

Paragon Asra Housing Limited

Management Approach in Shared Areas

August 2019

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Department	Housing Services
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Paragon Asra Housing Limited (PA Housing) is committed to equality and diversity. This policy has considered the Equality Act 2010 and its protected characteristics which are: race, gender, gender reassignment, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, marriage, civil marriage and partnership, and pregnancy and maternity explicitly.

We will make sure that all of our communication is fully accessible and to achieve this if a policy or document needs to be available in other formats we will provide them.

AUDIT LOG

Date of change	Who updated	Details of the change

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Paragon Asra Housing (PA Housing) is committed to working with residents to ensure that communal areas in blocks of flats are well-maintained, well-managed, clean and safe.
- 1.2 As the recent tragic event at Grenfell Tower has shown, despite the precautions built into modern buildings, fire retains its power to cause severe damage and loss of life. PA Housing manages the communal areas in its blocks of flats in compliance with legal requirements and to keep the risk of fire as low as possible. The co-operation of all residents is needed to make sure that they do not take actions that could put other residents in harm's way and a safe living space is maintained. Simple precautions like not allowing anything to block exit routes, keeping fire doors closed and not storing items in communal areas should be strictly complied with, since everybody's safety is at stake. The need to ensure safety of residents and their families also affects other items left in shared areas, such as paddling pools left full of water when not in use or other play equipment that could cause a danger to children if left unsupervised.
- 1.3 PA Housing's approach to managing items left in communal areas is either through managed use or zero tolerance and the policy states what enforcement action we will take if steps taken to resolve issues have been exhausted.
- 1.4 This policy is implemented in conjunction with the Health & Safety policy and Fire Safety policy and procedures

2 Objectives

- 2.1 PA Housing aims to provide:
 - a consistent and high standard of customer service
 - safe and pleasant homes and neighbourhoods, where people have pride in their homes and surroundings.
- 2.2 The objectives of this policy are to maintain safe and clean shared areas by:
 - Setting a clear and consistent approach to managing shared areas, taking account of local needs and the type of shared area
 - Setting a service standard in relation to residents' personal and unauthorised belongings left in shared areas, to ensure that PA Housing complies with legal requirements, including in relation to fire safety and accessibility
 - Explaining how belongings will be removed, including general timescales
 - Explaining how we will communicate our approach clearly to residents who use these areas
 - Controlling the presence of sources of ignition and combustible materials and exit route obstructions in order to reduce the risk of fire or other safety hazards.

3 Definitions

- 3.1 A "shared area" is any area owned by PA Housing which is not within the confines of a resident's home or for their sole use, and to which residents are able to access.

3.2 Shared areas include corridors, landings, lifts, stairwells, meter cupboards, basements, bin stores, external common gardens, open walkways and balconies, communal lounges, entrances to buildings and car parking areas.

4 Inspections

4.1 All staff visiting our neighbourhoods will visually check for any fire or other risks and will identify any items left in shared areas that are causing a risk to the residents or the building.

4.2 Neighbourhood inspections will include shared areas, in accordance with the PA Neighbourhood Standards, to ensure that neighbourhoods are safe and clean.

4.3 Generally, residents can expect neighbourhood inspections to be conducted as follows:

Property type and number of floor levels	Frequency
6+ stories	Weekly
3-5 stories	Monthly
2 stories	Quarterly
Houses (external only)	Six monthly

4.4 Our Fire Safety team will carry out Fire Risk Assessments and identify any actions required.

5 General management approach in shared areas

5.1 PA Housing has two approaches to managing shared areas:

- 1) Managed use – certain low risk items are allowed in shared areas with permission or in designated areas, providing that the items do not prevent safe escape from the building or create a fire risk.
- 2) Zero tolerance – no belongings are allowed in communal areas under any circumstances. This can be permanent or temporary zero tolerance.

5.2 Schemes of six plus stories in height will be managed with a permanent zero tolerance approach. This means that no belongings are allowed in communal areas under any circumstances. These schemes are listed at Appendix 1.

5.3 In other shared areas, PA Housing will adopt a common sense approach and expects residents to carry out their responsibilities under their tenancy agreements to keep these areas safe and clean.

5.4 From time to time, if shared areas are not being kept safe and clean, the approach to managing use of these areas may be escalated to zero tolerance.

5.5 Shared areas are not an extension of a resident's home, even if adjacent to their property, and therefore should not be used for to store personal effects or for storage of any kind.

5.6 Residents are expected to keep all shared areas - internal and external – safe and clean:

- If using shared areas, residents are expected to clear away all personal belongings and effects after use and store them in their homes.
- Rubbish must be disposed of in the refuse facilities provided and designated areas.
- Obstruction of any fire equipment including smoke alarms, fire doors and exit routes is not permitted.
- In all circumstances, front doors must not be compromised by drilling or tacks or screws – this could compromise the integrity of fire safety doors.

6 Keeping shared gardens safe

6.1 Shared garden areas provide the opportunity for residents to become involved in the community in which they live, and a common sense approach will be taken to balance health and safety with the opportunity to enjoy these outdoor areas.

6.2 Barbecues are not permitted in any shared areas, (both internal and external).

6.3 Large play equipment must not be left in shared garden areas when not in use, (such as trampolines, swings, climbing frames, paddling pools or inflatable play equipment such as bouncy castles)

6.4 Paddling pools and any other play equipment involving water must be emptied and removed from shared garden areas when not in use.

6.5 All play equipment must be removed from shared garden areas when not in use. Any items not stored for any reason and not in use, will be removed.

7 Managed use approach

7.1 PA Housing, in accordance with legal requirements and good practice, will adopt a common sense approach, (a 'managed use' approach) to managing shared areas. This means that we will allow some personal items in shared areas, at our discretion, and we will not be unreasonable. We appreciate that older people are likely to need mobility aids as well as those with disabilities and that pushchairs and prams are widely used by people with young children. The following items may be permitted:

- Walls –
 - small framed pictures (which are not offensive)
 - noticeboards
- Floors –
 - small doormats
 - potted plants if they do not restrict the escape route and do not exceed the width of the stairs or exit doors
- Designated shared storage areas:
 - Buggies, pushchairs, prams, or mobility aids or scooters - but only in designated and signposted areas. They must not be plugged in or recharged in the shared area under any circumstances

- Pushbikes, children's scooters – but only in designated and signposted areas.

8 Zero tolerance approach

- 8.1 All blocks of flats six stories high and above will be managed permanently with a zero tolerance approach. This means that no belongings are allowed in communal areas under any circumstances. From time to time, other shared areas may also be managed with a zero tolerance approach.
- 8.2 A scheme may be escalated to zero tolerance for the following reasons:
- There has been three months of consistent and persistent issues where items that are not permitted are being left in shared areas
 - A serious incident or issue has taken place
 - A request is made from the Health & Safety or Compliance teams
- 8.3 The scheme will be referred to the Safe & Clean Neighbourhoods panel for review and a decision may be made to implement a zero tolerance approach. If this approach is implemented, the decision will be reviewed monthly by the panel to ensure that it remains proportionate. The scheme may be moved back to a managed use approach when it is reasonable to do so.

9 Enforcement action

- 9.1 Where residents persist in inappropriately misusing or storing items in shared areas, PA Housing may be required to take enforcement action and will remove the personal items concerned. This is only pursued when all other options to resolve the issues are exhausted.
- 9.2 Other methods of enforcement action could be injunctions or tenancy enforcement actions.
- 9.3 PA Housing reserves the right to recharge at any stage any resident(s) identified as owners of the items, for costs incurred with removing them or taking enforcement action.

10 Training

- 10.1 Managers are responsible for ensuring staff utilising this policy are fully trained.

11 Monitoring and reporting

- 11.1 Our approach to managing shared areas will be monitored through our ICT systems (including Northgate, CRM and Photobook) which are used to record the following:
- Identification of zero tolerance schemes, whether escalated or permanent
 - Neighbourhood inspections carried out
 - Items left in communal areas and associated removals
 - Costs and recharges when implementing this policy, including removals and enforcement actions.

- 11.2 Reporting on performance and effectiveness of this policy will be carried out through

the following methods:

- KPIs – corporate and operational
- Outcomes from the Safe and Clean Neighbourhoods panel
- Contractor performance including costs of removals
- Neighbourhood ratings including customer satisfaction and estates Photobook standards
- Any other measurable information

12 Legislation

12.1 The following legislation applies to this policy:

- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (The Fire Safety Order)
- TORTS (Interference with Goods) Act 1977
- Building Regulations 2010

Appendix 1 – Permanent zero tolerance schemes

Building name and address
12 Skerne Road, Kingston-on-Thames, Surrey, KT2 5FB
Abbey Mill, 21 Abbey Park Street, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE4 5AG
Bowyers Court, Railshead Road, Twickenham, Middlesex, TW1 1RJ
Broadwater House, Greside Road, Weybridge, Surrey, KT13 8PZ
Canada Court, 109 Brookhill Road, Greenwich, SE18 6BJ
Crown House, 165 Kingston Road, New Malden, KT3 3NA
Croxall House, Vicarage Fields, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, KT12 2ER
Delamare Court, 246 Bromley Road, Lewisham, London, SE6 2AH
Dover House, 50 Dover Street, Leicester, LE1 6PN
Elmgrove Point, 77 Walmer Terrace, Plumstead, SE18 7AF
Ensign House, Tavern Quay, Sweden Gate, SE16 7EY
Glenpark Court, Felix Road, Ealing, London, W13 0NX
Gracie Fields House, 159, Harrow Road, Wembley, HA9 6DN
Hayes Court, 183 Ealing Road, Wembley, Brent, London, HA0 4LW
Hedingham House, Seven Kings Road, Kingston-on-Thames, Surrey, KT2 5AE
Hennessey Court, 125 Leyton Green Road, Waltham Forest, London, E10 6DQ
Lushington House, Vicarage Fields, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, KT12 2ER
Lynde House, Vicarage Fields, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, KT12 2ER
Margaret McMillan House, 2A Cundy Rd, Silvertown, Newham, London, E16 3DB
Newlife Apartments, Upper Cross Street, Northampton, NN1 2SS (Flats 70 - 140)
Newlife Apartments, Crispin Street, Northampton, NN1 2JH (Flats 1 -69)
Omega House, St Andrews Street, Northampton, Northamptonshire, NN1 2HB
Pearce House, 30, Brook Avenue, Wembley, HA9 8PH
Poppy Court, 73 Childers Street, London, SE8 5JR
Quadrant House, Bessant Drive, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4FF
Rolandson Court, Kilmorey Road, Twickenham, Middlesex, TW1 1QF
Thames View House, Felix Road, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, KT12 2SL
Vestry House, Humberstone Gate, Leicester, LE1 1WJ
Windsor Court, 185, Ealing Road, Wembley, HA0 4EJ
Wolsey Building, Abbey Park Street, LE4 5AF (Extra Care)
Wolsey Building, Ross Walk, LE4 5AW (GN)