

Fencing Policy

2026-31

Version Control

Version	Changes	Approval Stage	Date
1	Original Draft	Internal	April 2026
2		Tenants/Public Consultation	
3		Head of Service sign off	
4		Cabinet	

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Relevant Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defective Premises Act 1972 • Environmental Protection Act 1990 • Equality Act 2010 • Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 • Regulatory Standards April 2024 • Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 • Housing Act 2004 • Housing Health and Safety Rating System 2006 • Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 • Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 • Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) • The Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994 • Care Act 2014 • Children’s Act 1989 & 2004 • Modern Slavery Act 2015 • Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
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1.0 Purpose of the Policy

1.1 This policy details Cannock Chase District Council Housing’s (the Council) approach and commitment to provide homes that are comfortable, maintained and safe for people to live in.

1.2 The primary purpose of this policy is to ensure that all the Council staff, residents and contractors are aware and understand the policy that underpins the Council’s approach to new and replacement fencing on the Council’s owned land and boundaries.

1.3 It includes criteria for the allocation of annual resources, minimum requirements for individual situations, response times and specifications for the materials to be used to ensure a consistent appearance.

1.4 The policy is designed to meet the following aims and objectives:

Aims

- To provide and maintain boundary fencing that ensures our properties are protected and well maintained whilst maximising value for money.
- To ensure that all residents live in a safe, secure, and habitable environment.
- To comply with all relevant, statutory, and regulatory obligations.
- To provide an efficient, prompt and cost-effective responsive repairs service, which is easily understood by residents and staff.
- To support delivery of the Council’s corporate business plan.
- To ensure that replacement fencing does not restrict the movement of hedgehogs and other small wildlife, thereby contributing to the protection and enhancement of local biodiversity.

Objectives

- To interact and listen to the feedback of residents to shape service delivery and resident experience.

- To continually strive for the highest levels of performance and resident satisfaction.
- That communication with residents is always appropriate, easily understood and easily accessible.
- improve the security of tenants and reduce incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- improve the appearance of the Council's housing estates
- comply with the Council's repairing obligations in accordance with the Tenancy Agreement
- To clearly define the repair responsibilities of the Council and that of its residents.

2.0 Scope of Policy

2.1 This policy covers the specification for planned upgrade programmes works and responsive repairs and maintenance service to all properties and communal areas owned and/or managed by the Council.

2.2 The policy sets out the repairing obligations of the Council and of the rights and obligations of its residents. It outlines the procedure for reporting repairs and how repairs are prioritised.

2.3 The policy is applicable to all the Council staff members who are involved in the delivery of boundary fencing, as well as all residents who receive this service.

2.4 The Fencing Policy is linked to a number of other related policies and guidance including Tenancy Agreement, Recharge Policy, Empty Property Policy which includes the Lettable Standard and the Rechargeable Repairs Policy.

3.0 Definitions

3.1 **Reactive Repairs & Maintenance**, under this policy, are those repairs carried out at a single property or communal area at the request of an individual. These repairs can also be called reactive repairs or day to day repairs.

3.2 **Planned Improvement Works**, under this policy, are those works carried out at a single property or communal area under a planned capital investment upgrade.

3.3 **Resident** - Any tenant or leaseholder of a property or commercial property including shop premises as part of the Housing Revenue Account owned by the Council.

3.4 **Vulnerable Resident** - Residents who have additional needs, for example the very frail elderly, severely disabled, or families with young babies under one.

3.5 **Repair** – The process of rectifying a component or installation when it is faulty or in a state of disrepair; in a Council owned property.

4.0 Consultation

4.1 The Housing Maintenance Manager and Housing Property Services Manager have prepared this policy with input from the Tenancy Services Manager, Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager and Leadership Team.

4.2 As part of the development of this Policy and in line with the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards requirements, a review by a Resident Focus Group and wider

resident consultation exercise will inform the published version of this policy including the new fencing standard. The policy is also subject to review and approval by Cabinet before publication.

5.0 Policy Detail

Fencing Delivery

5.1 Planned replacement – Each year the available capital fencing budget will be allocated as follows:

- Proportion spent on targeted “estate” projects identified from cyclical Planned Repairs estate surveys. Fencing identified and ordered in a planned way often represents better value for money than carrying out repairs in an ad-hoc responsive way.
- Proportion spent on individual jobs drawn from a “holding list”.

5.2 Holding list – When fencing has reached the end of its life and can no longer be economically repaired, the replacement work will be added to a “holding list” and completed in order of priority subject to allocated funds as above. As this proportion could be variable year on year, through budget constraints, priorities and need, the proportion will be defined through the external envelope programme’s annual instructions.

5.3 Day to day repairs - Small fencing repairs will continue to be carried out as a part of the Council’s day to day response repairs service. However, this work has to be generally restricted to small repairs (not replacements) and includes attending to single broken fence posts, or urgent work to make fences safe. Wherever possible, all non-urgent fencing repairs will be put into batches and ordered in a planned way from the “Holding List”.

5.4 Emergencies - If a fence blows down in the wind, or is vandalised, the Council will attend to make it safe either as an emergency or urgent response, within 24 hours or 3 days respectively depending upon actual circumstances, but full replacement may not take place at the same time. The work to replace the fence will generally be placed on the “holding list” for completion as above.

5.5 Disability adaptations - Facilitating access to and from gardens, or making access safe, for a disabled occupant is one of the eligible works under the Council’s Policy on Adaptation’s for Disabled Tenants. This could include fencing works and would be carried out subject to an assessment from an Occupational Therapist.

5.6 Empty Properties (Voids) – The Council will check all fencing whilst the property is void before a new tenant moves into a property to ensure it is secure and free from any health and safety hazards.

The boundary will be checked against the deeds to ensure that it hasn’t been moved or altered by a previous tenant or owner.

Work to existing fences of void properties will follow the “repairs first” approach for all existing fences to the front / rear / side gardens, providing the fencing is sound, of suitable quality and constructed from materials that are in keeping with the aesthetics and character of the neighbourhood. Where fences, demarcation posts and / or unofficial drives/parking areas have been erected/created in front gardens on open plan estates then, all such obstructions will be removed, and the front garden returned to open plan.

When only part of a fence is damaged only the damaged section will be renewed, either to match the existing fence or to meet the new standard. Officers will use their discretion when deciding whether to match the existing fence or not, with such decision dependent on the location and extent of the damage and the impact on aesthetics and character of the surrounding neighbourhood.

Gifting - Where a fence has been erected by the previous tenant and is deemed to be in good condition but not standard, the incoming tenant will be asked if they would like Council to Gift the fence. In accepting the fence, the incoming tenant would be responsible for future repairs and maintenance, with replacement only occurring when Council considers it to have reached the end of its life. Any replacement will be to the agreed standard fencing and may not be to the same standard as the "gifted" fence.

5.7 Exceptional circumstances - There are sometimes exceptional circumstances that may affect the type of fencing that is installed. This could include requirements for additional security, impacts on lighting and noise, shortage of material stocked, other reasons. Sometimes the issues that make circumstances exceptional may be confidential in nature, and this sometimes leads to questions about fairness from neighbours. Decisions about exceptional circumstances will be referred to the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets

Fencing Materials and Standards

Where a complete boundary of existing fencing requires replacement, the following type of fencing will be provided:-	
For Council Houses and Flats	
Front Garden - Dividing Fences	Remove all and make good
Front garden - boundary fence adjoining highway where no public pathway is present	900mm high(nominal) timber Overlap fence Panel with concrete posts and gravel boards. Incorporate hedgehog friendly 13cm x 13cm hole Double gates to be installed only if there is a dropped kerb and driveway (only where the gates border the adjoining highway and fence line)
Rear Gardens - Dividing fences and rear fences	3 Panels x 1.5m (nominal) high Overlap, timber privacy panel (usually adjoining house wall) with concrete posts and gravel boards, elsewhere to be continued with 900mm high Overlap fence panels with concrete posts. Incorporate hedgehog friendly 13cm x 13cm hole <u>Note:</u> The provision of any more extensive fencing is a tenant responsibility and will only be replaced with the minimum standard of fencing as described.
Rear garden boundaries adjoining public highway/footpath	3 Panels x 1.5m (nominal) high Overlap, timber privacy panel (usually adjoining house wall) with concrete posts and gravel boards, elsewhere to be continued with 900mm high Overlap fence panels with concrete posts.

	Note: In some circumstances adjoining boundary conditions may stipulate only 1m high fencing Incorporate hedgehog friendly 13cm x 13cm hole
Exceptional circumstances	In exceptional circumstances (e.g. where required for disability or specialist medical conditions, or where suitable lighting for light or safety is required) alternative fencing may be considered as required.
Fencing on "Former Open Plan" Estates	No fencing will be erected on estates which were designed and formerly designated as "open plan". Fencing can, however, be erected (subject to permission being granted by the Council) by the tenant at their own cost subject to them agreeing responsibility for future maintenance.
For Communal Areas	
Parking areas and landscaped areas	600mm high knee-rail type fencing with timber or concrete posts and metal or timber rails to suit
Recycling areas	1.8 high hit and miss timber board fencing with concrete posts
Drying areas	1.8m high hit and miss timber board fencing with concrete posts
Alleys and public access passageways	1.8m high close boarded timber fencing with concrete posts
Estate fencing - garage blocks	1.8m high close boarded timber fencing with concrete posts
Tree Maintenance which is affecting the installation/fencing repair - referral for Tenancy Services to arrange with Parks & Open Spaces for tree work	

Repair Responsibilities

5.7 The responsibility for identifying, reporting, undertaking repairs and maintaining homes is shared between the Council and its residents.

5.8 Residents are required to report repairs in their home and surrounding communal areas, which are the responsibility of the Council as soon as reasonably practicable to ensure properties do not fall into disrepair. The Council colleagues, the Housing Maintenance Team, external contractors and consultants also have a responsibility to identify and report repairs.

5.9 Repairs attended by the Council or its residents that are subsequently found to arise due to neglect, wilful damage or accidental damage may be recharged to the resident.

5.10 The Council aims to complete all reactive repairs within its agreed and published timescales, as well as ensuring all repairs meet the acceptable standard. Where this does not occur residents may be entitled to compensation. All details associated with this can be found in the Council Compensation Policy in conjunction with the Repairs Handbook.

Rechargeable repairs

5.11 A rechargeable repair is defined as any repair that is beyond normal wear and tear, or arises from abuse, accidental damage, neglect or deliberate and/or malicious damage. This applies to all residents, their household or visitors to the property.

5.12 The Tenancy Agreement allows for residents to be charged for the cost of rechargeable repairs, and this is also set out in the Repairs Handbook for Housing Services.

Leaseholder obligations

5.13 Leaseholders should refer to their lease and any supplementary documents issued by the Council for details of ownership, and repair and maintenance responsibilities.

5.14 Leaseholders are responsible for most repairs to their individual dwelling and for repairing any damage to the structure, the Council is responsible for where this is due to neglect or carelessness caused by them, a member of their family, resident, or visitor.

5.15 the Council will recharge leaseholders if they fail to repair damage for which they are responsible if there is evidence that damage is the fault of a leaseholder, their household, or visitors.

Repair Categories & Definitions

5.16 the Council will diagnose and order repairs into the following categories which are set out in the Repairs Handbook provided to each tenant in paper version, is available online and additional paper versions are available from the Council on request

Emergency Repairs (Priority 1) - This is when there is a serious risk to residents or their home. We will attend the same day of the repair first being reported. The main aim is to ensure everyone is safe and secure by undertaking works to remove risks to people and property and ensure residents can continue to live at the property.

Urgent Repairs (Priority 2) - This is when there is an urgent need for a repair which would be detrimental to the property or resident if not attended to urgently. We will attend within 3 working days of the repair first being reported. These are repairs that are not emergencies but need to be undertaken quickly to prevent more damage, example repairs are set out in the repair's handbook.

Essential Repairs (Priority 3) - These repairs will normally be undertaken within 5 working days of the repair first being reported. These are minor repairs which are not causing damage to the property but add to the comfort and security for residents and their property, example repairs are set out in the repairs handbook.

Routine Repairs (Priority 4) - Repairs in this category are low priority repairs of a non-serious nature and not causing damage to the property. These repairs pose no immediate risk and can be booked in via a mutually convenient appointment. Routine repairs are undertaken and completed within 38 working days of the repair first being reported.

Planned Repairs - In addition to carrying out day-to-day repairs, our Housing Property Services section carry out major projects to improve the condition of the housing stock.

Vulnerable residents

5.17 We recognise that our residents have different needs and that in some circumstances residents may require additional assistance. the Council is committed to ensuring its services are accessible by all and where required we may adjust specifications, response times and increase our service offering on a case-by-case basis.

Resident Improvements

5.18 Residents have the right to carry out improvements within their property. Residents however must not make any improvements, alterations, or additions to the premises without first obtaining both the written consent from the Council and all other necessary approvals, such as planning and building regulation approval.

5.19 the Council will not unreasonably withhold consent when residents make requests for improvements, alterations, or additions.

5.20 Residents must comply with the reasonable requirements of the Council in relation to any consent given to make improvements, alterations, or additions to the premises, including the standard of the work to be carried out.

5.21 Following any improvements, alterations or additions undertaken by the resident they will be responsible for the future repairs, maintenance or replacement of the improvement unless previously agreed in writing.

5.22 Where permission has not been approved by the Council the resident may be recharged for any unauthorised improvements or alterations identified during or at the end of their Tenancy.

5.23 All authorised work must be completed to a sufficiently high standard and by qualified and competent persons. Work undertaken must be carried out by appropriately qualified persons and copies of certificates, insurance and other appropriate certifications must be submitted to the Council prior to works commencing, and on completion of works.

5.24 the Council are not liable for any loss or damage to, caused by or associated with any improvements or alterations carried out by residents with or without permission.

5.25 Residents may apply for compensation for approved improvements, alterations or additions to the premises provided they are carried out in accordance with the approval of the Council. This is set out in the repairs handbook and the leaflet available called 'Your right to Compensation' explains this in greater detail.

Service Quality and Complaints

5.26 the Council strives to ensure continuous improvement of its Housing Maintenance Service. We will actively seek out resident feedback on the quality of the service they receive to help us shape and develop the improvements to service performance, quality, and efficiency. All residents have the right to pursue a complaint in relation to any aspect of the Service. Information collated via complaints will be used to improve our services and any reoccurring issues.

6.0 Responsibility Under this Policy

6.1 The Head of Housing & Corporate Assets is responsible for this policy, its implementation, and future reviews.

6.2 The Housing Maintenance Manager and Housing Property Services Manager is responsible for implementation of this policy, ensuring that the policy and associated procedures are embedded within the operational delivery of the repairs service and planned improvement works respectively, and that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are adequately trained to undertake them.

6.3 The Council staff and residents will follow the policy guidelines and its approach to planned improvement works and repairs and maintenance.

6.4 This policy will be reviewed every three years or as required by statutory, regulatory, best practice, emerging developments, or circumstances arising from reviews of other Group wide policies.

6.5 All staff of the Housing Property Service, and Repairs & Maintenance Service will be required to ensure this policy is read in line with their duties and responsibilities.

7.0 Risk Management

7.1 The Council will reduce risk of non-compliance with the requirements of legislation detailed in the Housing Act 2004, the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards 1 April 2024, by delivering the framework and actions set out in this policy including;

- Maintaining Consumer Standards and Regulatory Requirements in line with the objectives and framework set out by the Regulator of Social Housing.
- Maintaining properties to a good standard, impacting on the overall value of the Council's housing stock and financial viability of the Housing Revenue Account.
- Adhering to this policy resulting in reducing likelihood of reputational harm as a result of its activities.
- Maintaining and delivering expenditure within agreed budget levels.

8.0 Equality and Diversity

8.1 The Council will ensure that this policy is applied fairly to all our customers. We will not directly or indirectly discriminate against any person or group of people because of their race, religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, or other grounds set out in the Equality Act 2010.

8.2 When applying this policy, we will act sensitively towards the diverse needs of individuals and communities.

8.3 This policy has had an Equality Impact Assessment undertaken upon it and any changes recommended have been made.

8.4 On request, the Council will provide translations of all its documents, policies and procedures in various languages and other formats.

9.0 Performance Reporting

9.1 The Council will measure its planned improvement works and repair performance by using, and issuing, a suite of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). KPIs will be benchmarked against the Council peer group through Housemark.

9.2 KPI's will be reviewed annually for all planned improvement works and repairs & maintenance to ensure year on year continuous improvements.

9.3 Performance against KPIs will be monitored and reported monthly to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Housing Board through to Cabinet.

9.4 Complaints received and Customer Feedback as part of our satisfaction surveys for planned improvement works and repairs & maintenance will also be used as an additional means of monitoring and improving the quality of the service.

9.5 The Council will publish repairs performance information at least annually to our customers and include regular updates on performance.

10.0 Approval

Strategic Lead:

Sign/Date

11.0 Contact

To find out more about this policy please contact:

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