



Draft Estates Management Policy consultation

A new Estate Management Policy has been drafted by Peaks & Plains and we would like to consult with and gather feedback from our customers, local residents and stakeholders.

The Policy principally concerns the Trusts communal areas and green spaces, but it also addresses issues regarding tenants' homes and garden spaces.

The Policy aims to provide information on how the Trust manages our green spaces and outlines the objectives of the Trust. The objectives include:

1. **Deliver clean and well maintained communal and green spaces;**
2. **Work in consultation with customers, to outline how we intend to deliver and manage communal areas and estates;**
3. **Meet the requirements set out by the Government's Regulator of Social Housing (RSH);**
4. **Ensure the way we manage estates represents good value for money;**

We'd really like to hear from you. What we do well, what we could do better or even that we should be doing something totally different with our green spaces.

If you would like to provide feedback on the policy you can this do by completing our online form here: peaksplains.org/estatespolicy or by emailing getinvolved@peaksplains.org.

Please provide any feedback by Friday 14 May.

We encourage residents to be part of the Trust and shape how things are done. If you would like to find out more about getting involved visit: peaksplains.org/getinvolved



PEAKS & PLAINS
Housing Trust

The Trust

Draft Estate
Management
Policy

Version number: Draft

Effective Date:

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1. OVERVIEW AND SCOPE

This policy sets out the Trusts approach to our management and delivery of our internal and external communal areas and green estate. We are committed to delivering clean, green and safe estates and acknowledge the way we manage our estates directly affects the quality of life and environment enjoyed by our customers.

Where we refer to an estate, this may mean homes with shared communal areas or a block of flats. This policy will apply where the Trust is the freeholder.

The Policy principally concerns the Trusts communal areas and green spaces, but it also addresses issues regarding tenants' homes and garden spaces.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this policy is to outline how the Trust will:

- **Deliver clean and well maintained communal and green spaces;**
- **Work in consultation with customers, to outline how we intend to deliver and manage communal areas and estates;**
- **Meet the requirements set out by the Government's Regulator of Social Housing (RSH);**
- **Ensure the way we manage estates represents good value for money;**

3. LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

In the RSH's Neighbourhood and Community Standard it states that:

'Registered providers consult with tenants in developing a published policy for maintaining and improving the neighbourhoods associated with their home. This applies where the registered provider has a responsibility (either exclusively or in part) for the condition of that neighbourhood. The policy shall include any communal areas associated with the registered providers' home.

Registered providers, having taken account of their presence and impact within the areas where they own properties, shall:

- (a) Identify and publish the roles they are able to play within the areas where they have properties;
- (b) Co-operate with local partnership arrangements and strategic housing functions of local authorities where they are able to assist them in achieving their objectives.'

We will manage estates in accordance with the requirement of our regulator, best practice and any other relevant legislation.

4. OUR APPROACH

Clean and well maintained

For aesthetic, as well as health and safety reasons, issues of cleanliness and maintenance will be adequately addressed. Working with customers, local authorities and managing agents, we will keep estates clean and safe.

- We will conduct regular inspections of our communal and green spaces using well trained staff to identify health and safety risks and ensure service standards are maintained.
- Where there is a local need, officers will arrange and attend estate inspections with customers in the neighbourhoods. Where problems have been identified, action plans will be drawn up to resolve these.
- Litter, graffiti, and vehicles damaging grassed areas will be effectively managed.
- We will tackle environmental crime which includes fly tipping; littering; dog fouling; and abandoned vehicles. We will work in partnership with local enforcement agencies in doing this and the maintenance of such issues will be addressed in a reasonable time frame.

Sustainability

The methods used in maintaining green spaces and the facilities within them will be environmentally sound, relying on current knowledge and best practice. The Trust's contractors will be aware of the range of techniques available to them, and demonstrate that informed choices have been made and are regularly reviewed.

- Wherever possible we will replace trees that have to be removed by replanting – although this may not be at the same location.
- We will minimise and justify pesticide use and wherever possible recycle waste plant material.
- We will take appropriate energy conservation, pollution reduction, waste recycling, and resource conservation measures.

Invasive Species

The Trust is aware of problems associated with the spread of invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed.

When invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed (or similar species) are identified on land for which the Trust is responsible (this includes customers gardens), we will accept responsibility for eradication of the local occurrence and work with licenced contractors to manage the area.

Community involvement

Our communal and green space management will offer opportunities for the involvement of as many customers and wider members of the community as possible.

We will seek customers' views on the way we manage communal and green spaces, and use any feedback from complaints to identify improvements to our services.

Tenants' garden space

The Trust is committed to increasing our tenants' enjoyment and awareness of the value of their garden spaces. We will encourage and support our customers to utilise and care for their garden spaces. This work will include:

- **Maintaining a robust and workable approach to enforcement where gardens are kept in a poor state.**
- **Maintaining a robust void garden process.**

Boundary Vegetation

The Trust will maintain hedged boundaries wherever possible. It is recognised that hedged boundaries add to the green character of Cheshire and surrounding counties. Where the hedge is rooted within a tenant's garden, it is the tenant's responsibility to maintain all sides of the hedge, including those that overhang onto the public footpath.

Trees

We will maintain trees sited on public realm and communal land, in accordance with the relevant legislation and best practice. Trees that are situated within a tenant's garden are the responsibility of the tenant.

The Trust will conduct a regular tree survey and maintain a database of the tree stock for which we are responsible. We will ensure that all trees are maintained in accordance with the recommendations of the tree survey.

The felling of trees will only be undertaken where a tree is clearly diseased or unstable, or where it is causing structural damage to property. Where a tree is felled, consideration will be given to potential replacement of that tree with another, whether in the same area or as a program of planting.

Work will not normally be undertaken to trees where they are claimed to be blocking light to a property, dropping leaves or affecting television or telephone reception.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

This policy will be followed in conjunction with the Trust's Equality and Diversity policy. We will ensure that all persons will be able to enjoy the use of our communal areas and green spaces, and will to make reasonable adjustments to our approach to ensure that this happens, for example access for disabled customers.

6. RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The Executive Director of Operations is the lead officer with responsibility for implementing this policy. The Estates Manager has operational responsibility for the day to day management of this policy. All staff have the responsibility for reporting any concerns or health and safety failures within the Trust’s communal spaces and green estate.

7. VALUE FOR MONEY

As part of our commitment to deliver an economical, efficient and effective service, we will use external benchmarking services and best practice groups to monitor our costs and service outcomes.

- **Where we’re legally able, we will service charge all costs of our estate management to customers who benefit from this service.**
- **We will ensure that value for money is considered in the management of estates.**

8. MONITORING EFFECTIVENESS

The Trust will ensure consistency in contractor performance through regular meetings to ensure contract standards are maintained.

We will record customer satisfaction with Estate Management performance and report this detail to the Executive Leadership Team through KPI production.

We will report performance regularly to tenant groups, including the Challenge Group.

POLICY INFORMATION

Policy Name:	DRAFT Estates Management Policy
Status:	DRAFT
Approved by:	
Drafted By:	David Squires, Head of Customer Experience
Date approved:	
Next Review Date:	

Next steps

Following our consultation with customers, local residents and stakeholders we will review all feedback and comments.

The Trust will then discuss how – if possible – we can implement suggested changes to the Policy.

We will email those who expressed an interest in a Zoom meeting directly to arrange a meeting to discuss the Policy and feedback further.

Once the changes have been made to the Policy following this consultation it will be made available on our website.