

**1.0 CONTEXT**

1.1 GWHA operates within a mature set of inner city neighbourhoods, in the Anderston, Finnieston, Woodside, Hillhead, and Hyndland communities in the central and west of the City. The stock ranges from high rise and deck-access accommodation surrounded primarily by hard landscaping, to traditional tenements with communal hard / soft landscape areas in defined boundaries.

**2.0 AIMS**

2.1 To support effective Estate Management through resident engagement initiatives.

2.2 To encourage positive neighbourly relations, a community spirit, and participation in GWHA activities.

2.3 To demonstrate GWHA commitment to the environment, and ecological sustainability through targeted micro-place-making initiatives and support for residents to enhance their neighbourhoods.

**3.0 DEFINITIONS**

3.1 *GWHA* – Glasgow West Housing Association

3.2 *GGI* - Garden Grant Initiative

3.3 *PI's* – Performance Indicators

3.4 *GCC* – Glasgow City Council

3.5 *ESO* – Environmental Services Officer

3.6 *GCGC* – *Good Close & Garden Competition*

**4.0 POLICY STATEMENT**

4.1 GWHA recognise the benefit of resident involvement in maintaining, and enhancing back courts, gardens open spaces, and communal areas. These benefits include: instilling a sense of responsibility, pride and achievement amongst residents and the community; promoting ownership and respect for communal areas, deterring anti-social behaviour, improving resident satisfaction, sustaining tenancies, and protecting investment in the housing stock.

4.2 Concierge services, combined with appointed Close Cleaning, Environmental Maintenance, and Waste Management contractors establish a baseline “GWHA standard” and expectation for residents. These services are augmented by a rolling programme of inspections undertaken by staff to ensure to resident compliance with tenancy expectations, and to ensure optimum value for money in the services undertaken.

4.3 Residents are encouraged to enhance and improve upon this standard, whether that relates to individual or communal gardens, stair landings, light-wells, flower boxes, balconies, or back-court areas.

4.4 Initiatives that encourage participation in gardening and/or environmental projects that enhance the area will be developed in consultation with residents, and Community groups. Partnerships with agencies that provide environmental services (e.g. Zero Waste Circular Economy (Waste Management) contractors, and existing services contractors) will also be investigated with a view to improving our neighbourhoods as part of a Community Benefit framework.

4.5 This Policy sets out our strategy for sustaining Good Close and Garden standards, and outlines the framework for fair and equal recognition of efforts made. Our resident's achievements will be acknowledged through annual Good Close and Garden competitions, with nominations accepted for, or on behalf of, all GWHA residents (including owners living in factored developments).

## 5.0 POLICY

### 5.1 Estate Management - Inspection and Sustainment Categories<sup>1</sup>

- 5.1.1 The baseline garden or close standard is reviewed annually to ensure focus on priority areas. Where GW do not provide services the condition of the Communal areas will be monitored in line with our inspection categories and residents must ensure GWHA standard is maintained and/or exceeded. In the event communal areas fall below expected standard Environmental Services will be introduced in line with Tenancy Agreement and/or Deeds of Condition.
- 5.1.2 The annual Estates Inspection schedule is informed by a range of criteria such as resident compliance with waste management procedures, including clean and clear communal areas, correct disposal of household waste and recycling and ensuring close area is free from household and personal items.
- 5.1.3 The review categorises these areas as either "Excellent", "Good", "Room for Improvement", "Factored by Others", "Hotspot". In doing so it establishes a sustainment and improvement target for the next 12 months.
- 5.1.4 All GWHA communal areas will be categorised to reflect the overall condition of the area in question. The 2022 Estates Services Strategy review (pending<sup>2</sup>) will take a fresh look at the baseline criterion for each category with a view to setting challenging Performance Indicators (PI's) and promoting continuous improvement.
- 5.1.5 Performance is routinely reported to Management Committee through mid-year and end of year reporting.

### 5.2 Estate Management - Resident Engagement / 3rd Party Support

- 5.2.1 The estate management inspection schedule, which informs the Best Close/Good Garden Award shortlist, ensures at least one formal annual inspection throughout all GWHA properties per year, and more regularly where appropriate depending on the estate management category.
- 5.2.2 Estate Inspections additionally monitor, review, and ensure action taken to address any identified Health and Safety issues including combustible items within communal areas, fly tipping and dog fouling.
- 5.2.3 Door to door discussions with residents will be completed as part of the ESO's investigation into incidents / issues within communal areas and backcourts, enforcement letters will be issued and GCC involvement will be introduced as required
- 5.2.4 Routine Tenancy Agreement and Tenancy Sustainment enforcement measures are introduced on a case by case basis to address challenges and assist behavioural change.
- 5.2.5 Walk-about inspections with residents and / or other interested parties (e.g. local councillors, GCC Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability Department, and community groups) are introduced as requested, and will additionally be promoted through newsletter correspondence.

### 5.3 Formal Gardening / Environmental Groups

- 5.3.1 GWHA Service Engagement Strategy (2019-24) sets out arrangements for supporting Registered Tenants Organisations, in line with Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.
- 5.3.2 Support will be considered where groups operate within the Association's area, where membership of the Group is primarily GWHA residents and/or where GWHA has an interest in the area in question. Factors such as other sources of funding, GWHA's relationship with the Group, the purpose of the funding and how it will be utilised for the furtherance of GWHA vision / objectives / aims are also considered.
- 5.3.3 Delegated Authority is given to Services Director (SD) to consider written applications for financial / resource support which may fall under this policy including access to training and advice, accommodation and equipment, and distribution of information through Newsletters, public meetings, conferences etc.

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<sup>1</sup> Factored by others – 1 visit per year, Excellent – 2 visit per year, Good – 4 visits per year, Room for Improvement – 12 visits per year, Hotspot – 50 visits per year

<sup>2</sup> Estates Services Strategy review is included in the policy initiatives (previous policy reference: Estates Management 2005).

**5.4 G3 Growers**

5.4.1 The G3 Growers Initiative was established in 2011 on an area of previously derelict land accessed at 15-25 Brechin Street. A 15 year partnership arrangement is in place, with GWHA supporting the G3 Growers through Newsletter articles / social media, website updates, participation in open days, and through reimbursement of their public liability insurance premium.

5.4.2 Opportunities for joint annual + events are explored by the ESO for consideration by SD in line with GWHA Community Sustainment and Service Engagement Strategies.

**5.5 Garden Grant Initiative (GGI)**

5.5.1 The GGI, established from a contractor donation<sup>3</sup>, was launched September 2012 following consultation at the ATC<sup>4</sup>, MC approval of the principles<sup>5</sup> and CP<sup>6</sup> agreement over the qualifying criteria.

5.5.2 The initiative has continued ever since, recognised as a valuable community sustainment driver. Annually through the End of Year report Charter Indicator 11 Management Committee review the grants awarded. When reviewing judging panel recommendations MC consider the extension of the GCGC and GGI into the following year including confirmation of budget allowances.

5.5.3 Grants are intended as a small contribution towards the cost of garden/back-court enhancements, with an average award in the region of £50, reimbursed on production of receipts.

5.5.4 A maximum of one grant allocation is made per close/ back court per annum, with a maximum of 3 grants in any 5 year period. Any variation from the GGI principles is subject to approval in line with Delegated Authority.

5.5.5 No approval for Garden Grant will be given where proposal would conflict with SHQS<sup>7</sup> obligations or create a Health & Safety hazard. Instruction to remove, or rectify any alteration initiative in common areas that conflicts with these obligations will be given, along with Alteration Policy guidance around what is permitted.

5.5.6 Private Home-owners who wish to improve communal areas shared with GWHA tenants will be eligible to apply for Garden Grant Initiative funds in support of promoting community relations, and improving neighbourhoods.

**5.6 Annual Awards****5.6.1 Good Close Garden Competitions**

5.6.1.1 Aligning with Policy Aims (See section 4.5), annually a panel of judges will consider nomination for closes and gardens that have taken efforts to go beyond the baseline standard and enhanced the communal areas around their home.

5.6.1.2 Nominations for these annual awards are sought through the Tenants Handbook, the website, at GWHA events, and through promotional posters and newsletter articles. The closing date for nominations mid-July each year, with the specific date confirmed in the promotional information in advance.

5.6.1.3 Feedback / nominations are also sought from our appointed services contractors.

5.6.1.4 Residents are encouraged to nominate their own, or neighbouring properties, with staff contributing to the nominations, based on the estate management category and the outcome of inspections in the preceding year. Every effort is made to ensure nominations are representative of all stock/property type and area.

5.6.1.5 A shortlist for visiting by the Judging Panel is prepared by the ESO<sup>8</sup>.

**5.6.2 Judging Panel**

5.6.2.1 Following the closing date for nominations the Judging Panel, consisting of at least two MC Members and a GWHA staff member (generally the ESO), will visit the nominated properties, inviting residents in advance of the visit to meet with them on site to discuss their efforts. The winner/s of the previous year's awards will also be invited to take part in the Judging Panel.

5.6.2.2 The ESO will photograph the nominated contributions for promotional purposes and for the benefit of illustrating recommendations to the MC.

<sup>3</sup> McTaggart: Brechin ST New Build contractor (Sept 2011).

<sup>4</sup> 21/01/12

<sup>5</sup> 24/01/12

<sup>6</sup> Consumer Panel 02/07/12

<sup>7</sup> SHQS – Scottish Housing Quality Standard

<sup>8</sup> Estate Services Officer

### 5.6.3 Judging

- 5.6.3.1 In determining the shortlist, the following criteria will be considered, with a mark out of 5 in each assessment area, and a total score awarded as a percentage of the eligible criteria. Up to 5 additional points may be allocated by the Judging Panel to recognise enhancements and/or efforts of the Nominee.
- 5.6.3.2 The ESO will photograph the nominated properties for promotional purposes and for the benefit of illustrating recommendations to the MC.

<b>GOOD CLOSE (LANDING<sup>9</sup>) CHECKLIST</b>			
Contractor or concierge services in place or maintained entirely by residents:			
Community Spirit demonstrated (yes / no - include details):			
Entrance doors clean and brasses polished		No Graffiti	
Entrance doors locked (where appropriate)		No visible litter or rubbish	
Tiles/walls in the close clean and polished		Windows & sills clean	
Stairs/landing brushed and washed		Banisters clean and polished	
Enhancements		No personal or household items within communal areas	

<b>GOOD GARDEN (BACK-COURT) CHECKLIST</b>			
Service Contractors in place or maintained entirely by residents:			
Community Spirit demonstrated (yes / no (include details):			
Bin stores tidy		No Graffiti	
Grass cut and edged		Plants pruned (i.e. not overgrown)	
No weeds/litter		Hard landscaping brushed and de-mossed	
Hedge/Shrub area maintained		No personal or household items within communal garden area	
Enhancements		Recycling / Upcycling and promotion of Bio-diversity promotion	

### 5.6.4 Awards

- 5.6.4.1 The MC meeting in September will receive recommendations from the judging panel regarding the Awards and the decision of the MC will be final.
- 5.6.4.2 There will be one award for “Best Close/Landing” with the winning entry receiving a plaque for display in the property. A “lifetime award”, in the form of a brass plaque, will be gifted to a property that receives the award on three occasions. This will not exclude future participation.
- 5.6.4.3 For the Good Garden/Back-Court competition, there will be three awards as follows:
- |                                 |     |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Best Communal Garden/Back-court | £50 |
| Newcomer/Most Improved          | £50 |
| Best Main Door/Box Garden       | £25 |
- Where the award is for a communal space, residents will be invited to meet with ESO and ESC to discuss and agree how the award will be spent with all residents having a input on the proposed communal area improvement.
- 5.6.4.4 Outcome of GCGC will be confirmed in Autumn newsletters.
- 5.6.4.5 MC delegate authority to Chief Exec for exceptional procedural adjustment to reflect external factors out-with GWHA control. For example GCGC assessed during pandemic lock down 2020 via photographs. Timing of any variation, and communication of the change will ensure continued fair participation for all.

<sup>9</sup> This relates to multi-storey and deck access properties

**6.0 FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS**

**6.1 Feedback**

6.1.1 GWHA tenants and other customers may provide feedback about this document by emailing [admin@glasgowwestha.co.uk](mailto:admin@glasgowwestha.co.uk)

**6.2 Complaints**

6.2.1 Tenants with a grievance arising from the Good Close and Garden Policy will be considered in accordance with GWHA's Complaints Handling Procedure.

6.2.2 Once the Association's Complaints Handling Procedure is exhausted, there is a right of appeal to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). As the SPSO is unlikely to comment on matters of a legal nature, a review will focus on the proper application of the Association's policy.

**7.0 REVIEW**

7.1 This Policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or sooner, subject to a change in legislation or circumstance.

7.2 The Policy, in parts, attempts to summarise current legislation. In any case of conflict between the two, legislation will always preside.

**8.0 DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

8.1 Delegated authority is granted by the Management Committee to the Chief Executive and Staff to implement this Policy and the associated procedures.