



Housing Estates Service Standard Policy

Scope:	Our Housing Estate Service Standards should be designed to ensure that properties are provided in a safe, secure, and pleasant environment. This includes cleaning and repairing communal areas, addressing boundary issues, maintaining grounds and parking, and managing communal areas for the general use of residents.
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Statute:	Housing Act 1985 Housing Act 1996 Housing Act 2004 Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 General Data Protection Regulation 2016 and Data Protection Act 2018
National Standards and Guidance	Regulator of Social Housing Best Value Standards and Intervention Regulator of Social Housing Safety and Quality Standard Regulator of Social Housing Tenancy Standard Regulator of Social Housing Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard
Related Policies	Aids & Adaptation Policy Complaints policy Repairs and Maintenance Policy Tenancy policy Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy Vulnerable Person & Reasonable Adjustment Policy Data Protection Policy



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1 Introduction to Housing Estates Service Standards

It is important to get the basics right. This includes managing tenancies and estates well, effectively dealing with neighbourhood disputes and antisocial behaviour, maximising income collection, and minimising arrears. Good-quality housing management is central to providing homes and communities where people want to live.

Our Housing Estate Service Standards should be designed to ensure that properties are provided in a safe, secure, and pleasant environment. This includes cleaning and repairing communal areas, addressing boundary issues, maintaining grounds and parking, and managing communal areas for the general use of residents.

Housing Estate Services are a rechargeable service funded through a service charge.

2 Estate Standards Guidance

This document represents Welwyn and Hatfield Borough Council Housing commitment to the provision of high-quality housing estate services to our customers and sets out the following:

- Our clear promise on standards, inspections and consultation.
- Details of how residents can help us.
- A list of specific services and how often customers should expect them to be provided.
- Information on the inspection process.
- Details of how customers can make a complaint if we don't meet the service standard.

We will:

- Keep your neighbourhood clean and tidy.
- Keep your neighbourhood free from hazards as far as we can.
- Remove offensive graffiti as soon as possible.
- Remove abandoned vehicles following the legal process.
- Advise on how to safely and responsibly dispose of unwanted furniture and white goods (e.g. washing machines, fridges).
- Advise on how to report illegally dumped waste, fly tipping.
- Report and arrange repairs to shared communal areas
- Carry out regular scheduled inspections.
- Consult residents about neighbourhood improvements and plans.

Residents can help us by:

- Reporting repairs, hazards, graffiti, and abandoned vehicles
- Disposing of your rubbish properly
- Keeping communal areas free from bulky items
- Keeping your garden, and the outside of your home clean, tidy and free from rubbish.
- Providing us with feedback and views about your estate.
- Reporting anti-social behaviour.
- Making suggestions on how we can improve our services.
- Completing customer satisfaction surveys.
- Becoming a Neighbourhood Champion to monitor the services we provide.

3 Housing Block Cleaning

Out of over 500 blocks, only a handful receive a regular cleaning service of communal areas. It is our intention to roll a contracted scheduled service to all our blocks during 2026/27. Service charges may apply for this service.

The specification below is the general expectation of what will be required, the full specification will be published to the website on commencement of the contract:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full clean (sweep, mop, vacuum (where applicable) spray and wipe of communal areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• External windows to be cleaned
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internal glass panes, window frames, door frames and windowsills to be cleaned
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remove cobwebs from walls, ceilings, light fittings, window frames and ledges
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clean and disinfect bin stores areas

***Block cleaning does not include structural maintenance or repairs.**

4 Communal Area's Fire Safety

We check communal areas regularly to keep everyone safe. This includes:

- Testing and maintaining **fire alarms** (if installed).
- Testing **emergency lighting**.
- Checking **fire signage**.

Important:

Do **not** store anything in communal areas like stairways, balconies, or bin stores. These spaces must be clear for fire safety.

Example of items you **cannot store** in communal areas:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mobility aids – keep all aids inside your home. Motor scooters must not be stored or charged in communal areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prams and buggies – store inside your home.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chemicals – paints, solvents, fuel, oil, cleaning fluids, weed killer, or any other combustible liquids.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BBQs or fuel – charcoal, firelighters, fireworks.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Candles and matches – tea lights, incense sticks, lighters.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Furniture or fabrics – chairs, curtains, wall hangings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic items – garden furniture, plant pots, toys.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recycling and rubbish – keep bins outside the building. Do not leave rubbish outside your door.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motor vehicles – mopeds, scooters, or any other powered vehicle.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clothing and shoes – including shoe racks.

The council can ask for the immediate removal of anything that poses a risk.

If we have to remove items, the cost may be charged to the individual or to your block.

5 Communal Bin Stores and Recycling Areas

Communal bin stores may be located inside or outside your building. Residents are responsible for the following:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the correct bin store for your property.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place all rubbish inside the bins provided. Do not leave bags or loose waste on the floor of the bin store or surrounding area.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure rubbish and recycling are contained at all times to prevent litter.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not store rubbish anywhere else except inside your own property.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only household waste should be placed in the bin store. Bulky items, electrical items, and lithium batteries must be disposed of separately.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where recycling bins are provided: All recycling must be placed loose in the correct bin. Do not put bagged items in recycling bins, except for food waste that must be placed in the correct bin.

Information regarding bin collections can be found on www.welhat.gov.uk

Bulky Waste

- If you have large household items (like furniture or appliances) that you need to get rid of, you can book a collection on our website: www.welhat.gov.uk.
- The website shows what items we collect and how much it costs.

Important:

- Do **not** leave bulky items in **communal bin stores or bin areas**.
- Leaving items there can be considered to be **fly-tipping**, which is against the law and could lead to a **fine or enforcement action**.

Fly Tipping and Enforcement

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council wants to keep our borough clean, safe, and green. We take firm enforcement action against fly-tipping and littering.

We will:

- **Investigate all fly-tipping on housing land** and take prompt action to remove waste and use enforcement powers to identify those responsible.
- **Issue fines or prosecute offenders** who dump waste, litter, or damage the local area.
- **Provide advice and guidance** to help prevent fly-tipping and littering.

How you can help:

- Put your rubbish in the right bins.
- Do not dump rubbish or leave bulky items in communal areas.
- Report fly-tipping on our website: www.welhat.gov.uk.

6 Grounds Maintenance

The housing grounds maintenance service is included in the grounds maintenance contract that covers the whole borough.

We provide extra grounds maintenance services when needed to keep communal areas tidy and safe. Leaseholders pay for these services through their service charges.

Residents are expected to maintain their own gardens as part of their tenancy, however there is an assisted Gardening Service scheme available for grass or hedge cutting or both for those council tenants who are unable to maintain their gardens.

Amenity grass cutting is carried out, up to twelve times per annum, weather and ground condition dependant.

Shrub beds receive eight spring/summer and one winter maintenance visit a year. All maintenance is subject to weather/ground conditions.

- Prune shrubs and hedges, including pruning of shrubs/hedges if they are causing obstruction to doorways and pathways
- Maintain shrubs and hedges to agreed standards
- Weed, or treat shrub beds and hard paved areas
- Remove litter and rubbish from communal areas
- All trees managed by Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council are maintained within the policies laid out in the Trees and Woodlands Strategy.

7 Pest Control

Pest Control in housing estate communal areas, such as communal gardens, bin stores, communal lofts and stairways within blocks is covered by the council. This can be reported via housingstateservices@welhat.gov.uk or via our Contact Centre Contact-WHC@welhat.gov.uk All internal pest issues within the resident's property are the responsibility of the resident. The council offers a subsidised pest control for domestic premises through our pest control contractor, to report and book a pest control treatment, go to www.welhat.gov.uk/environment-streets/pest-control-treatments-prices

8 Estate Inspections

We carry out regular estate inspections to monitor service levels and identify improvements. We actively encourage our neighbourhood champions, tenants, leaseholders and councillors to join us on these inspections.

9 Parking in Residential Areas

Some residential areas may require a parking permit. Where no permit restrictions apply, parking in nearby car parks is available on a first come, first served basis.

The borough offers numerous marked disabled parking bays. If you or someone in your household holds a valid Blue Badge, and parking is available, you can apply for a disabled bay near your property.

Please note:

- Disabled bays are not reserved for specific individuals or addresses.
- Anyone with a valid Blue Badge can use them.

For new developments, disabled parking is managed in line with our Parking Standards Policy.

10 How We Monitor These Service Standards

We're committed to delivering high-quality services across your neighbourhood — and we want to make sure we're getting it right.

We monitor our service standards through:

- **Your feedback and complaints** – every comment helps us improve.
- **Regular estate inspections** – we check communal areas to ensure they're clean, safe, and well-maintained.
- **Our tenant satisfaction measures survey** – your views on communal services help shape what we do next.

Your voice matters — and it helps us keep your neighbourhood a place to be proud of.

11 Performance

You can find our estate inspection timetable and our latest performance and satisfaction scores on our website, www.welhat.gov.uk / [Tenant Satisfaction Measures Survey – One Welwyn Hatfield \(welhat.gov.uk\)](#).

12 National policy on rent and service charges

Tenants may also pay service charges in addition to their rent. Rents are generally taken to include all charges associated with the occupation of a property, such as maintenance and general housing management services. Service charges usually reflect additional services that may not be provided to every tenant or that may be connected with communal facilities rather than being particular to the occupation of a dwelling. Service charges are subject to separate legal requirements and are limited to covering the cost of providing the services. Under the **Landlord and Tenant Act 1985**:

- Service charges are only recoverable by the landlord if the costs have been reasonably incurred and the works are of a reasonable standard.
- The service charge can be based on the landlord's estimate of costs for the coming year, and the actual costs are provided at the end of the year.
- The landlord should provide tenants with information about the service and how the service charge has been set.
- In the case of social rent properties, providers are expected to identify service charges separately from the rent charge.
- Service charges are not governed by the same factors as rent.
- Social landlords should consult with tenants when new or extended services are introduced, and an additional charge may need to be made.

13 Resident Involvement – Your Voice Matters

This is your home, and we want you to feel proud of where you live.

One way you can make a real difference is by becoming a **Neighbourhood Champion**.

Neighbourhood Champions help us keep an eye on the quality of our services and make sure your estate stays clean, safe, and well-maintained. It's a great way to get involved, share your views, and help shape your community interested?

Get in touch with our Housing Estates Services team at

✉ housingestateservices@welhat.gov.uk