

KEY POLICY: SERVICE DELIVERY

Date: Jan 2009

Review: Jan 2012

ESTATE MANAGEMENT POLICY

1.0 Policy Statement

South Lakes Housing aims to help build cohesive and sustainable communities and to ensure that our estates and their environment are effectively managed with high standards of maintenance, cleanliness, safety and security.

South Lakes Housing is committed to ensuring all tenants enjoy the right to peace, quiet and security in their homes. In terms of tenants satisfaction, we recognise that this an area of high priority for its tenants.

2.0 Key Strategic Links

Cumbria Housing Strategy 2006 - 2011

The Cumbrian authorities and their partners have traditionally worked in collaboration to develop housing services within the County. With a stronger regional framework we need to strengthen the sub-regional identity of Cumbria within that framework.

All of Cumbria's stakeholders agreed that by working together they would be able to improve the planning, implementation and delivery of all housing services within the sub-region. Particular emphasis is on the way our housing and planning services can improve the ability of Cumbria's housing markets to respond to social and community needs.

To deliver sustainable communities our sub-regional fit-for-purpose housing strategy will be integrated with complementary planning and economic development strategies.

South Lakeland Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2028

Statement and Executive Summary: Our shared Vision is that "By involving people and creating opportunities we will make South Lakeland the best place to live; work and visit..."

We are committed to:

Children and Young People

- Addressing the needs of young people and to create better opportunities for them

Safe Communities

- Keeping crime low and providing reassurances to our communities

Health and Well-being

- Continuing to improve the health and well-being of local people

Involving Communities

- Working more closely with our communities and groups

3.0 Key Policy Links

This Policy should be read in conjunction with our Anti-Social Behaviour, Empty Property Management (Voids), Abandoned Property, Tenant Consultation and Complaints, Remedies and Compensation policies.

4.0 Key Policy Standards

The estate management function focuses on the delivery of services, which directly affect the environment, and quality of life of our tenants.

South Lakes Housing will proactively manage estate issues. These will include management of tenancies, anti-social behaviour and neighbourhood nuisance, harassment, car parking issues and grounds maintenance contracts, cleaning and environmental contracts.

South Lakes Housing is committed to developing services together with residents to build and maintain environments, which are safe and enhance the quality of life. The need to promote sustainable tenancies and improve the demand on estates for South Lakes Housing's stock is recognised.

South Lakes Housing will ensure key links to its own service plans recognising that estate management links in with effective empty property management and tenancy management policy.

South Lakes Housing has a commitment to a multi-agency framework involving all stakeholders and partners. South Lakes Housing is committed to developing effective communication strategies engaging all appropriate voluntary, private and public agencies.

Broader regeneration initiatives will be developed, reviewed and evaluated including:-

- An ongoing commitment to developing Community Agreements which provide framework for local estate action planning, outlining standards and measuring outcomes through joint working with residents and other agencies
- A commitment to tenancy enforcement using both preventative measures and on-going monitoring. Where necessary legal action will be used to maintain security and quiet enjoyment on estates

Staff will be equipped with the skills and knowledge required to effectively address and monitor estate management issues using best practice and drawing on specialist training and development.

South Lakes Housing will provide a consistent service to its customers. Customers can expect to receive a copy of the tenancy agreement and the tenancy handbook explaining the services offered. South Lakes Housing will ensure local priorities on estate management are reflected and published for new tenants and when requested.

When South Lakes Housing receives complaints, the complainant will be advised of the service they can expect. Firm and prompt action will be taken in dealing with disruptive tenants and or other persons causing a nuisance on estates or in individual households.

South Lakes Housing will carry out annual 'estate walkabout' inspections with tenant representatives on all its estates and in sheltered housing schemes to ensure service improvement and programmes are reviewed.

South Lakes Housing will ensure that the implementation of estate management is fair, equitable and consistent in its application and does not discriminate against minority groups.

Appropriate schemes to improve estates will be identified through proper consultation and budgeted for accordingly. These will take into account environmental improvements, security improvements, grounds maintenance and cyclical repair works.

5.0 Key Targets and Performance Indicators

- Tenant consultation outcomes including tenant satisfaction
- Numbers and type of complaints and length of time taken to investigate
- Estate improvement programmes – achievement of specific targets
- Sheltered Housing Scheme Action Plans
- Estate Walkabout Action Plans

6.0 Equality and Diversity

South Lakes Housing recognises that there is a broad range of visible and non-visible differences that characterise its tenants. Some of these qualities include race, religion, culture, nationality, ethnic background, colour, disability, sex, sexual orientation, age, literacy and income level. By understanding and respecting this diversity it is able to set a policy which ensures that all tenants are able to access services provided by South Lakes Housing in an equitable manner.

South Lakes Housing is committed to providing information and services equally and without discrimination so that they meet the needs of all sections of the community. These include our tenants, leaseholders and those living nearby or seeking access to or information on housing services in the South Lakeland area. In carrying out all housing management policies, South Lakes Housing's Equality and Diversity Policy will be adhered to.

7.0 Monitoring, Review and Consultation Process

Regular reports will be made to the Board detailing South Lakes Housing's position with regard to the agreed key targets and performance indicators.

Annual report to tenants and regular reports to Tenants' Committee and tenants groups.