

## Women's Pioneer Housing

Title	Estates Management Policy
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Document owner	Kemal Hulusi
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Related corporate policy objectives	Corporate policy objective 1, 2 and 5

### 1. Purpose of the policy

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out our approach to the management of our communal areas and installations and to the services we provide to residents.
- 1.2 The policy also sets out how our work in this area contributes to our Corporate Objectives.

### 2. Introduction

- 2.1 Women's Pioneer Housing (WPH) are committed to providing our residents with high quality homes and services. By Estates Management, we mean the procedures and processes by which we will organise, implement and monitor the services provided to communal areas or installations and for which residents pay through their service charge. The services provided differ from property to property.
- 2.2 In properties comprising flats, there will be parts of the building shared by residents (common parts). In some properties there may be external areas or gardens for the use of residents (communal grounds). Some properties have communal systems for the provision of heating and or hot water, others may have passenger lifts, most have fire safety equipment and door entry systems from which residents benefit.
- 2.3 The services we provide in relation to the above are called Estate Services

### 3. The Policy

- 3.1 Estate Services are provided to ensure that all common parts and any communal grounds are clean, tidy and free of hazards and to ensure that any communal installations from which all residents benefit are kept in full working order.
- 3.2 We do not provide Estate Services to homes which do not have any communal areas or installations shared with others

- 3.3 The day-to-day responsibility for the management of estates services rests with either the Estate Services Officers (ESO's) in the general needs properties or the Scheme Managers in the Sheltered Schemes.
- 3.4 In our general needs (non-sheltered) homes which makes up most of our housing stock we employ ESO's to monitor standards of cleanliness and tidiness in common parts and communal grounds and to ensure effective management of estate services contracts. In sheltered housing schemes for older women, these duties are carried out by the Scheme Manager.
- 3.5 Estate Services Officer is not an office based post as the duties involved in the role require a high degree of mobile working. Currently residents pay eighty per cent of the cost of the ESO service through service charges to reflect the proportion of time spent accordingly on communal services. The remaining twenty percent of the cost of the ESO service is regarded as an office overhead. In Sheltered housing, 80% of the Scheme Manager costs are also dealt with in the same way. This percentage is reviewed annually.
- 3.6 Appendix I sets out a complete list of these services.
- 3.7 How we charge for these services is set out in the Service Charge Policy and this policy should be read in connection with the Service Charge Policy.
- 3.8 We apportion Service Charges between all residents however; occasionally we may choose to provide a service for the benefit of a single resident, or to a minority of residents in a particular property. In these circumstances, (subject to the terms of the tenancy agreement or lease) we will recharge the full amount to that resident, or residents receiving the benefit of the service.
- 3.9 The policy is part of a range of policies framing our work with regard to the following objectives, Objective 1, Objective 2 and Objective 5.

#### **4. Legislation and relevant WPH policies and procedures**

- 4.1 WPH will comply with all relevant legislation and regulatory requirements in the management of its estates, and other WPH policies and obligations that are in place:
- The Home Standard
  - WPH Contractors' Code of Conduct
  - Regulatory Reform Order (Fire Safety) 2005
  - Recharges Policy
  - Service Charge Policy
  - Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (as amended).
  - Pest Control Policy

- Cyclical, Major Repairs and improvements Policy
- Zero Tolerance of items in communal areas.
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH).
- Torts Procedure

## **5. How our work supports the objectives**

### **5.1 Objective 1: Providing High Quality Homes and Services**

- We will engage with residents when reviewing the arrangements for providing estate services. We will always consult residents when material changes are being considered.
- We will include residents in key decision-making about service provision. We will also include residents in the process of appointing contractors and recruiting Estate Services Officers.
- We will include resident feedback as a key feature in the periodic reviews of service. This means that we will continue to seek feedback from tenants and consider recommendations from the Tenant Scrutiny panel and any Task and Finish or Focus groups considering any element of the estate service.
- We shall review regularly the effectiveness of the services. Our Estate Service Officers and Scheme Managers will inspect the buildings on a regular basis to ensure that the common parts are clean and free from hazards and that we provide services in accordance with the contracts we hold and that equipment in the common parts is fully functional.
- We will enforce the Contractors' Code of Conduct to ensure the safety of our residents.
- We will set high standards by rigorously monitoring and responding to residents' concerns and complaints and pass on positive feedback.
- We will hold regular review meetings with contractors providing estate services.
- We will aim to resolve complaints raised informally however should this not be successful we will investigate in accordance with our Complaints Policy

### **5.2 Objective 2: Supporting our residents' independence and well-being**

- We will tailor the delivery of our services to suit resident needs where it is possible to do so.
- We will seek to make reasonable adjustments to service provision when necessary due to the needs of a more vulnerable tenant.
- We will aim to provide estate services in a way, which enhances resident safety- this means that our employees and contractors will adopt safe working practices as set out in the Contractors Code of Conduct. When ESO's and Scheme Managers identify hazards on site by the use of hazard tape. All communal areas are inspected regularly

- We will maintain a regime of zero tolerance in relation to removing articles left in the common parts which may pose a risk should a fire occur. ESO's and Scheme Managers are responsible for enforcing this regime. We will make residents aware of this approach.
- We will aim to provide estate services in a way, which enhances resident safety. We employ a panel of suitably qualified /experienced contractors working to a Code of Conduct with residents at its heart.
- Responsibility for fire safety in affordable housing rests with WPH, although residents also have responsibilities in this regard. WPH reviewed its policies following the fire at Grenfell Tower in 2017, and we will continue to review and amend policies and procedures in the light of recommendations emerging from the public enquiry.

### **5.3 Objective 5: Strengthening our organisation**

- We undertake to procure estate services in a way as to ensure value for money. We will aim to procure estate services to secure best value in terms of both price and quality of service offered. We undertake to review these arrangements periodically.
- We will monitor and evaluate estate services contracts to ensure compliance with the specifications and that the quality standards within the contract are being met. The ESO's and the Scheme Managers will be key to this process.

## **6. Contact Officer**

- 6.1 Paula Wray – Contracts and Estate Services Manager. [paula.wray@womenspioneer.co.uk](mailto:paula.wray@womenspioneer.co.uk)

## **Appendix I**

### **List of Services Paid for Via Service Charges**

Cleaning  
Window Cleaning  
Communal Electric Repairs  
Grounds Maintenance  
Minor Communal Repairs  
Communal Contents Insurance  
Communal Computer Costs  
Communal Heating and/or Hot Water  
Personal Heating and/or Hot Water  
Electronic Door Entry System  
Pest Control  
TV Aerial Repairs  
Estate Services Officer or Sheltered Scheme Manager  
Communal Asset Depreciation  
Fire Equipment Servicing  
Communal TV Licence  
Lift Servicing  
Laundry Costs  
Community Alarm Service  
Paladin Bin Hire  
Legionella Testing  
Communal Electricity.