworthy vehicles and car parking** is in relation to vehicles parked on **land that is owned by Leeds Federated**. We can only take action where cars are abandoned, uninsured or unroadworthy where it is land that we own. We might make a report to the local council if there is a problem on a public road, like it being blocked and stopping emergency services vehicles getting through, or there is a potential health and safety risk.

Car parking that is provided **within the boundary of a home**, such as on a drive or an allocated parking space, will be acted on if the vehicle is not fit for use on a public road or if it presents a health and safety concern.

Some of our neighbourhoods have **communal parking areas**. We ask that customers use the parking spaces within these areas with consideration for all the customers who need to use the parking area as we will not become involved in disputes. Our general rule is that we do not allocate specific parking bays. If a specific parking bay is part of your tenancy agreement, it will be listed there. We may consider an individual parking bay being allocated for disabled parking requirements, this will be on a case by case basis.

If there are specific **covenants** around parking within a neighbourhood then these must be met.

The following types of vehicle should only be parked within communal parking areas if permission has been granted by us:

- Vehicle with Statutory Off Road Notice (SORN)
- Caravans or motor homes
- Boats
- Trailers
- Heavy goods vehicles
- Buses or mini buses

- Vehicles that may cause difficulties with access

*(This list is not exhaustive)*

## Garden management

Leeds Federated wants to provide neighbourhoods which are well kept and that customers feel proud to be part of. We look after the **communal gardens** to make sure that they are nice places to be in whilst bearing the cost of this in mind. This is because the cost is met by customers through their **service charge**.

**Individual gardens** that are untidy can lead to other issues such as an area looking poorly maintained, attracting vermin, health and safety issues, anti-social behaviour and fly tipping. We will let you know if your garden is thought to be untidy and signpost you to support for this. Looking after your garden is part of the **tenancy agreement** and we may seek legal action if gardens are left in a poor condition.

## Pests and vermin

If you make a report of pests or vermin in your home or in a communal area, we will instruct a specialist surveyor to assess if there are any repairs that can be carried out to deal with the infestation.

Part of the survey will include whether there are any factors that are adding to the problem that cannot be resolved by a repair. This might include things such as shelter, food or water sources. If it is found that customer actions are contributing to the infestation, we will support you to deal with this.

Our Repairs Policy gives more detail on timescales and our responsibilities to help deal with pests and vermin.

## Keeping Communal spaces safe

We make sure that communal spaces in blocks of flats meet the recommendations on **fire safety**.

Internal communal spaces must be kept free of anything that could block the area at all times.

These areas include:

- Stairwells
- Corridors
- Landings
- Lobbies
- Communal lounges
- Communal kitchens
- Communal laundry rooms
- Guest rooms in sheltered schemes
- Mobility scooter storage

*(This list is not exhaustive)*

We will consider requests for personal items to be kept in communal areas on a **case-by-case basis**. We do not want communal areas to appear uninviting, but customer **health and safety** is our main concern.

## Security grilles

We do not give permission for **security grilles** to be fitted to any of our homes. This decision has been made with the health and safety of our customers in mind. Other changes to your home will be considered, but this is one that we do not give consent for.

If you decide to go ahead with the installation of window grilles, Leeds Federated will not carry out any repairs or maintenance to them.

We may remove security grilles to allow repair and maintenance work to be completed. They will not be re-fit after the works we complete and the responsibility to do this is with the customer.

## Good Neighbourhood Management

Leeds Federated sees **Good Neighbourhood Management** as a way to support customers to tackle issues within their neighbourhood that are not thought to be anti-social behaviour. Our aim is to help to provide customers with the tools to **build and maintain good relationships within the community**.

**Good Neighbourhood Management** looks at what we can do if our customers are upset or frustrated by someone else's behaviour but it isn't classed as anti-social.

The following list of behaviours or actions fall under the **Good Neighbourhood Management Policy**:

- Smoking/Vaping
- Boundaries/Fences
- Dogs barking
- Cats/Pets in gardens
- Cooking smells
- Placement of bins
- People looking/staring at each other
- Children playing ball games/bikes/trampolines
- Working from home
- One-off celebrations
- Occasional noise made by a customer or someone in their household who has protected characteristics such as a mental health condition or a physical disability
- Reasonable DIY/household activities
- Breakdown in friendship
- One off incident of shouting/arguing/loud music
- General household noise such as babies crying, children playing, people talking and walking within their homes, closing doors and windows, vacuuming, using white goods, switching lights on and off, flushing the toilet/running the taps

*(This list is not exhaustive)*

We will decide if we think the person causing upset is doing it to cause nuisance, annoyance or distress based on the information available to us. We refer to this as **with intent**.

Where it is felt that the behaviour is conducted **with intent**, it will be managed under the **Anti-Social Behaviour Policy**.

Some of the examples above relate to **noise nuisance**. So that customers can record and report noise, a free of charge app called the Noise app can be downloaded to a smart phone. This can be used to share noise reports with Leeds Federated. An officer will then review the noise recordings and confirm whether it will be managed under the **ASB Policy** or the **Good Neighbourhood Management Policy**.

If our customers can't use the Noise app, we will offer other ways for noise to be reported and the levels of noise assessed.

We offer other solutions that customers can use to resolve concerns, like "Dear Neighbour" cards, which let neighbours know how their behaviour is making other people feel; mediation; or community agreements.

### Key points for customers

There is more information about the points covered in this policy in your **Tenancy Agreement**.

It is really important to us that we receive feedback from customers about their neighbourhoods. We would really like you to let us know if you feel that we are not seen within your area as often as you would like. We can work with you and the broader community to understand what you feel is enough. The easiest way for you to let us know this is through our **Community Based Approach** consultations.

We would like to help our customers to **resolve neighbourhood and community issues** without court action. This helps customers to be **neighbourly** and look to **find other solutions**.

If the issues get worse and we think that they should be dealt with using our **ASB Policy**, we will let you know.

### Key points for colleagues

Colleagues will use this policy and all **relevant legislation** and **regulatory standards**. They will also reference the **Tenancy Agreement**.

It is essential that customers are helped to use the tools to be able to resolve matters themselves. Colleagues should keep in contact with relevant **partner agencies** to help with signposting and supporting our customers to comply.

**Estate inspection** frequency should be set and monitored for performance to ensure standards are being met.

We will use data and information gathered through the management of this policy to help to inform where additional resources are needed. For example, where there are consistent or repeated noise nuisance problems reported in a particular location or within a certain property type, particularly over multiple tenancies, that we will examine the cause for the noise levels and how we can work to prevent this.

Provide customers with the “**How to be a Good Neighbour**” information leaflet when a new tenancy starts or when neighbourhood issues are reported where this could help.

We will manage customers expectations and challenge unrealistic expectations.

### **Key points for board/committee members and the regulator**

Our housing management team are responsible for approving this policy and making sure it supports the Association’s objectives to:

- Sustain
- Engage
- Grow

We consider Neighbourhood Management as part of our:

- Budget and business plan
- Strategic risk register
- Corporate balanced scorecard and performance management
- Regulatory compliance and Tenant Satisfaction Measures
- Equality, diversity and inclusion strategy

### **Policy updates**

The Housing Management team is responsible for updating this policy.

Policy updated and approved January 2025. Next review due January 2028.