



WCHG Environmental Services Policy

Date of approval	11 th May 2026
Responsible director	Paul Butterworth Executive Director of Assets
Policy monitoring body	Customer Experience Committee
Resident input into policy	March 2026
Date for policy review	May 2029
Linked strategies/policies	<p>WCHG Assisted Gardening Policy WCHG Empty Home Policy WCHG Equipment and Adaptations Policy WCHG Allocations Policy WCHG Complaints Policy WCHG Data Protection Policy WCHG Equality and Diversity Policy WCHG Asset Management Strategy WCHG Repairs and Maintenance Policy WCHG Garden Boundary and Fencing Policy WCHG Mutual Exchanges and Transfers WCHG Asbestos Management</p>
Statutory and Legal Framework	<p>Environmental Protection Act 1990 Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 Waste Management Regulations 2006 Quality and Safety Consumer Standard</p>
Version/date	May 2026 V2.1

Environmental Services Policy

1. Background

- 1.1. The Wythenshawe Community Housing Group (WCHG) Corporate Plan includes the strategic themes of Great Place and Living Well, that confirm our commitment to providing residents with a healthy, safe and presentable environment. This policy sets out our approach to delivering a range of services that ensure the maintenance, quality and decency of shared and communal internal and external shared areas and other assets.
- 1.2. The delivery of environmental services under this policy will be proactive and deliver value for money. They play a fundamental role in supporting our wider Asset Management Strategy to preserve and improve the net present value of the homes we provide.

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.

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 customers, 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 wherever possible; preference for safe, compliant, and controlled approaches.' The key focus of the Board is that regulatory compliance continues to be achieved, and the Regulator of Social Housing's 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. The following areas of service come under the scope of this policy:
 - 4.1.1. Mobile Cleaning services provided at shared internal and external communal areas.
 - 4.1.2. Grass cutting to WCHG owned open spaces.
 - 4.1.3. Provision of safe and tidy garden spaces at empty homes before new tenancy starts.
 - 4.1.4. Provision of an assisted gardening service for residents who meet the qualifying criteria.
 - 4.1.5. Garden service to shared and communal grounds
 - 4.1.6. Arboriculture services to the urban trees across the WCHG estates.
 - 4.1.7. Treatment of Japanese Knotweed growing on WCHG owned land.
 - 4.1.8. Waste management and removal
 - 4.1.9. Maintenance of open water courses on land owned by WCHG.
 - 4.1.10. Winter gritting to offices and priority accommodation such as Independent Living.
- 4.2. In addition, this policy governs the management of space related to other assets where WCHG has responsibilities including:
 - 4.2.1. Unadopted roads, paths and green spaces, including landlocked sites
 - 4.2.2. Parks and play areas
 - 4.2.3. Bin stores
 - 4.2.4. Car parking
 - 4.2.5. Garages
 - 4.2.6. Commercial shops

5. Commitments and obligations

5.1. Mobile Estate Service

5.1.1. WCHG will provide cleaning services to all properties with communal areas utilising internal and external resources.

5.1.2. The scope and frequency of service is in line with the service standard for each building.

5.2. Open space Grass Cutting

5.2.1. Open grassed areas owned by WCHG will be cut without collecting cuttings.

5.2.2. We will maintain a 28 day cutting cycle, subject to weather conditions.

5.2.3. We will not cut roadside verges that are the responsibility of Manchester City Council.

5.3. Empty Homes Gardens

5.3.1. Gardens will be clear of waste, overgrowth, hazards and unsafe structures and left in a clean and tidy condition when a property is re-let.

5.3.2. External features that are safe and fit for purpose can be left in place if the new tenant accepts responsibility by signing a disclaimer alongside their tenancy agreement.

5.4. Assisted Gardening Service

5.4.1. This service is available to residents who meet the criteria set out in the Assisted Gardening Policy.

5.4.2. The number of applicants who can receive this service is limited by the available budget WCHG can allocate to it each year.

5.4.3. Membership of this service is reviewed every year and it can be withdrawn in line with the Assisted Gardening Policy.

5.5. Shared and Communal Grounds

5.5.1. WCHG will provide a minimum of 8 and maximum of 17 garden maintenance visits to shared and communal grounds, This includes removal of grass cuttings, when access and weather conditions allow.

5.6. Arboriculture

5.6.1. WCHG will maintain a register of all the trees we own.

5.6.2. We will carry out tree work in line with the 4 D's principal, meaning work will be carried out if a tree is 'dead, dying diseased or dangerous'. Additional work will only be carried out if it will benefit the tree's health.

5.6.3. Where damage is caused to a third party's property due to a falling tree or branch, the third party must claim through their own insurance.

5.7. Treatment of Japanese Knotweed

5.7.1. WCHG will deal with Japanese Knotweed that is identified on land or property owned by us, in accordance with statutory regulations.

5.8. Waste management and removal

5.8.1. WCHG will maximise the recycling of waste generated by our activities and disposed of through our waste management partners.

5.8.2. All hazardous waste will be removed in line with all relevant legislation.

5.8.3. We will remove fly tipped waste from our land and properties and reserve the right to recharge residents who are responsible for it.

5.9. Maintenance of open water courses

5.9.1. WCHG will regularly inspect and maintain the open flow of water courses and brooks that come under our land ownership and title/lease responsibilities.

5.10. Winter gritting

5.10.1. Car parks and pedestrian pathways will be gritted when safe to do so at offices and priority accommodation such as Independent Living properties during working hours, and in line with weather forecasts for ice. No service is offered outside of office working hours or to general estates areas.


5.11. Electric Vehicle Chargers

5.11.1. WCHG recognise the current transition to low carbon technologies and need for home infrastructure to charge vehicles purchased by customers. The garden city estate design often prevents 'in-curtilage' parking. WCHG commit to supporting customers through our 'request for alterations' process to ensure customers can gain our formal approval for customers commissioning charging solutions. Installation must prioritise safety and be in accordance with the latest regulations and guidelines. WCHG will not fund charging installations but will seek to support customers positively and engage when grants or estate solutions are available.

6. Management of other assets with open space

6.1. There are a number of other types of open spaces listed in paragraph 4.2 that WCHG are responsible for.


6.2. We will take a proactive approach to monitoring and maintaining the condition of all such areas.

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- 6.3. We will complete repair work needed at these locations in line with our Repairs and Maintenance Policy.
 - 6.4. We will inspect the unadopted public paths, pavement, car park areas and roads year to identify any necessary maintenance work. This will be completed in line with the Repairs and Maintenance Policy.
 - 6.5. We will maintain land locked sites, garage sites and access sites twice a year.
 - 6.6. We will deliver a programme of annual inspections and health and safety audits of all parks and play areas that we are responsible for. Follow up remedial work and any responsive maintenance will be completed by specialist suppliers in accordance with the specific contracts that are in place.
 - 6.7. We will maintain the bin stores across the property portfolio to ensure they remain accessible, effective and secure. All maintenance work will completed in line with the Repairs and Maintenance Policy, and specialist contractors will maintain fob access systems.
 - 6.8. We will maintain the condition of all car parking areas we provide in line with the Repairs and Maintenance Policy.
 - 6.9. We will not provide any additional car parking spaces, unless it is required and approved through the Disabled Facilities Grant application process, as part of property adaptation to enable independent living.
 - 6.10. We will not remove grassed areas to install new parking including for electric vehicle charging
 - 6.11. We will maintain garages and the surrounding areas, in line with the Repairs and Maintenance Policy.
 - 6.12. We will complete all repairing obligations to commercial shops in line with the terms of the specific lease.

7. Significant Non - Compliance and Escalation

- 7.1. We will investigate and manage all RIDDOR notifications submitted to the Health and Safety Executive in relation to the environmental services covered in this policy and will act to address any issues identified or lessons learnt, to prevent a similar incident occurring again.

8. Quality Assurance

- 8.1. WCHG Resident Service Inspectors will complete regular inspections of communal areas and report findings to monitor the quality of mobile cleaning services.
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- 8.2. Environmental Team Leaders will post inspect 10% of completed work. Suppliers will be managed and recruited in line with our procurement policy and procedures and subject to rigorous contract management by team leaders.
- 8.3. We will utilise demand data and annual feedback trends to influence budget setting during the annual business planning processes that will establish resources to deliver the range of competing demands across the garden city estate.

9. Performance Measurement and Monitoring

- 9.1. We will use a range of key performance indicators (KPI) to monitor and report performance against the delivery of Environmental Services.
- 9.2. The performance achieved will be reported internally as follows:

Monitoring Body	Frequency
WCHG Board	Every meeting – bi monthly
Group Leadership Team	Every Meeting - monthly
CX Committee	Every meeting – bi monthly

- 9.3. 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 all colleagues with strategic and operational responsibility for environmental services, through our performance management system.
- 9.4. The measures reported will include but are not limited to:

Data

- Empty homes gardens, number requested, completed and outstanding
- Shared communal grounds, number of sites completed each month, and time spent on each site
- Mobile cleaning, number of sites completed per month
- Waste removal, number requested, completed and outstanding
- Grass cutting, number of days per cycle

Commentary to explain:

- Current position and spend profiles
- Corrective action required.
- Progress with completion of follow-up works.

10. Resident engagement

- 10.1. We recognise the need to provide residents with effective communications to support our delivery of environmental services. We will use as required a range of mechanisms to engage with residents including letters, phone calls, electronic notification boards and one to one support for vulnerable and hard to reach residents.

- 10.2. We will also share information clearly and transparently and make it available to residents through regular newsletters and our external website.
- 10.3. Residents can join the WCHG Service Inspector initiative to play an active role in monitoring delivery of this service
- 10.4. Residents can make a complaint about this service in line with the WCH G Complaints Policy

11. Roles and Responsibilities

- 11.1. The CX Committee have delegated authority from the WCHG Board, to be 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.
- 11.2. The Group Leadership Team are responsible for monitoring that compliance against this policy is being achieved.
- 11.3. The Customer Experience Committee receive, and review performance data related to the delivery of this policy.
- 11.4. The Executive Director of Assets has strategic responsible for the overall delivery of this policy.
- 11.5. The Head of Repairs and Head of Assets is responsible for the operational delivery, management and monitoring of this policy.
- 11.6. The Environmental Services Manager has operational responsibility for the management of Environmental Services and providing data to inform service charge accounts.
- 11.7. The Environmental Team Leaders and their teams are responsible for the delivery of services within the scope of this policy.
- 11.8. The Wythenshawe Works technicians and a range of approved sub-contractors are responsible for the delivery of any repairs in line with the Repairs and Maintenance Policy.
- 11.9. The Tenancy Management Team are responsible for enforcing the Tenancy Agreement to keep communal areas free from waste and other hazards, enforce garden regulations, and approve requests for Assisted Gardening applications.

12. Competence, Training and Professionalism


- 12.1. 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

- 12.2. 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.
- 12.3. 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.
- 12.4. The Environmental Services Manager and Team Leaders will hold the ILM level 3 and CIH level 4 qualifications.
- 12.5. Environmental Services operatives will have specific competence training in line with their job role such as:
 - 12.5.1. Machinery competence training,
 - 12.5.2. Trailer towing,
 - 12.5.3. Hand Arm Vibration training,
 - 12.5.4. COSHH training
 - 12.5.5. Pesticide qualifications - PA1, PA6PA30
- 12.6. 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.
- 12.7. 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.

13. Equality Diversity and Inclusion

- 13.1. WCHG is committed to providing fair and inclusive services for all our residents.
- 13.2. 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.
- 13.3. 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.
- 13.4. If you need this policy in another format, such as large print, Easy Read, Braille, audio, or another language, please contact us:

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- Phone: 0300 111 0000
 - Email: inclusionanddiversity@wchg.org.uk

13.5. This policy is not a new policy. There have been no significant changes to the policy from the previous full review. An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed at the next full review.

