

Loreburn Group

Estate Management Policy



Creating Great Places to Live

Policy	Estate Management Policy									
Version Reference	3									
Approved by	MC			LET			MT		X	
Date of Approval	November 2021									
Review Period	Three Yearly or as legislation or substantive changes occur									
Review Due	November 2024									
Policy Champion	Head of Housing									
Who this policy affects	Staff	X	Customers	X	Contractors	X	Members of the Public		X	
Where this policy affects	General needs	X	Later Living	X	Supported	X	Offices/staff base			

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1. Purpose of Policy

- 1.1 To set out Loreburn's approach to estate management to enable customers and their households to live in well managed and well-maintained housing with an environment that is attractive, safe, and secure that is free from nuisance, intimidation, and harassment.
- 1.2 To set out the responsibilities of the landlord and the customer and ensure enforcement is legal and in line with the requirements of the tenancy agreement.
- 1.3 Loreburn will promote good practice and partnership working
- 1.4 Contribute to creating sustainable communities where people want to live.
- 1.5 We recognise that the environmental management and maintenance of our developments are Integral parts of both the Housing Management and the Asset Management functions. We have adopted this policy to ensure a common and consistent approach to these key activities. We realise due to the mixed tenure of some of our developments or where some are factored, and some are non-factored that there may from time to time be limitations on our management. We will try to liaise with all residents and parties to maintain high standards of estate management

2. Aims of this Policy

- 2.1 Estate Management crosses several areas covered by other policies and covers issues which may not be solely within our control. In many instances, we must work with other agencies such as the police, environmental health, and social work to provide effective estate management services. We have identified the main aims of the policy to be:
 - To maintain and sustain our properties and the developments in which they are located to an appropriate standard in line with our strategies, policies, legal obligations, and those obligations contained within our tenancy agreement.
 - To set out our policy commitments concerning estate management
 - To monitor the quality of services provided by our contractors including ground maintenance and contract cleaning to ensure they represent good value for money for our customers.
 - To ensure those customers who are not our tenants but for whom we act as factor get good value for money.
 - To provide services that our residents tell us they want and need and to maintain a high standard in the upkeep and cleanliness of communal areas on our estates giving customers a peaceful, clean, and tidy environment.
 - To ensure that our customers are aware of their role in the upkeep of their neighbourhood and comply with the conditions of their tenancy agreement.

- To create and maintain stable, safe, and socially inclusive communities where people want to live.
- To ensure that estate services represent value for money and are delivered in a way which meets service standards that have been agreed with customers.

3. **Scottish Social Housing Charter – Performance Monitoring**

3.1 The Scottish Social Housing Charter sets out the standards and outcomes that all Scottish landlords should achieve when conducting their housing activities. These are used to monitor performance and to ensure customers are receiving a high standard of service.

3.2 There are five relevant charter outcomes, these are described below:

Equalities

Social landlords should ensure every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.

We can achieve this by prompt resolution of estate management complaints and by offering solutions to meet the needs of our customers.

Communication

Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.

Loreburn can achieve this outcome by using a variety of methods of communication from face-to-face conversations to social media. Customers should be able to have queries about the management of their neighbourhood answered promptly.

Participation

Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.

Loreburn will use the communication methods outlined above and also look to our Customer Engagement Strategy to engender a culture where customers can influence the management of their neighbourhood.

Estate Management, Anti-Social Behaviour, Neighbours Nuisance and Tenancy Disputes

Social landlords, working in partnership with other agencies, help to ensure that tenants and other customers live in well-maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe.

Where appropriate Loreburn will work with other agencies such as Police Scotland, DG Council Community Safety Team, and Social Work to tackle issues which are of concern to our residents.

Tenancy Sustainment

Tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations.

We will offer advice and assistance to residents to help them maintain their tenancy by referring them to appropriate agencies or by organising support by us or other support services.

3.3 All Loreburn H A's policies adhere to VFM principles.

4. How will we achieve our aims and objectives

4.1 We will provide advice and assistance on estate management related tenancy matters to help residents maintain their tenancies and environment to the best of their abilities.

4.2 Enforce estate management related to tenancy conditions, using legal action where appropriate

4.3 Monitor empty properties, gardens, and surrounding areas, including internal and external communal areas, so that our developments remain safe, attractive, and secure.

4.4 Provide advice and assistance to both our tenants and owner-occupiers in developments including signposting them to services which help them look after their property.

4.5 This policy is supported by detailed procedures outlining our day-to-day practice which will enable us to meet the aims and objectives the policy.

4.6 We will aim to be consistent but where necessary we will adopt flexible, proportionate approaches which reflect local needs and expectations when providing an estate management service.

5. Housing Stock

5.1 Loreburn properties are built to high-quality standards to minimise the risk of estate management issues.

5.2 Loreburn have a planned maintenance programme which ensures the structural features of properties are regularly surveyed and become part of a programme of works to keep them in good condition and are compliant with the Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS).

5.3 Loreburn work with Police Scotland to ensure where possible our properties and the surrounding communal space meet 'secure by design' standards.

5.4 Properties that have self-contained gardens are required to be maintained to an acceptable standard in line with the tenancy agreements.

6. Estate Management Service

- 6.1 Loreburn will make every effort to provide a safe and pleasant environment for our customers. We will ensure that customers are fully aware of the part they play as detailed in their tenancy agreement including definitions of breach of tenancy.
- 6.2 Loreburn will provide a consistent approach to estate management but also aim to be flexible and proactive and work with customers to improve the service.
- 6.3 All Loreburn staff has a duty in the course of their day-to-day work to note any repairs and issues which pose a threat to health and safety or good Estate Management and report them to the relevant department.
- 6.4 Responsibility for the condition and maintenance of our developments is held by the Asset Management Team however all staff have a responsibility to safeguard our stock. Developments are visited at least monthly, and a full inspection is carried out monthly/3 monthly, according to risk, by the relevant Neighbourhood Officer or Later Living Manager.
- 6.5 Repairs issues to common areas noted during inspections i.e., fences and walls will be reported in line with the Estate Management Procedural Guide.

7. Premises Risk Assessments

- 7.1 Premises Risk Assessments (PRA) are carried out on schemes with communal internal and/or external areas to identify the hazards and risks associated with the scheme and implement control measures as required to ensure the scheme is safe, as far as reasonably practicable.
- 7.2 The PRAs must be reviewed annually or whenever there are changes or should any incidents occur.
- 7.3 The NO/LLDM is responsible for maintaining and reviewing the PRAs for their schemes.
- 7.4 The Housing Team Manager/Later Living Service Manager is responsible for ensuring the PRAs are in place and reviewed as and when required.

8. Estate Management

- 8.1 Loreburn will provide the following services to ensure neighbourhoods are managed:
 - **Estate Management Inspections** – Loreburn commits a Neighbourhood Officer (NO) or Later Living Development Manager (LLDM) to regularly being present in the communities they serve, and regular estate inspections take place during visits within the area. Any items of concern for example fly-tipping, vandalism or defective fencing will be noted. Monthly or Quarterly Estate Management Inspections (EMIs) are carried out in properties with communal areas however the frequency of visits may increase or decrease as required. Schemes where there are no internal or external communal areas do not require a formal EMI,

however they should still receive a visit at maximum every 3 months. Where possible joint visits should be completed with the IHR Team Manager annually at each scheme. 10% of EMIs will be audited by the Housing Team Manager/ Later Living Team Manager annually.

- **Premises Risk Assessments** – annual Premises Risks Assessments are carried out on properties with communal areas to evaluate the hazards and risks specific to the development and to consider and implement control measures to eliminate or reduce the risks to customers, staff, contractors or anyone else who may be affected by Loreburn properties or activities.
- **Cleaning of Common areas** – a contracted cleaning service is in place for some corridors and stairwells in flatted developments. Customers are responsible for keeping common areas free from clutter and obstructions to ensure the area is kept safe and free from hazards.
- **Common landscaping/grounds maintenance** Loreburn employ the services of a grounds maintenance contractor to ensure common landscaping in our developments meets an acceptable standard. The terms of the works will vary in each development according to the service procured.
- **Grit Bins** – Where a Grit Bin is provided these will be checked during each EMI to ensure that they are filled and ready and available for use when needed.
- **Private Gardens** – Many of our homes have their own garden. We expect customers to maintain their garden under their tenancy agreement. The NO/LLDM are responsible for ensuring customers meet the requirements of their tenancy agreement.
- **Car Parks, Paved Areas, and lighting** – NO/LLDM will monitor these areas as part of their estate management inspections. Car parking at developments is available on a first-come-first-served basis. Staff will not normally become involved in parking disputes unless someone is in breach of their tenancy agreement due to the way they are using the parking facilities, the way they are acting towards other residents or if they have multiple vehicles.
- **Neighbour Disputes** - we will fully investigate any neighbour disputes and enforce tenancy conditions where appropriate. Where relevant the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy will be applied.
- **Play Parks** – Within some of our developments, we have play parks which, in some instances, are owned by Loreburn however many are adopted by the local council. Where the play parks are owned by Loreburn, checks should take place every week, and must be recorded.
- **Abandoned Properties** – Where staff suspect that a property has been abandoned or is not being occupied by the tenant action will be taken under Loreburn's Tenancy Changes Policy staff suspect.
- **Fire Safety** – Where a development has Fire Alarms present the NO/LLDM will carry out a weekly test of the system. During the EMI, where a Fire Risk

Assessment is in place, the terms of the assessment must be checked and the NO/LLDM ensure that steps are taken if any action is required.

- **Fencing and Walls** - During each check the NO/LLDM when on site will check the condition of the fencing and walls and arrange for repairs where required.

9. Tenancy Matters

- 9.1 When a tenancy is allocated, NO/LLDM will ensure that the new customer understands their rights and obligations concerning their tenancy agreement. The NO/LLDM will visit the new tenant within 3 – 4 weeks of the tenancy start date to provide any advice and assistance required in respect of tenancy matters. A follow-up visit can be arranged if required.
- 9.2 Loreburn staff will develop professional relationships with support and care agencies to help our tenants with vulnerabilities or specific needs to sustain their tenancy.
- 9.3 The Customer Handbook is given to all new customers at the start of their tenancy. The handbook gives advice on tenancy related issues and the customer responsibilities and is also available on the Loreburn website.

10. Vermin and Pest Control

- 10.1 Where cases of vermin and pest infestation in customer's homes are reported to Loreburn, staff will respond to those by signposting customers to the relevant environmental health services.
- 10.2 Where infestation is in a communal area Loreburn Housing will be responsible for taking appropriate action to remove the pest(s) and any associated costs.
- 10.3 Where an infestation is as a direct result of a failure by any Loreburn service, Loreburn will be responsible for the remedy and any associated costs.

11. Biohazards & Hazardous Substances

- 11.1 Where hazards are noted i.e., syringes, faeces, blood, or other bodily fluids Loreburn apply health and safety procedures to minimise risk and when necessary issues will be reported to the local authority.
- 11.2 The same approach will be adopted where hazardous substances are found within our developments.

12. Customer Involvement

- 12.1 An exceptional customer experience is at the heart of what Loreburn does so we involve and foster good relationships with our customers and shape services which meet their needs. It is especially important regarding Estate Management issues therefore Loreburn actively seeks to encourage customers to take an active interest in estate management and issues which affect their local area.

13. Staff training and Development

- 13.1 The successful implementation of the policy and supporting procedures depend on the knowledge and skills of staff implementing it. Training will be provided to relevant staff to ensure a consistent approach and ensure they are carrying out the roles and duties linked to the application of this policy.

14. Measuring Performance

- 14.1 Performance monitored through Loreburn's Performance Management Framework using the Scottish Housing Regulator Annual Return Indicators and Loreburn's Strategic Performance Indicators and operational performance indicators for Estate Management i.e., ASB completion rates and timescales. Annual targets for collection are set based on the Scottish Housing Regulators' ARC national performance data, HouseMark peers benchmarking and internal results.
- 14.2 Loreburn will consult customers, stakeholders, and other agencies to continually measure good practice.
- 14.3 This policy will adhere to Loreburn's commitment to Continuous Improvement and Value for Money.

15. Complaints

- 15.1 Loreburn has a commitment to valuing complaints and ensures the organisation benefits from feedback to identify areas for change or improvement.
- 15.2 Loreburn has a Complaints Policy which ensures there are robust and effective procedures in place for complaints to be properly managed and acted upon.
- 15.3 Anyone dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint having exhausted Loreburn's complaints procedure has the right to refer the matter to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

16. Equality and Diversity

- 16.1 Loreburn aims to ensure that equality, fairness, dignity and respect are central to the way we work and how we treat our customers. We support diversity and uphold equal opportunities in all areas of our work as an employer and service provider.
- 16.2 Loreburn will not discriminate against tenants, staff, visitors, suppliers or others based on their age, sex, sexual orientation, race, disability, religion or belief, marital status, pregnancy and maternity or gender reassignment (collectively referred to as 'protected characteristics' in the Equality Act 2010).

17. Risk Management

- 17.1 Loreburn has a Risk Management Strategy, Policy and Procedure. These documents set out how the organisation will manage risk as an integral part of its

governance and management systems, ensuring risks are identified, evaluated and controlled effectively.

17.2 Identifiable risks arising from this policy will be monitored and managed by the internal processes set out herein and by regular review of this and all other associated policies and procedures, ensuring risks are mitigated and Loreburn complies with all legislative requirements and regulatory and best practice guidance.

18. Responsibilities Chart

18.1 The chart below illustrates the responsibilities of all staff about this policy.

Responsibilities	MC/CEO	LET	Head of Housing	TM/LLSM	All Staff
To set the policy and direction with regards to estate management	✓				
Ensure Loreburn H A staff have a robust understanding of estate management and the associated risks		✓			
Manage service, reporting and update LET quarterly			✓		
Take lead on applications, make day to day decisions				✓	
Policy Champion			✓		
Ensure effective and clear communication with key stakeholders including customers			✓		
Reporting any concerns to the Line Manager				✓	✓
Participate in meetings and provide evidence for investigations as required			✓	✓	✓
Ensure feedback is used to improve service			✓		
Working with Head of P&C ensure staff have appropriate training			✓		
Ensure policy is reviewed as necessary			✓		
Ensure E&D guidance is adhered to		✓			

19. Legislative Background and Guidance

19.1 In preparing this policy **Loreburn HA** have taken account of:

- Housing (Scotland) Act of 2014.
- Scottish Social Housing Charter 2012. – this sets out the standards that Scottish landlords must achieve when conducting their housing activities.

- The Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement – this is the formal document that outlines the customer’s responsibilities and obligations about the upkeep of their property and surrounding area.
- H&S at Work Act
- Health and Safety at Work Regulations
- H&S at Work Act and Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations

20. Associated Policies

- Income Maximisation Policy
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- Tenancy Changes Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Pet Policy
- H& S Policy
- Privacy policy
- Factoring Policy
- Fire Safety Policy

21. Policy Review

- 21.1 The Policy Champion is the Head of Housing.
- 21.2 The Policy Champion is responsible for completing the Health and Safety Assessment and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Assessment Checklist.
- 21.3 This policy will be reviewed by the Policy Champion every 3 years or sooner as required due to legislative or substantive change.