

Meeting Cabinet
Portfolio Area Housing and Housing Development
Date 12th November 2025



MANAGEMENT OF ESTATES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS POLICY 2025-2027

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KEY DECISION

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To present a draft Management of Estates and Neighbourhoods Policy 2025-2027 related to the on-going management of Housing Services and to ensure that Stevenage Borough Council (SBC) delivers well maintained, safe and attractive places that residents can enjoy and take pride in.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet approves the adoption of the draft Management of Estates and Neighbourhoods Policy 2025-2027 (Appendix A), subject to consultation with tenants and leaseholders.
- 2.2 That the relevant Strategic Director, after consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, be given delegated authority to make minor updates and changes to this policy.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council retains its own housing stock of social rented and affordable housing, for those that need it, and is considered a Registered Provider and landlord of Social Housing. It currently owns and manages approximately 7890 general needs and sheltered housing dwellings. In addition to this it owns and manages an additional 1440 leasehold and shared ownership.
- 3.2 A Management of Estates and Neighbourhoods Policy 2025-2027 provides guidance to both residents and the Council on their respective obligations and sets out a fair, consistent and responsible approach.
- 3.3 Estate management reflects the wider role that the Council has in areas where there are clusters of Council owned properties. In these areas, the Council is more than just a landlord but is also responsible for neighbourhood sustainability and some aspects of the environmental quality in the local area.

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

- 4.1 The Council is committed to providing a cost effective, efficient Estate and Neighbourhood Service whilst meeting all its legal and contractual, obligations. The aims of the Policy are to;
- Improve standards whilst delivering value for money in the upkeep of clean, green and safe estates,
 - Have estates that the Council and our residents are proud of,
 - Ensure we have clear standards, that residents know what to expect from the estate management service, including obligations for both the Council and residents,
 - Ensure our services deliver value for money and we are clear on what we are charging for,
 - Maintain a regular, visible presence on estates,
 - Ensure we comply with all Health & Safety requirements,
 - Encourage residents to take responsibility for their environment/estate.
- 4.2 In April 2024, The Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) published a new Neighbourhood and Community Standard that sets out three clear objectives relating to the management of shared spaces;
- 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.
 - Local Cooperation – Registered providers must co-operate with relevant partners to promote social, environmental and economic wellbeing in the areas they provide social housing.

- Registered providers must work in partnership with appropriate local authority departments, the police and other relevant organisations to deter and tackle anti-social behaviour and hate incidents in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.

4.3 In addition to the new Neighbourhood and Community Standard, The Regulator of Social Housing also includes within the tenant perception survey data measures that it collects on an annual basis, three measures linked to the management of estates and neighbourhoods, they are;

TSM Measure	Annual 23/24	No of respondents	Annual 24/25	No of respondents	Direction of travel	
TP10 Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained	53.3%	401	64.0%	344	+10.7%	↗
TP11 Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods	47.7%	401	63.1%	804	+15.4%	↗
TP12 Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling ASB	49.5%	270	57.9%	592	+8.4%	↗

- 4.4 The Regulator of Social Housing uses Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) as one piece of intelligence in building a picture of how a landlord is performing against the consumer standards (safety, repairs, maintenance, complaints handling, tenant involvement etc).
- 4.5 TSM results are required to be published by the landlord and to be used as a measure of delivering good outcomes for tenants and to drive improvements, with landlords expected to reflect on their results and take action to increase satisfaction.
- 4.6 Whilst satisfaction is increasing for SBC across the three measures above, it is important that the Council maintains a sharp focus on improvement to ensure that it meets regulatory compliance, prevents safety and legal issues and supports pride, safety and cohesion across its housing stock.
- 4.7 The Council currently has an ASB Policy in place to ensure that it deals effectively with nuisance behaviour, but it is equally important to have clear and consistent guidelines to managing Estates and Neighbourhoods to tackle health and safety issues and to ensure that staff, contractors and residents have clear expectations relating to their roles and responsibilities as well as the standards set for operational delivery.
- 4.8 The Council is committed to driving improvements across its housing stock and commissioned specialist consultants to undertake a review of Caretaking Services, which includes the cleaning of Council owned flat blocks and the delivery of a proactive service. The Council is currently in the

process of drawing together an action plan to help inform service improvements and during November 2025, SBC will be further consulting with tenants and leaseholders on how they would like the service to be delivered in the future. The Caretaking Review Action Plan will be shared with the Executive Housing Working Group at a future meeting.

- 4.9 A Management of Estates and Neighbourhoods Policy 2025-2027 is considered essential to the Council's Maintaining Safe and Decent Homes priority commitment through the delivery of the Corporate Plan.
- 4.10 In addition, tenants and leaseholders will also be asked to review the Estates and Neighbourhoods Policy 2025-2027 as part of SBC's commitment to involving tenants and ensuring that they are able to influence how services are delivered now and in the future. This is also a key requirement of the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard set by the RSH. Consultation on the Policy and the Caretaking Service Review commences on the 28th October 2025 with 3 pop-up engagement events at Harrow Court, Brent Court and Bedwell Community Centre. There will be a 6-week on-line consultation relating to this Policy that commences on the 24th November 2025 as well as drop in sessions at Independent Living Schemes.
- 4.11 The Executive Housing Working Group has reviewed the proposed Management of Estates and Neighbourhoods Policy 2025-2027 and endorse the recommendations to Cabinet.
- 4.12 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed on this Policy and whilst there are some negative impacts, there are valid mitigations in place to protect future tenants. (Appendix B).

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1.1 The ability of the Council to manage shared spaces effectively is imperative to the financial viability of the Housing Revenue Account and makes clear resident obligations in as well as those of SBC.

5.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.2.1 Failure to have an effective Policy in place puts the Council at risk of not complying with the Neighbourhood and Community Standard and the Homes Standard as set out by The Regulator of Social Housing.

5.3 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.3.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed and can be seen at Appendix B.

5.4 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.4.1 There are no direct significant risks to the Council in agreeing the recommendation(s). However, officers responsible for implementing any improvement activity set out within this report will need to consider any risk implications that arise.

5.5 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

5.5.1 The Council declared a climate change emergency in June 2019 with a resolution to work towards a target of achieving net zero emissions by 2030.

6. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Draft Recharge Policy 2025-2027

Appendix B – EQIA Recharge Policy