



WCHG Boundary Policy

Date of approval	11 th May 2026
Responsible director	Paul Butterworth - Executive Director of Assets
Policy monitoring body	CX Committee
Resident input into policy	CX Committee
Date for policy review	May 2029
Linked strategies/policies	Garden Enforcement Policy Empty Homes Policy Repairs and Maintenance Policy Environmental Services Policy Assisted Gardening Policy Asset Management Strategy Tenancy Management Policy Complaints Policy
Statutory and Legal Framework	Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 Equality Act 2010 Quality and Safety Consumer Standard
Version/date	V2.1 May 2026

Boundary Policy

1. Background

- 1.1. The strategic themes of Great Place and Living Well set out within the Wythenshawe Community Housing Group (WCHG) Corporate Plan, confirm our commitment to maintaining homes and providing services for our residents. This supporting policy sets out the approach we take to the provision and maintenance of boundary hedges, fences and walls.
- 1.2. WCHG continues to recognise the Garden City heritage that communities across Wythenshawe proudly support, and this policy will continue to promote these principles.

2. Legislation, Guidance, Regulatory Standards and Sanctions

- 2.1. **Legislation** – The principal legislation applicable to this policy is the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and the obligations and responsibilities set out in tenancy agreements and leases.
- 2.2. **Regulatory Standards** - We will comply with the Regulator of Social Housing's regulatory framework and consumer standards for social housing in England. The Safety and Quality Standard is the primary one applicable to this policy.
- 2.3. **Local Planning Authority** – We will comply with the Local Planning Authority guidelines for boundary heights to front and rear boundaries..

3. Risk Management

- 3.1. The WCHG Board annually review the Corporate Risk Register and agree the risk appetite for each one.
- 3.2. The WCHG Audit and Risk Committee is responsible for overseeing the management of corporate risks associated with this policy.
- 3.3. The specific risks associated with this policy are:

SR2 - Death, Serious Injury or Harm: Fail to ensure we effectively protect our residents, WCHG colleagues and visitors. Board Appetite – Averse

SR3 - Regulatory Standards, laws, legislation and compliance: Non-compliance with regulatory standards, laws and legislation. Board Appetite – Averse

SR8 - Asset quality, repairs and building safety: Failure to effectively manage asset quality and building safety. Board Appetite - Averse (but open to innovation)

- 3.4. The risk appetite set by the Board is 'Averse', defined as 'avoidance of risk and uncertainty as a key organisational objective. The key focus of the Board is that regulatory compliance continues to be achieved, and the Regulator of Social Housing Standards and Consumer Standards are met.

- 3.5. We will maintain a suite of procedures and processes, and provide adequate resources to implement them, to mitigate the risk of service delivery failing to adhere to this policy.

4. Scope

- 4.1. This policy applies to gates and boundaries comprised of a hedge, a wall, or a fence of different types, for example solid, perforated, wooden panels, or wire.
- 4.2. Boundaries within the scope of this policy include perimeter and divisional boundaries to the front and rear of properties and to communal areas.
- 4.3. Effective boundaries may be formed from a mixture of fence types or hedges and do not need to be uniform throughout.
- 4.4. Application of this policy is subject to any specific responsibilities set out in the resident's lease or tenancy agreement.
- 4.5. Under the scope of this policy the maintenance of boundaries includes minor repairs and cyclical replacement, work required to protect health and safety, and to provide an effective boundary. For purposes of this policy 'effective' does not constitute impenetrable and, for example it does not replace the resident's obligation to supervise visitors, children and keep pets under control, in line with their tenancy agreement.

5. Commitments and obligations

Landlord Responsibilities

- 5.1. WCHG will complete all boundary repairs that present an immediate health and safety risk in line with our Repairs and Maintenance Policy, as emergency repairs within a 24 hour completion timescale.
- 5.2. WCHG will record the condition of all boundaries at the start of every new tenancy or property exchange.
- 5.3. WCHG will confirm specific resident responsibilities, such as fencing installed by previous residents that exceeds the WCHG offer, at the start of each tenancy before taking on the tenancy.
- 5.4. WCHG will aim to agree the fair sharing of costs where work is required to boundaries with a private property. This includes the use of legal action, when necessary, for example when a third-party surveyor is appointed under The Party Wall Act, to determine an award in disputed matters. The consent of all parties will be required before any work goes ahead.
- 5.5. WCHG will investigate boundary disputes between tenanted properties and private properties. This includes establishing boundary locations, legal advice and re-aligning boundary if required.
- 5.6. WCHG will investigate issues related to unmanaged land between boundaries, sometimes referred to as 'no-man's land'. This could include the clearance of waste or

corrective boundary work. When appropriate WCHG will seek to recover reasonable costs from tenants and private land owners.

- 5.7. WCHG will set an annual budget as part of the annual business planning process which will influence the capacity and pace of boundary investment across the estates.

Fencing

- 5.8. WCHG will complete fencing repairs that do not exceed more than 3 fence panels, in line with our Repairs and Maintenance Policy. Such works will generally be classed as non-urgent and assigned a 20-day completion target unless a planned programme is imminent for the estate.
- 5.9. For more extensive fencing work, WCHG will deliver a planned programme approach in partnership with a specialist contractor, to manage demand and achieve value for money.
- 5.10. WCHG will assess the work required against the following criteria:
- 5.10.1. Confirmation that WCHG is responsible for the fencing.
 - 5.10.2. The level of health and safety risk presented by current condition.
 - 5.10.3. The access that is available to complete the work required.
 - 5.10.4. The residents' circumstances that may require reasonable adjustment to the policy in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- 5.11. WCHG will confirm the completion timescale and extent of the work that will be undertaken, with individual residents at the point of inspection. Completion timescales will vary in line with levels of demand and assessment of priority.
- 5.12. WCHG will, (when possible), endeavour to match existing fencing when completing repairs. When this is not possible a mix of fencing types will be used to re-instate an effective boundary.
- 5.13. When trees are present within the boundary line the most suitable type of fencing will be installed. WCHG will not remove healthy trees simply to install fencing.
- 5.14. WCHG will only provide and maintain fencing to the height of 4 feet, when it borders a public highway or footpath.
- 5.15. WCHG will deliver a cyclical programme of boundary gate and fencing inspection and redecoration, including the repair and or replacement of gates, fence panels and posts as required.

Hedges

- 5.16. WCHG will ensure that boundaries formed by hedges are cut back to a reasonable level in line with the re-lettable standard before a new tenancy starts.

- 5.17. WCHG may correct gaps between sparse trunks by installing metal chain link type fencing, or concrete posts and timber panel fencing, alongside additional planting of infill privet and shrubs.
- 5.18. WCHG will not replace boundary hedges with fencing or walls.

Walls and gates

- 5.19. WCHG will maintain walls and gates in line with the WCHG Repairs and Maintenance Policy.

Resident Responsibilities

- 5.20. Residents are responsible for the maintenance of boundaries as outlined in their tenancy agreement or lease. This includes the regular maintenance and cutting back of hedges.
- 5.21. For residents who started their tenancies after 1st April 2021 this includes the responsibility for repair of boundaries to the rear of their property.
- 5.22. We may carry out repairs to mitigate any health and safety risks caused by fencing that is the residents responsibility, and we reserve the right to recharge residents in these cases.
- 5.23. Residents must ensure their property is clear and free from hazards for any boundary repair or replacement work to be undertaken.
- 5.24. Residents can request permission to complete boundary improvement work through the WCHG Tenant Improvement and Alteration Form that is available on our website.
- 5.25. Residents who install their own boundaries are responsible for getting any necessary planning permission, maintaining and repairing them.
- 5.26. Residents may be recharged at the end of their tenancy if WCHG has to complete remedial work to boundaries the resident has installed or is responsible for and has failed to maintain.

6. Performance Measurement, Monitoring and Review

- 6.1. We will use a range of indicators to monitor and report performance against this policy.
- 6.2. Performance will be reported internally as follows:

Monitoring Body	Frequency
Group Leadership Team	Every Meeting - monthly
Leadership Team	Every Meeting - monthly
CX Committee	Annually

6.3. Performance reporting to all monitoring bodies will be a snapshot position on the last day of the month. Access to live daily data is available to colleagues with strategic and operational responsibility for services related to boundaries through our performance management system.

6.4. The measures reported will include but are not limited to:

Data - The total number of:

- Number of fencing jobs requested, outstanding and completed
- Number of properties split by M22 and M23 postcode, (incl. adjacent postcodes).
- Annual expenditure and investment into boundaries

Commentary to explain:

- Current position and general wait times for customers
- Corrective action required.
- Progress with completion of follow-up works.

7. Resident engagement

7.1. We recognise the need to provide residents with effective communication relating to boundaries. We will use a range of mechanisms to maximise resident access for any repair work relating to boundaries, including letters, phone calls and one to one support for vulnerable and hard to reach residents.

7.2. We will also share information clearly and transparently and make it available to residents through regular newsletters and our external website.

7.3. Residents who are dissatisfied with any part of the service related to boundaries under this policy can make a complaint in line with the WCHG Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy. Full details can be found on our website.

7.4. Residents requiring specific boundaries to suit their household needs may be referred to Manchester Equipment & Adaptations Service for grant funding to undertake major work that accommodates Disabled Facilities Grant funded alterations.

8. Roles and Responsibilities


8.1. The Customer Experience Committee is responsible for setting and approving the priorities of this policy and ensuring it is fully implemented. They will formally review and approve it every three years or sooner if there is a change in legislation or regulation.

8.2. The Leadership Team are responsible for monitoring delivery against this policy.

8.3. The Customer Experience Committee receive, and review performance data periodically related to the delivery of this policy.

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- 8.4. The Executive Director of Assets has strategic responsibility for the Boundary Policy and they oversee the implementation of this policy.
 - 8.5. The Head of Assets and Building Safety is responsible for the operational delivery, management and monitoring of this policy.
 - 8.6. The Environmental Services Manager has operational responsibility for the management of boundaries.
 - 8.7. Neighbourhood Officers are responsible for enforcing the garden regulations within the Tenancy Agreement to allow access to boundaries
 - 8.8. The Wythenshawe Works technicians and a range of approved sub-contractors are responsible for the delivery of services within the scope of this policy.
 - 8.9. The Living Well Team will support Wythenshawe Works teams to gain access to properties to carry out work to boundaries when required.
 - 8.10. The Tenancy Management Team, Garden City Homes Team and Environmental Services Team are jointly responsible for managing boundary enquiries from leaseholders, owner occupiers and other private landowners.

9. Competence, Training and Professionalism

- 9.1. WCHG is committed to realising the capability and potential of colleagues by investing in them through learning, training and professional study. Line managers will use the WCHG Continuous Performance Engagement process to ensure that mandatory training and required qualifications are maintained and kept up to date for all colleagues involved in the delivery of this policy
 - 9.2. Our Board is recruited to meet the requirements of the governance skills matrix to ensure appropriate strategic control and oversight is provided across the Group's operations. Members receive regular and ongoing training to ensure skill and competency levels are maintained.
 - 9.3. The Executive Director of Assets and the senior management team holds or is working towards the Chartered Institute of Housing Level 5 Diploma in Housing, or equivalent.
 - 9.4. We will check our contractors hold the relevant qualifications and accreditations when we procure them, and thereafter on an annual basis; we will evidence these checks and each contractor's certification appropriately.
 - 9.5. We will deliver training on this policy and its supporting procedures through mechanisms including but not limited to:
 - Team Meetings
 - One to one meeting
 - On the job training
 - Toolbox talks.
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10. Equality Diversity and Inclusion

- 10.1. Wythenshawe Community Housing Group (WCHG) is committed to providing fair and inclusive services for all our residents.
- 10.2. We will do our best to make sure that no one is treated unfairly because of who they are. This includes any protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.
- 10.3. We understand that some people may be more affected by our policies or services. Where needed, we will take extra steps and make reasonable adjustments to make sure everyone can access our services fairly.
- 10.4. If you need this policy in another format, such as large print, Easy Read, Braille, audio, or another language, please contact us:
 - Phone: 0300 111 0000
 - Email: inclusionanddiversity@wchg.org.uk
- 10.5. A screening document for this policy has been completed and reviewed by the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Panel. Following this review, a full EIA was not found to be necessary