

# Customer Access Review – Full Assessment

<b>Assessment details</b>	
<b>Assessment area</b>	Neighbourhood Management Policy
<b>Date of assessment</b>	June 2024
<b>Directorate and Service</b>	Housing and Public Protection, Housing Services
<b>Manager</b>	Tenancy Services Manager / Housing Maintenance Manager
<b>Officer conducting assessment</b>	Housing Policy & Performance Officer
<b>Step 1: Scoping the assessment</b>	
<b>1. What are the aims and objectives of the activity or proposal?</b>	<p>The Neighbourhood Management Policy aims to set out the Council's approach to the management and maintenance of its neighbourhoods. The Council aims to ensure all neighbourhoods are kept safe, clean and in good repair.</p> <p>The key objectives of this Policy are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that all tenants are able to live in a safe and well maintained environment;</li> <li>• Raise awareness of landlord and tenant responsibilities in the maintenance of homes and the surrounding area;</li> <li>• Ensure any neighbourhood management issues are resolved as quickly as possible;</li> <li>• Ensure responsive repairs to blocks and communal areas are carried out as quickly and efficiently as possible to minimise any disruption to residents;</li> <li>• Encourage resident involvement and offer opportunities to residents to contribute in the maintenance and improvement of neighbourhoods;</li> <li>• Work in partnership with contractors, local agencies and landlords to ensure neighbourhoods are managed and maintained to a high standard.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Who will be affected by the activity or proposal?</b>	The Policy will affect tenants, leaseholders and residents of Dartford Borough Council.
<b>3. How does the activity or proposal contribute to: a) any key performance indicators? b) policies, values or objectives of Dartford Borough Council?</b>	<p>a) The Council is measured on responsible neighbourhood management through the following Tenant Satisfaction Measures, set by the Regulator of Social Housing:</p> <p>TP10 – Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained TP11 – Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods</p> <p>b) The Neighbourhood Management Policy contributes to the Housing ambitions in the draft Corporate Plan 2024-2027 to:</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that our homes are well maintained and empower tenants to shape and influence their own communities.</li> <li>• Provide a high quality and responsive housing service that’s built on respect for aspiring and existing tenants. We want to be practical, honest and straightforward in all the information and advice we give.</li> <li>• Strive for full compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing’s consumer standards in delivering good quality homes and services to the tenants that live in our homes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Which aspects of the activity or proposal are dictated by legislation/regulation and where do we have discretion in how they are delivered?</b></p>	<p>The Policy will be delivered in compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing’s Neighbourhood and Community Standard. Specifically, this standard includes a requirement that 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.</p> <p>The Policy will also comply with the Regulator of Social Housing’s Safety and Quality Standard, which includes a requirement that registered providers must take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of tenants in their homes and associated communal areas.</p> <p>The requirements outlined above from the Neighbourhood and Community Standard, and Safety and Quality Standard came into force in April 2024.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Management Policy and its delivery is intended to be compatible with all relevant legislation, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Act 2004</li> <li>• Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005</li> <li>• Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981</li> <li>• Environmental Protection Act 1990</li> <li>• Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978</li> <li>• Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014</li> <li>• Equality Act 2010</li> <li>• Data Protection Act 2018</li> <li>• UK GDPR</li> </ul>

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<p><b>5. What do you know about the groups of people who will be affected?</b> (i.e. demographic information in relation to the protected characteristic groups of age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, race, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership)</p>	<p><b>Dartford population profile</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Gender</b> – There are slightly more female residents than male residents in Dartford where 51% are female and 49% are male, which is the same as the overall England ratio of females and males.</li> <li>• <b>Age</b> – The median age in Dartford is 37 years, which is slightly lower than the overall England mean age of 40 years. 21.1% of Dartford’s population is aged 14 years or under. This is followed by residents aged 35 to 44 years (15.7%), 25 to 34 years (15.2%), 45 to 54 years (13.3%), 55 to 64 years (10.8%), 15 to 24 years (10.2%), 65 to 74 years (7.4%), and aged 75 years and over (6.4%).</li> <li>• <b>Ethnicity</b> – The largest ethnic group that people in Dartford identify with is White at 74.5%. This is followed by Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African (10.50%), Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh (9.90%), Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups (3.10%), and Other ethnic groups (2.00%).</li> <li>• <b>Disability</b> – 15.9% of Dartford’s population are disabled. Of this, 6.6% of people’s activities are limited a lot and 9.3% of people’s activities are limited a little.</li> <li>• <b>Religion</b> – 48.1% of Dartford’s population connect or identify with the Christian religion, followed by 3.8% Hindu, 3.5% Muslim, 1.7% Hindu, 0.6 Buddhist, 0.1% Jewish, 0.4% other religion. 36.5% of Dartford’s population did not connect or identify with any religion and 5.3% did not answer this question in the Census.</li> <li>• <b>Sexual orientation</b> – 91.2% of Dartford’s population aged 16 years and over identified as straight or heterosexual. 1.5% described themselves as gay or lesbian. 0.91% described themselves as bisexual. 0.14% described themselves as pansexual; 0.03% described themselves as asexual; 0.00% described themselves as queer. 0.01% described themselves as ‘other sexual orientation’. 6.54% did not answer this question in the Census.</li> </ul> <p>(Source: Census 2021, Office for National Statistics)</p> <p><b>Tenant profile</b></p> <p>The Council owns and manages a housing stock of 4,216 properties. Information in relation to profile of Council tenants (Tenant 1 data) is captured by the Council’s Housing Service, as follows:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td rowspan="3">Sex</td> <td>Male</td> <td>33.85%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Female</td> <td>66.03%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unknown</td> <td>0.12%</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Age</td> <td>18-24</td> <td>1.59%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25-39</td> <td>20.41%</td> </tr> </table>	Sex	Male	33.85%	Female	66.03%	Unknown	0.12%	Age	18-24	1.59%	25-39	20.41%
Sex	Male		33.85%										
	Female		66.03%										
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	25-39	20.41%											

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		40-59	38.22%
		60+	39.78%
	Race	White	67.72%
		Asian or Asian British	1.45%
		Black or Black British	1.47%
		Mixed	2.00%
		Chinese or other ethnic group	0.24%
		Unknown/ prefer not to say	27.12%
	Disability/ vulnerability	No disability/ vulnerability	79.16%
Disability/ vulnerability		20.84%	
<p><b>Leaseholder profile</b> – There are currently 481 leasehold properties. The conveyancing process is managed by external bodies and legal transfers which do not collect personal data concerning the protected characteristics of new home owners. The Housing Service does not receive or hold any personal data regarding leaseholders other than name and address.</p>			
6. What consultation has taken place with affected groups? Please describe who was consulted and the key findings	<p>Internal consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Management Policy has been carried out with Council officers.</p> <p>The Council has been informed of tenants views on responsible neighbourhood management through the annual Tenant Satisfaction Measures Survey (TSM) carried out in 2023, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TP10 – Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained – 52.5%</li> <li>• TP11 – Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods – 58.3%</li> </ul>		
7. Are there any gaps in information? If so, what additional research and/or consultation is needed to ensure that affected groups needs and views are taken into account?	<p>The Council is committed to ensuring the voice of its tenants is heard on matters that affect them. The Regulator of Social Housing places a requirement on social housing landlords to comply with the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard 2024, by ensuring that residents are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in the formulation of their landlord’s housing-related policies and strategies. Consultation with Council tenants will be undertaken, as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All Council tenants and residents will be invited to comment on the draft Neighbourhood Management Policy.</li> <li>2. The Dartford Tenants’ and Leaseholders’ Forum (DTLF) will be invited to comment on the draft Neighbourhood Management Policy. The DTLF aims to ensure that the services delivered by the Council are</li> </ol>		

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Step 2: Information collection	
	<p>accessible to all. The Forum works as a group to ensure that the views and housing needs of residents are recognised and addressed by the Council, and that those needs and views are placed at the centre of housing services delivery.</p> <p>3. The Housing Advisory Board (HAB) will be invited to comment on the draft Neighbourhood Management Policy. The HAB considers reports on proposed policy, strategy and performance in relation to housing issues and makes recommendations to Cabinet as appropriate. The HAB includes representation from Council officers, elected Members and DTLF members.</p>

Step 3: Assessing the equality impact
<p><b>8. Consider whether the activity or proposal has or will have any positive or negative equality impacts on the protected characteristic groups in relation to the following aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty:</b></p> <p><b>a) tackling unlawful discrimination</b>  <b>b) promoting equality of opportunity</b>  <b>c) promoting good relations</b></p> <p><u>NOTES:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Initial Screening will have identified which aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty are relevant to the activity or proposal for consideration</li> <li>• For existing activities, consider how they are working in practice for each relevant protected group</li> <li>• For new proposals, consider whether there is anything that could give rise to positive and negative equality impacts for each relevant protected group</li> <li>• If there is no identified equality impact, please tick the 'No Impact' box and explain why in question 9</li> <li>• If the equality impact is unclear, please tick the 'Unknown' box and explain why in question 9</li> </ul>

Step 3: Assessing the equality impact				
PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC	POSITIVE IMPACTS	NEGATIVE IMPACTS	NO IMPACT	UNKNOWN
<b>Age</b>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Disability</b>	<p><b>Hoarding</b>            Hoarding may have a detrimental impact on the neighbourhood, for example, a communal area or garden may not be accessible or is extensively overgrown, or there is a heavy vermin infestation. Where a tenant has care and</p>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Step 3: Assessing the equality impact				
PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC	POSITIVE IMPACTS	NEGATIVE IMPACTS	NO IMPACT	UNKNOWN
	<p>support needs and is excessively hoarding, the Council will follow the Safeguarding Policy and make referrals to specialist support where necessary.</p> <p><b>Communication needs</b> In accordance with the Council's Equality &amp; Diversity Document Framework, the Policy and information about neighbourhood management, and the assistance the Council can provide to address any issues, can be provided in alternative formats, including: Braille, audio tape and large print versions of documents. British Sign Language interpreting services can also be provided upon request. Calls can also be received via Relay UK.</p>			
<b>Sex</b>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Gender reassignment</b>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Race</b>	<p><b>Alternative format and interpreting services</b> In accordance with the Council's Equality &amp; Diversity Document Framework, the Policy and information about neighbourhood management, and the assistance the Council can provide to address any issues, can be provided in alternative formats including documents translated into other languages. Telephone and face-to-face language interpreting services can also be provided upon request.</p>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Religion/Belief</b>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Step 3: Assessing the equality impact				
PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC	POSITIVE IMPACTS	NEGATIVE IMPACTS	NO IMPACT	UNKNOWN
Pregnancy/Maternity			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage and Civil Partnership*	Not applicable as the Policy does not apply in the context of employment.	Not applicable as the Policy does not apply in the context of employment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

\* Regarding the protected characteristic of Marriage and Civil Partnership – public bodies need to comply with the first aim of the Public Sector Equality Duty and only in the context of employment.

Step 3: Assessing the equality impact	
9. If 'no impact' or 'unknown' was selected, please explain	There are no known circumstances where the Policy will have relevance to or a disproportionate equality impact on the protected characteristic groups of age, sex, gender reassignment, religion/belief, sexual orientation and pregnancy/maternity. Older and disabled tenants who may have support needs will receive additional support from the Council where required to ensure neighbourhoods are kept clean and well maintained.
10. If Dartford Borough Council works with partners to deliver the activity or proposal, please describe any circumstances that could give rise to positive or negative equality impacts between different groups	The Council may carry out estate inspections jointly with the cleaning contractor, repairs partner and horticultural contractor to ensure that any improvements or maintenance works required are noted and arrangements are in place for them to be completed.  The Council will work with other agencies where required to deal with issues such as fly tipping and the removal of abandoned vehicles.
11. Any other comments	No other comments.

Step 4: Action plan
12. Based on the information in Steps 1 to 3, please list the actions that will be taken to address: a) any gaps in information and consultation b) how any negative impacts on equality will be mitigated or eradicated

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**a) If additional information and/or consultation is required or the impact is still unclear, what actions will you put in place to gather the information you need?**

Information needs	Action	Intended outcome	Date for completion	How this will be monitored	Responsible officer
Views from all Council tenants and leaseholders	Invite comment and input on the draft Policy from all Council tenants and leaseholders	Feedback will, at a formative stage, inform any further changes that may be required to the draft Policy in advance of seeking approval for the Policy	August 2024	Details of the consultation and amendments made to the draft Policy as a result of the consultation will be included in the Cabinet report	Housing Policy & Performance Officer
Views from the Dartford Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum on the draft Policy	Invite comment and input on the draft Policy from the Dartford Tenants' and Leaseholder's Forum	Feedback will, at a formative stage, inform any further changes that may be required to the draft Policy in advance of seeking approval for the Policy	August 2024	Details of the consultation and amendments made to the draft Policy as a result of the consultation will be included in the Cabinet report	Housing Policy & Performance Officer
Views from the Housing Advisory Board	Invite comment and input on the draft Policy from the Housing Advisory Board	Feedback will, at a formative stage, inform any further changes that may be required to the draft Policy in advance of seeking approval for the Policy	October 2024	Details of the consultation and amendments made to the draft Policy as a result of the consultation will be included in the Cabinet report	Housing Policy & Performance Officer

**b) If any negative impacts on equality were found, what actions will you put in place to mitigate or eradicate these impacts?**

Identified impacts (and who is affected)	Action	Intended outcome	Date for completion	How this will be monitored	Responsible officer



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<b>Step 5: Decision making and future monitoring</b>	
<b>13. Which decision making process does this Customer Access Review need to go through? i.e. who does this need to be approved by?</b>	Head of Legal Services and Director of Housing & Public Protection
<b>14. Is the subject of the Customer Access Review going to committee? If yes, include your findings in the committee report and attach this assessment to the report</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>15. How will you continue to monitor the activity or proposal on protected characteristic groups?</b>	The Council will monitor how neighbourhood management services are delivered, and the scale of improvements and repairs works required within its neighbourhoods. The Council collect and monitor tenant satisfaction measures, set by the Regulator of Social Housing, and also offers various involvement opportunities to residents to gain their feedback on improving our neighbourhoods. The feedback received will inform the Council on how the services provided affect the protected characteristic groups, and be used to identify how the Council can improve its neighbourhood management service.
<b>16. When will you review this Customer Access Review?</b>	The Neighbourhood Management Policy will be reviewed every three years to address legislative, regulatory, best practice or operational issues. New Customer Access Review assessments will be undertaken in conjunction with the review of the policy.
<b>Step 6: Final steps</b>	
<b>17. Once this Customer Access Review has been approved, send this assessment to the Policy &amp; Projects Officer</b>	
<b>18. Implement the actions identified from this Customer Access Review and ensure progress is monitored and recorded</b>	

Reviewed by Legal Services:

1/8/2024

Reviewed by Director of Housing & Public Protection:

31.7.2024