

Creating affordable homes and empowering communities



Neighbourhood Policy

CONTROLLING AUTHORITY: Head of Customer Services		
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making a splash
in the areas we serve

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy is published in line with the requirements of the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) 'The Regulator' under the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing Providers in England from April 2012.
- 1.2 The Regulator has published a Neighbourhood and Community Standard that registered providers are expected to meet. Included in the Standard is 'Neighbourhood Management' where the required outcome is that neighbourhood and communal areas associated with homes are clean and safe. This reinforces our own and already stated desire to ensure that neighbourhoods are attractive, clean and safe places to live, work and socialise in.
- 1.3 The standard makes clear that there is a specific expectation that we shall consult with residents in developing a published policy for maintaining and improving the neighbourhood associated with our properties/customers' homes. This applies where we have responsibility (either exclusively or in part) for the condition of the neighbourhood. The policy shall include any communal areas associated with our homes. Rather than just consulting, we shall actively work in close partnership with our customers (tenants), other residents and other relevant stakeholders.
- 1.4 We acknowledge that as a major landlord in the area, that we must play a lead role developing and ensuring attractive, clean and safe neighbourhoods.
- 1.5 Delivering an effective Neighbourhoods Policy will involve not only sound day to day operational practice to ensure timely interventions but also more strategic oversight to inform good investment planning that, where possible, addresses underlying issues to enhance the appearance and sustainability of neighbourhoods.
- 1.6 This policy document should be read in conjunction with our:
 - a. Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and Procedure
 - b. Asset Management Strategy
 - c. Participation Policy for Tenants & Customers
 - d. Equality & Diversity Policy
 - e. Any other relevant and referenced Boston Mayflower Policy

2.0 Key Objectives

- 2.1 To ensure that all stakeholders have a clear understanding of our approach to developing and maintaining attractive, clean and safe neighbourhoods; this includes customers, staff members and partner organisations.
- 2.2 To ensure that we plan and target resources effectively and in a consistent way, but whilst taking into account our diverse customer base and their needs so that neighbourhoods are popular and sustainable places to live.

- 2.3 To ensure we adopt a partnership approach, encouraging everyone to play their part and seek to lever in additional resources.
- 2.4 To ensure we closely monitor the quality of our services and that we quickly deal with complaints.
- 2.5 To ensure that we always seek to deliver effective and efficient services which are lean and offer real value for money.
- 2.6 To ensure that we actively benchmark ourselves against other providers both locally and nationally and report our performance both accurately and regularly.

3.0 The Policy

This sets out how we will deliver the Policy;

- 3.1 We will lead, empower and support our customers and other residents where appropriate, to develop joint approach's to maintaining and improving the neighbourhoods associated with our properties/customers' homes to ensure that neighbourhoods are attractive, clean and safe and where customers, other residents and visitors feel pride in their immediate surroundings and have a sense of ownership.
- 3.2 We will jointly agree Service Standards and monitor adherence against these through the 'Your Neighbourhood Service Voice'. Such standards will include as a minimum: Anti-Social Behaviour, Cleaning, Grounds Maintenance and Repairs.
- 3.3 Through the work of our Customer Service Engagement Team, we will encourage customers, other residents and partner organisations to jointly inspect neighbourhoods, deliver priorities important to this group with work carried out to a high standard, to the satisfaction of the majority and which offers value for money.
- 3.4 We will encourage customers and other residents to be responsible citizens who are considerate of their neighbours.
- 3.5 We will provide clear information to customers about our statutory and contractual obligations whilst clearly explaining their own responsibilities.
- 3.6 We will provide a variety of ways for residents to contact us to report a repair or enquire about progress, including an out of hour's service for emergency repairs.
- 3.7 We will operate in a proactive and responsive manner, drawing on good practice and working in partnership, to get the most cost-effective service outcomes for our customers.

- 3.8 We will let homes promptly and to a high standard and monitor void property performance to identify at an early stage any adverse trends.
- 3.9 We will when designing new homes or making changes to existing ones; take into account crime prevention, safety measures, energy efficiency and the way public space can be used to enhance the environment and quality of life. We will have regard to the standardisation of components wherever possible in order to simplify servicing and repairing arrangements and provide for better value for money.
- 3.10 We will in addition to responding appropriately to day-to-day works that arise, maintain the elements of our properties/customers' homes that we are responsible for through programmed works and this includes maintaining communal areas and keeping them in a good condition. There will be timely redecoration, repair and where appropriate improvement to communal buildings, fencing, garage areas, paths and washing spaces to maintain an attractive overall appearance and to help reduce the need for costly responsive repairs.
- 3.11 We will have in place grounds maintenance and cleaning contracts for communal areas to ensure that open spaces, borders and shrub bed areas are looked after according to the plant species and are weed and litter free, grassed areas are cut as appropriate during the different seasons, hard landscaped areas are free of debris, bin areas are tidy and windows are cleaned.
- 3.12 We will have in place appropriate arrangements for the timely removal of large items of refuse and abandoned cars.
- 3.13 We will, where leaseholders are sub-letting their homes, send any information on matters relevant to the property or the neighbourhood to the occupant as well as the leaseholder to ensure that all parties are informed.
- 3.14 We will ensure that all required health and safety inspections and checks are carried out on a programmed basis.
- 3.15 We may where agreed locally with customers, other residents or partner organisations put in place parking control measures.

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Customers (Tenants and their Visitors and Leaseholders)

These can all play a part in sustaining the objectives of this Policy through;

- Complying with the obligations of tenancy agreements
- Being involved and engaged in decision making through the established channels

- Responding to satisfaction survey requests
- Identifying – formally or informally – opportunities for improvement within communities

4.2 Contractors and Staff

- To deploy resources effectively and efficiently and on a value for money basis
- To ensure a high level of responsiveness in responding to service issues such as environmental decline, breaches of tenancy and in particular anti-social behaviour
- To work effectively within a partnership setting – being ‘eyes and ears’ within communities
- To serve as ambassadors for the wider housing service
- To identify opportunities for improvement and innovation
- To engage customers as part of a listening organisation

4.3 Other Residents / The Wider Community

- All members of the community have an obligation to live their life in accordance with the law and enable ‘peaceful enjoyment’ of tenancies
- To alert Boston Mayflower to issues affecting our neighborhood’s that affect quality of life and physical appearance
- To participate in consultation when appropriate opportunities arise

5.0 Performance Monitoring

5.1 We will closely monitor the quality of the services we provide and will do this by:

- Setting challenging Key Performance Indicators for contractor and staff performance;
- On a monthly basis carryout satisfaction surveys as well as internal checks that our own processes are being followed.
- Monitor our asset management and investment delivery to ensure that issues are dealt with as soon as possible
- Engage our customers in service delivery monitoring and service improvement initiatives

5.2 We will, on a six weekly basis, report statistical information to the ‘Your Neighbourhood Service Voice’ who are charged to review, monitor trends and hold to account Heads of Service. Issues may also be referred by the group to the Customer Scrutiny Panel.

6.0 Compliments, Suggestions and Complaints

6.1 We welcome all feedback from our customers, other residents, visitors to a neighbourhood and partner organisations.

- 6.2 Constructive feedback, both positive and negative can be sent directly to us:
- a. On line at www.bostonmayflower.org.uk
 - b. By email to mail@bostonmayflower.org.uk
 - c. By telephone to 0300-365 5000
 - d. In person to a member of staff at any office
 - e. In writing: Boston Mayflower, Chantry House, 3 Lincoln Lane, Boston, PE21 8RU
- 6.3 Any feedback considered to be a complaint will be dealt with in accordance with our Corporate Complaints Policy.
- 6.4 We will provide alternative methods of contacting us on request for customers who have a disability, which prevents them using the methods above.
- 6.5 For those whose first language is not English we will where necessary, provide the services of an interpreter.

7.0 Consultation

- 7.1 This Policy has been the subject of internal consultation given its significance as a regulatory requirement and also discussed at the Neighbourhood Service Voice and their feedback incorporated.

8.0 Publicity

- 8.1 We will consider publicity in all cases where activity has had a positive impact.
- 8.2 The benefits of publicity include:
- a. Motivating customers and other residents to get involved
 - b. Promoting confidence in our services
 - c. Highlighting our successes to a wider audience

9.0 Review

- 9.1 Formally review every 24 months to ensure compliance with national best practice and legislation.
- 9.2 Benchmark against comparable local and national organisations to ensure that we are leaders in the field.
- 9.3 Engage customers in the formal review of this policy.

10.0 Summary

- 10.1 This is an 'umbrella' Policy that signposts a number of specific delivery policies that determine how we provide services. It recognises the linkages and inter-relationships that exist across a range of service areas that influence how popular and ultimately lettable homes are within our

neighbourhoods. This is the key not only to satisfied customers but also underpin the sustainability of Boston Mayflower as a social housing business.



Equality Impact Assessment Initial Screening

Neighbourhood Policy

Name of policy / strategy / project (the "initiative"):

Neighbourhood Policy

Provide a brief summary of the aims and main activities of the initiative:

Neighbourhood and Community Standard that registered providers are expected to meet is published by RP's regulators the HCA. Included in the Standard is 'Neighbourhood Management' where the required outcome is that neighbourhood and communal areas associated with homes are clean and safe. This reinforces our own and already stated desire to ensure that neighbourhoods are attractive, clean and safe places to live, work and socialise in.

Completed by: Deborah Tempest

Date: 10th October 2016

STAGE 1: SCREENING

This stage establishes whether a proposed initiative will have an impact from an equality perspective on any particular group of people or community – i.e. on the grounds of race, religion/faith/belief, gender (including transgender), sexual orientation, age, disability, or whether it is "equality neutral" (i.e. have no effect either positive or negative).

Q 1. Who will benefit from this initiative? Is there likely to be a positive impact on specific groups/communities (whether or not they are the intended beneficiaries), and if so, how? Or is it clear at this stage that it will be equality 'neutral' i.e. will have no particular effect on any group? *Please consider all aspects of Diversity including as a minimum: Age, Disability, Gender/Transgender, Race/Ethnicity, Religion/Faith/Belief, Sexuality*

Staff and customers.



Equality Impact Assessment Initial Screening

Neighbourhood Policy

Q 2. Is there likely to be an adverse impact on one or more minority/under-represented or community group as a result of this initiative? If so, who may be affected and why: Or is it clear at this stage that it will be equality 'neutral'? Please consider all aspects of Diversity including as a minimum: Age, Disability, Gender/Transgender, Race/Ethnicity, Religion/Faith/Belief, Sexuality

None however to ensure that all customers receive the same quality of services we will survey, mystery shop and deliver a positive complaints service ensuring that the same quality of service is delivered.

Q 3. Is there sufficient data on the target beneficiary groups/communities? Are any of these groups under or over represented? Do they have access to the same resources? What are your sources of data and are there any gaps? Please consider all aspects of Diversity including as a minimum: Age, Disability, Gender/Transgender, Race/Ethnicity, Religion/Faith/Belief, Sexuality

N/A

Q 4. Outsourced services – if the initiative is partly or wholly provided by external organisations / agencies, please list any arrangements you plan to ensure that they promote equality and diversity. Please consider all aspects of Diversity including as a minimum: Age, Disability, Gender/Transgender, Race/Ethnicity, Religion/Faith/Belief, Sexuality

The responsibility for delivery is the responsibility of Boston Mayflower staff however where there is partner involvement this will be delivered to the standard required by Boston Mayflower and appropriately monitored to ensure that it consistently meets this standard.

Q 5. Is the impact of the initiative (whether positive or negative) significant enough to warrant a full impact assessment – see guidance? If not, will there be monitoring and review to assess the level of impact over a period of time? Please consider all aspects of Diversity including as a minimum: Age, Disability, Gender/Transgender, Race/Ethnicity, Religion/Faith/Belief, Sexuality



Equality Impact Assessment Initial Screening

Neighbourhood Policy

We do not believe that it will however this will be kept consistently under review through customer feedback, surveying and customer participation with the business.

Q 6. To be completed at six monthly review Detail actions taken to assess the level of impact over a period of time, or to address any gaps in data.

Please consider all aspects of Diversity including as a minimum: Age, Disability, Gender/Transgender, Race/Ethnicity, Religion/Faith/Belief, Sexuality