



## WCHG Environmental Services Policy

<b>Date of approval</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> September 2023
<b>Responsible director</b>	Paul Butterworth Executive Director of Assets
<b>Policy monitoring body</b>	Customer Experience Committee
<b>Resident input into policy</b>	Consultation with Great Places Panel, Scrutiny Group and Customer Focus Groups
<b>Date for policy review</b>	September 2026
<b>Linked strategies/policies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• WCHG Assisted Gardening Policy</li><li>• WCHG Empty Home Policy</li><li>• WCHG Equipment and Adaptations Policy</li><li>• WCHG Allocations Policy</li><li>• WCHG Complaints Policy</li><li>• WCHG Data Protection Policy</li><li>• WCHG Equality and Diversity Policy</li><li>• WCHG Asset Management Strategy</li><li>• WCHG Repairs and Maintenance Policy</li><li>• WCHG Garden Boundary and Fencing Policy</li><li>• WCHG Mutual Exchanges and Transfers</li><li>• WCHG Asbestos Management</li></ul>
<b>Statutory and Legal Framework</b>	Environmental Protection Act 1990 Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 Waste Management Regulations 2006
<b>Version/date</b>	Version 3 August 2023

## **1. Background**

- 1.1. The Wythenshawe Community Housing Group (WCHG) Environmental Services Policy reflects the WCHG commitment to providing customers with a healthy, safe and presentable environment, by ensuring external and internal shared communal areas are maintained to service standards and focussed on maintaining the safety, quality and decency of the property portfolio.
- 1.2. We recognise that the quality of these services are critical to determining how satisfied customers are with their home and landlord. This policy will drive provision of a service that is proactive, has a right first time ethos, provides value for money, is accessible, and capable of meeting the different needs of all our customers.
- 1.3. In addition, it will fundamentally support the delivery of our Asset Management Strategy, and the need to preserve and improve the net present value of the homes we provide.
- 1.4. WCHG will use this policy to support the delivery of the WCHG Corporate Plan, the Great places strategic theme, and ensure that we meet all statutory, regulatory and contractual obligations in ways that customers recognise. We will enable customers to hold us accountable for its delivery, and influence its ongoing development.

## **2. Scope**

- 2.1. This policy defines the service provided by WCHG to meet our environmental responsibilities for shared internal and external communal areas, empty homes gardens, estate works, assisted garden, Arboculture, open space grass cutting and waste removal.

This policy applies to:

- Customers who pay rent and / or service charges.
- Leaseholder customers.
- Customers who live in homes with shared communal internal and external areas.
- Customers who qualify for Assisted Gardening.

## **3. Environmental Service Delivery**

This policy covers the following services delivered by the Environmental Services Team:

### **3.1. Open Space Grass Cutting**

All open grassed areas owned by the Group will have a 28-day cutting cycle target without collecting cuttings. Roadside verges are part of the Highway system and remain the responsibility of Manchester City Council.

### **3.2. Restoration of Empty Homes Gardens**

When a property is re-let the garden will be cleared and left in a clean and tidy condition. Any hazards such as fish ponds and unsafe structures will be removed. Where an external existing feature are deemed fit for purpose these will be left on site for the new tenant unless the new tenant requests their removal. The new tenant will sign a disclaimer to accept responsibility of the item when they sign the tenancy agreement with Tenancy Management.

### **3.3. Assisted Gardening Service**

The Assisted Gardening service is available to vulnerable tenants who have difficulty maintaining their garden and meet the criteria set out in the WCHG Assisted Gardening Policy.

### **3.4. Arboriculture**

WCHG will keep and maintain a tree register of all trees in our Ownership.

Tree work will only be carried out in line with the 4 D's; Dead, Dying, Diseased or Dangerous. Additional work will only be carried out if it will benefit the tree's health.

On occasions when a tree or branch falls and impacts a third party's property, the third party will need to make any claim through their own insurance.

### **3.5. Shared and Communal Grounds**

WCHG will provide a gardening service to shared and communal grounds and will aim to carry out up to 17 maintenance visits per year. Grass cuttings will be removed from site unless access or weather prevents this.

### **3.6. Additional Services**

WCHG will provide a range of additional services including:

- Maintain the flow of the Brooks and water courses within WCHG ownership.
- Winter gritting to office grounds and sheltered accommodation.
- Support for community projects (bulb planting, food growing initiatives etc).
- Dealing with Japanese Knotweed that is identified in accordance with statutory regulations.

### 3.7. **Mobile Estate Service (cleaning of internal communal areas)**

WCHG will provide a cleaning service to properties with communal areas; each area will receive a regular cleaning service in line with our service standards.

### 3.8. **Waste Management**

**General waste:** Where possible waste generated by our activities will be separated at source to maximise recycling and disposed of through our waste management partners

**Other Waste:** Hazardous and other waste will be removed in line with legislation relevant for the type of waste.

## 4. **Equality Diversity and Inclusion**

4.1. WCHG will ensure that the Environmental Services Policy and procedure is accessible to it all customers. WCHG recognises that customers of all races, ages, religions, gender, sexual orientation, literacy levels and disability should be treated equally and fairly. We will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no-one is discriminated against directly or indirectly on the basis of any protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

4.2. We recognise that some protected groups may be disproportionately impacted and will take additional steps in the application of this policy and make reasonable adjustments to ensure compliance with the Act.

4.3. A full Equality Impact Assessment was not found to be necessary for this policy.

## 5. **Monitoring and Review**

5.1. We gather a range of performance and customer satisfaction data to monitor and measure the quality of service delivery and report at monthly performance meetings

5.2. Customers are invited to hold us accountable for our performance and guide the development of priorities, particularly through the Great Places customer panel, the Scrutiny Group, and the Customer Experience Committee.

5.3. We will review this policy every 3 years.