

Neighbourhood Management Policy

We will provide this policy on request at no cost, translated, in large print, in Braille, on tape or in another non-written format.

We can produce information on request at no cost in large print, in Braille, on tape or in another non-written format. We can also translate this into other languages. If you need information in any of these formats please call us on **0800 011 3447** or email info@wheatley-group.com

Możemy, na życzenie, bezpłatnie przygotować informacje dużą czcionką, w alfabecie Braille'a, na taśmie lub w innym niepisanym formacie. Możemy je również przetłumaczyć na inne języki. Jeśli potrzebujesz informacji w którymkolwiek z tych formatów, zadzwoń do nas pod numer **0800 011 3447** lub wyślij e-mail na adres info@wheatley-group.com

Podemos produzir informações mediante solicitação e sem custos, em impressão grande, Braille, cassete ou noutro formato não descrito. Também podemos traduzi-las em outros idiomas. Se precisar de informações em qualquer um destes formatos, contacte-nos através do número **0800 011 3447** ou envie um e-mail para: info@wheatley-group.com

يمكننا إنتاج معلومات عند الطلب مجاناً مطبوعة بأحرف كبيرة أو بطريقة برايل أو على شريط أو بتنسيق آخر غير مكتوب. يمكننا أيضاً ترجمة هذا إلى لغات أخرى. إذا كنت بحاجة إلى معلومات بأي من هذه التنسيقات، فيرجى الاتصال بنا على info@wheatley-group.com 0800 011 3447 أو إرسال بريد إلكتروني إلى

در صورت درخواست، می توانیم اطلاعات را در چاپ بزرگ، خط بریل، روی نوار یا در فرمت غیرنوشتاری دیگری ارائه دهیم. همچنین می توانیم اطلاعات را به سایر زبانها ترجمه کنیم. در صورت نیاز به اطلاعات بیشتر در هر یک از این فرمتها، لطفاً از طریق شماره info@wheatley-group.com با ما تماس بگیرید یا ایمیلی به **0800 011 3447** از این فرمتها، لطفاً از طریق شماره ارسال کنید.

ہم درخواست پر معلومات کو بڑے حروف، بریل، ٹیپ پر یا کسی اور غیر تحریری صورت میں بغیر کسی لاگت کے مہیا کر سکتے ہیں۔ ہم اس کا دوسری زبانوں میں ترجمہ بھی کروا سکتے ہیں۔ اگر آپ کو ان میں سے کسی صورت میں یہ معلومات درکار ہوں تو برائے کرم ہمیں **0800 011 3447** پر کال کریں یا info@wheatley-group.com پر ای میل کریں۔

Approval body	Wheatley Homes South Board
Date of approval	13 March 2024
Review Year	2025
Customer engagement required	Yes
Trade union engagement required	Yes – For information
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes

Contents

1. Introduction and background.
2. What is neighbourhood management?
3. Policy aims and objectives.
4. Good neighbourhood management.
5. Neighbourhood management concerns.
6. Resolving neighbourhood management concerns.
7. Support for those experiencing neighbourhood management concerns.
8. Partnership working.
9. Support and signposting.
10. Legislative, Regulatory and Strategic Drivers.
11. Policy review and consultation.
12. Policy awareness and training.
13. Performance monitoring and reporting.
14. Confidentiality and data protection.
15. Complaints.

1. Introduction and background

Developing peaceful and connected neighbourhoods is a key strategic outcome within our Group strategy ***Your Home, Your Community, Your Future***. To support this ambition, we have outlined a strategic target that over 70% of our customers will live in neighbourhoods categorised as peaceful, meaning reports of antisocial behaviour (ASB) are reducing.

Wheatley Homes South has a vital role in ensuring our neighbourhoods are places where customers are proud to live. Good neighbourhood management is integral to promoting pride in our neighbourhoods, which can only be achieved through a coordinated approach involving customer and partner engagement.

Wheatley Homes South is Scotland's second largest social landlord with more than 10,000 affordable homes across Dumfries and Galloway, where we are committed to ***Better Homes, Better Lives*** for all customers residing within our neighbourhoods. We pride ourselves on the provision of award-winning services and recognise the central role our customers play in contributing to this. We encourage customer engagement and consultation, ensuring they are actively involved in shaping services in relation to neighbourhood management.

Our neighbourhood teams are a crucial element in the delivery of safe, well-maintained neighbourhoods, where they deliver a proactive and responsive service across our areas of operation, including neighbourhood environmental services, antisocial behaviour management, customer voice, and housing and care services.

Our neighbourhood management approach recognises that each neighbourhood, community, or area is distinct in nature, including stock type and customer base.

We adopt a placemaking methodology within our approach, where we work collaboratively with customers, partners, and the wide-ranging Wheatley Homes South services, to identify the needs and requirements of the area in realising its full potential. Placemaking is a collaborative process for creating public spaces that people enjoy and feel connected to. There are tools available to measure this, that we proactively use within our neighbourhoods.

Customers are at the heart of this approach in helping drive forward the change required and desired within our neighbourhoods, which is based on the observations and opinions of those residing there.

This collaborative and participative approach affords a better understanding of the things that matter most to our customers and where our resources and service delivery priorities should be targeted, whilst ensuring better outcomes for neighbourhoods with increased opportunities.

It allows us to easily identify where there are areas or issues impacting good neighbourhood management and to consider suitable resolutions available to tackle these.

2. What is neighbourhood management?

Neighbourhood management is the term used to describe the proactive and reactive activity and action that is undertaken to maintain the appearance of the neighbourhood environment to a high standard that is considered clean, safe, well maintained and an attractive place for people to live.

It is the collective responsibility of everyone living or working within an area to ensure the neighbourhood is maintained to the highest standard. This can include, but is not limited to the following individuals and organisations:

- Wheatley Homes South and housing providers within the area, including Registered Social Landlords, Private Landlords, and the Local Authority.
- Local Authority departments with designated responsibility for neighbourhood management, including environmental health teams.
- Residents living within a neighbourhood from the variety of tenure types present, including social housing, private tenancies and owner occupation.
- Organisations, both statutory and non-statutory, working within or operating out of neighbourhoods.
- Business owners.

Neighbourhood management includes the planning, monitoring, management, and delivery of services within the area and is distinct from the management of antisocial behaviour, which is dealt with under the Wheatley Homes South Antisocial Behaviour Policy.

3. Policy aims and objectives

3.1 Our aim

Our aim is to create neighbourhoods that are thriving and well-maintained safe spaces where Wheatley Homes South customers feel proud to live. The policy will set out the structures and approaches in place to achieve this, as well as the partner agency approach required by key stakeholders involved across our neighbourhoods.

3.2 Our objectives

We will realise our stated aim for thriving neighbourhoods by successfully achieving the following objectives:

- Clear identification of the **actions, behaviour and/or activity** that can compromise good neighbourhood management.
- List of **actions and solutions** available to support the resolution of identified neighbourhood management issues.
- Ensure customers are aware of their **responsibilities** under the terms of their Wheatley Homes South tenancy agreement.
- Routine **engagement activity** focused on keeping our neighbourhoods at a high standard and highlighting any areas of concern requiring proactive action to be taken.
- Regular Neighbourhood Environmental Team (NETs) environmental **weeks of action** with key stakeholders on any thematic areas identified.
- Embedding **Neighbourhood Plans** within Wheatley Homes South with clear, detailed improvement action to be taken with agreed timescales attached.
- Empower local communities to drive forward **change and continuous improvement** within their neighbourhoods through involvement in the creation of Neighbourhood Plans.
- Provide **clear guidance** for staff to confidently deal with any reports concerning the management of neighbourhoods.
- Deliver **training to relevant staff** on responding to incidents reported which challenges good neighbourhood management.
- Thoroughly **investigate reports** where neighbourhood management issues exist and ensure customers receive a satisfactory response based on the available resolution actions to deal with these issues.
- **Work in partnership** with key stakeholder agencies to deliver thriving neighbourhoods where our customers are proud to live.

4. Good neighbourhood management

In our strategy we outline our commitment to making the most of our homes and assets by investing in our existing homes and environments.

We take a proactive approach to managing our neighbourhoods at Wheatley Homes South through the delivery of an extensive range of services, whilst responding to any issues as and when they arise.

Our service provision linked to good neighbourhood management includes but is not limited to the following services:

Our Neighbourhood staff teams

Our operating model means more of our staff are based within our communities and available to identify and respond to any concerns raised, at times to suit our customers. This ranges from our Housing Officers, Antisocial Behaviour Intervention and Prevention Officers, Stronger Voices Officers, Repairs Operatives, and our Neighbourhood Environmental teams. Having a wide range of staff making up these wider neighbourhood teams benefits our commitment to supporting our vision of thriving neighbourhoods.

Neighbourhood Environmental Services (NETs)

Our NETs teams within Wheatley Homes South play a vital role in delivering thriving neighbourhoods through the delivery of services including common close/stair cleaning, grass cutting, uplifting bulk items, gardening, and grounds maintenance, to ensure local neighbourhoods are clean and tidy. The teams contribute hugely to that sense of pride customers can feel in their communities and are at the heart of our neighbourhood teams for customers to engage with.

Repairs service

We provide a planned and reactive repairs service for all customers across Wheatley Homes South, to ensure our stock is maintained to the highest possible standard and delivers on our customer priorities. We have clearly defined timeframes for our repairs to be conducted, and our repairs and maintenance work is always completed in line with our commitment to sustainability.

Our in-house repairs service is customer led and as an organisation we invest significantly in the delivery of the repairs service we provide, to maintain our homes and keep them in excellent condition. This approach ensures we are providing high quality homes that are safe for our customers to live in and contribute towards the delivery of thriving neighbourhoods.

Fire Safety

We work in partnership with Scottish Fire and Rescue to deliver a sector leading approach towards ensuring effective fire safety across our properties. Keeping our customers safe from harm through the risk of fire is a key priority for Wheatley Homes South and an integral part of good neighbourhood management.

We have an in-house Fire Safety Team who assumes responsibility for the prevention and mitigation of fires across our neighbourhoods and the team works collaboratively with a range of agencies to achieve this. Their work is accomplished through prevention, early intervention, and delivery of a responsive service to build resilience within neighbourhoods in relation to fire safety.

Customer Engagement – Neighbourhood Planning

Through our Stronger Voices programme, we take a community led approach where the design and delivery of services, systems, processes, and targets are co-created with our customers. Good neighbourhood management and neighbourhood planning make up an extensive part of this programme and work is consistently ongoing in this area to ensure the customer voice is at the heart of our service delivery.

Through this process we work with customers to assess neighbourhoods, identify areas of strength, areas for improvement and co-create action plans to support the delivery of identified activity. A key focus of this is establishing opportunities for our customers. The Wheatley Foundation plays an important role in this through their priorities to maximise access to employment, training and learning opportunities and tackling social exclusion and alleviating the impacts of poverty for our customers.

5. Neighbourhood management concerns

5.1 Neighbourhood concern types

Wheatley Homes South is committed to creating thriving spaces where our customers feel safe and are proud to live, however, we recognise that there are times when issues arise that can challenge this.

There are certain actions, activities and behaviours undertaken which can compromise good neighbourhood management and impact how individuals feel about where they live. If not managed appropriately this can have a detrimental impact on the community and the desirability of a neighbourhood.

Based on our experience of the types of neighbourhood management concerns raised by customers, we have categorised these within two main heading types – noise (non-antisocial behaviour) and environmental issues. These are outlined below with some examples of the type of activity we see reported:

Neighbourhood management issue	Examples of activity
Noise (Non-antisocial behaviour)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children Playing (e.g., within the property, kicking a ball off a wall). • Babies/children crying. • Animals (e.g., birds chirping, dogs barking – within the property, in the garden or on the veranda). • DIY. • Domestic Noise (e.g., washing machines, hoovering, walking within the property, flushing toilet, showering, creaky floorboards). • Musical Instruments. • Lifts. • Door/window closing (including common close/stairwell door).
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fly Tipping (e.g., rubbish or bulk in a public area). • Garden Maintenance (e.g., overgrown trees/hedges, rubbish not being put in bins, cutting of grass). • Litter/Rubbish (e.g., being thrown from property or left in common close/stairwell area, in gardens, being dropped by people (including children), feeding the birds/keeping in veranda, use of other's bins). • Dog fouling (private place) – (e.g., where this takes place within an individual's garden that isn't a shared space). • Street Parking (e.g., parking on the street, parking in disabled bays). • Smells – (e.g., cooking).

Noise (non-antisocial behaviour) can often be described as 'living noise' and constitutes activity that would be considered part of everyday life. We recognise that this activity can still impact customers and are committed to trying to work with all parties, and where appropriate partners, to find appropriate solutions to noise issues which aren't managed within our ASB policy. Similarly, there may be instances where there is no action we can take, as the activity, action or behaviour is considered general living noise and part of everyday life.

The condition of the environment can impact customers' sense of pride in where they reside, therefore we fully recognise the impact that these types of environmental issues can have on customers, which is why we are fully committed to working with all parties, and where appropriate partners, to find effective solutions to the issues.

Customers' experience of these neighbourhood management concerns can be negative; therefore, it is imperative that these issues are investigated and dealt with, and appropriate solutions sought. There are a variety of solutions that can be utilised to address identified neighbourhood management concerns, which are outlined in more detail in section 6.

It is important to note that the action, activity, and behaviour referred to as impacting upon good neighbourhood management does not constitute antisocial behaviour. This is a separate type of behaviour and activity that is linked to the Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004 and is covered within our Antisocial Behaviour Policy. Within this policy there is clear categorisation of the types of conduct this refers to and actions to support addressing the conduct.

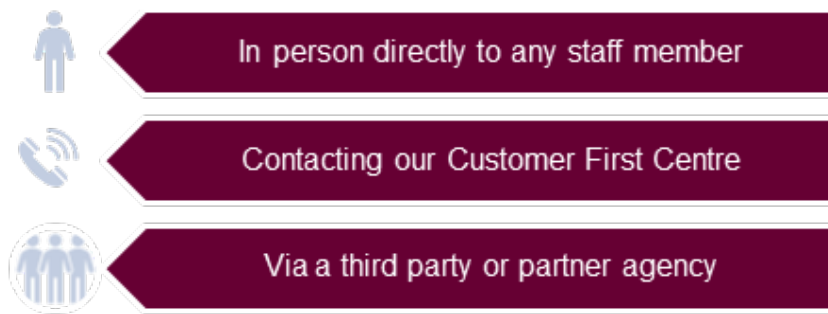
5.2 Customer commitments

We have set customer commitment levels to ensure our customers are clear around what level of service they can expect from us when they report a concern or issue related to the management of their neighbourhood, which are:

Customer commitment	Timescale
We will contact you to gather further information on your neighbourhood management issue or concern	Within 3 working days
We will have communicated with you to provide information, support, and guidance and/or discuss potential solutions to the issue or concern raised	Within 10 working days

5.3 Reporting neighbourhood management concerns

Neighbourhood management concerns can be reported by Wheatley Homes South customers via several routes, including:



5.4 Triaging methodology

Circumstance is a crucial element in determining whether something falls into the category of impacting good neighbourhood management or whether it could be considered as something else. To support this process, we have developed a clear triaging methodology with factors for consideration to determine which category the concern falls within, which will be either:

- Neighbourhood management concern; or
- Antisocial behaviour.

Staff will establish details around the concern to determine this and will be well trained to manage these types of cases:

Triaging methodology - factors for consideration	
1.	What is the nature of the issue or concern?
2.	When is the activity, action or behaviour taking place – (e.g., time of day)?
3.	How often is the activity, action or behaviour taking place – (e.g., the frequency of this – hourly, daily, weekly, monthly)?
4.	How long does the activity, action, or behaviour last – (e.g., the duration of this - 30 minutes, one hour, all morning/evening, all day)?
5.	What impact is the action, activity or behaviour having on the person affected by this?
6.	Are there any underlying reasons to explain the activity, action, or behaviour?
7.	Is the activity, action, or behaviour unreasonable?

Each case will be dealt with on its merits and characteristics and a determination made following full consideration of all detailed and contextual information. Our staff will communicate clearly with customers which route their concern is being dealt with under – neighbourhood management concern or antisocial behaviour.

6. Resolving neighbourhood management concerns

There are a number of solutions available to support good neighbourhood management. They are individualised based on circumstance and can involve effective communication, partnership working, negotiation and compromise, to achieve effective resolution to suit all parties involved.

The provision of advice, support and guidance is central to achieving successful outcomes, as is a clear understanding of the differences between action, activity and behaviour that constitutes a challenge of good neighbourhood management and that which doesn't (e.g., antisocial behaviour). It is also important to recognise where resolution measures are required, or where there is no requirement for them, as the action, activity or behaviour constitutes living noise or everyday life.

An example of some key measures that can be used to resolve neighbourhood management concerns include the following list, which is not exhaustive:

Discussion with the individual(s) involved in action, activity, or behaviour

One of the first steps that should be taken when there is a clear individual(s) identified as partaking in the action, activity or behaviour that is causing distress, frustration or upset to another individual, is to have a conversation with them around this to raise awareness. This allows for open dialogue to discuss the issue and explain the impact it is having on those affected. The approach allows awareness to be raised and can be sufficient for understanding and compromise to be reached to resolve things. This can involve a visit to the property by the Housing Officer if necessary.

Mediation

Where parties have failed to reach an agreement or relationships have broken down because of the neighbourhood management concerns raised, sometimes using a third party to mediate can be helpful. This will be a confidential and independent service, where both parties can express their position and feelings to try to sort out their differences, reach a compromise, and help rebuild their relationship. It will often be in a neutral venue to support impartiality and is entered into voluntarily.

Referral to specialist teams within the Local Authority

Local Authorities have a variety of roles within their dedicated team to deal with neighbourhood management concerns. The teams are often multi-skilled and range from community wardens, noise teams, home security and mediation services and they will provide advice to anyone who contacts them if they reside within that local authority area.

Local authorities have the statutory responsibility for controlling and dealing with noise concerns.

They also have the responsibility to deal with issues around fly tipping and must have a procedure in place to deal with this.

Access to products and services

If the neighbourhood management concern raised can be resolved through the provision of a specific product or service, then this will be considered as a viable option to address this. Examples of this could be soft door/window closers, adaptations for bin areas or headphones. Another example would be arranging for the customer to access the Noise APP, which is a tool used to submit reports of noise nuisance to landlords for further investigation.

NETs Support

Our NETs are an integral part of our approach towards the creation of thriving neighbourhoods and play a major role in ensuring our neighbourhoods are clean, tidy, and safe places for our customers to live.

We can utilise our NETs teams to support addressing concerns within areas identified either through one off pieces of work or programmed activity. This can be a partnership approach with other agencies or organisations involved in maintaining our neighbourhoods or with wider teams from across Wheatley Homes South.

Wraparound support

Wheatley Homes South has access to an extensive package of internal wraparound support for customers which can be utilised at any stage during their tenancy, should their circumstances require this. This ranges from services including financial capability, employability, and safeguarding. If wraparound support services will assist in supporting anyone involved in neighbour disputes or neighbourhood management concerns, the appropriate referrals would be arranged.

7. Support for those experiencing neighbourhood management concerns

Where a Wheatley Homes South customer has experienced neighbourhood management concerns and reports this to us, they can always be assured of the following:

Effective Communication	We will keep you updated throughout the duration a case is ongoing, explaining the process taken at each stage and honour any commitments made to contact you.
Internal wraparound support	We will provide access to internal wraparound support services that suit an individual's needs.
External support	We will signpost to specialist services based on individual circumstance and need and make any referrals identified as necessary.

We will always strive to support good relations between our customers and within our neighbourhoods. However, it is important to recognise that there may be occasions where the conduct or issues being reported to us are considered general living or everyday life and options to address this will be exhausted, and no further action can be taken.

8. Partnership working

Our neighbourhoods are diverse areas made up of different housing types with many cultures and communities residing within them.

Ensuring our neighbourhoods remain vibrant and thriving spaces where our customers feel safe, secure, and proud to be part of the community takes a true partnership approach to achieve this. This includes a partnership approach directly with our customers with strong customer engagement embedded throughout, to ensure their voice is at the heart of our service design and delivery.

It also involves strong partnership working with external agencies with a vested interest within our neighbourhoods, which includes, but is not limited to the following partners:

- Local Authorities where we have a geographical stock footprint.
- Police Scotland.
- Scottish Fire and Rescue.
- Voluntary and Third Sector organisations operating within the community.
- Local businesses.

Taking this collaborative approach will deliver better outcomes for customers and neighbourhoods collectively, when there is shared responsibility over the ongoing management of the area.

9. Support and signposting

Building customer and community resilience is a key intention set out throughout our strategy. We recognise that for some people involved in neighbour disputes and experiencing neighbourhood management concerns, this can have an impact on their health, wellbeing, and resilience.

If we become aware of any specific support needs identified throughout the process of dealing with neighbourhood management concerns, we will seek to assist, either directly through our internal wraparound support services, or through making referrals to specialist external agencies.

We will use our knowledge of our neighbourhoods and available services contained within, alongside our strong network of partnerships, to advocate for our customers where necessary.

10. Legislative, Regulatory and Strategic Drivers

10.1 Legislation

This policy has been written taking cognisance of the following legislation:

- Environmental Protection Act 1990.
- Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004.
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2010.
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2014.
- Human Rights Act 1998.
- Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000.
- Equality Act 2010.
- Data Protection Act 2018.
- General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation) (EU) 2016/679).

10.2 Regulatory

Neighbourhood management is an established indicator within the Scottish Social Housing Charter. Registered Social Landlords must provide details about satisfaction within neighbourhoods as part of their Annual Return on the Charter (ARC). Full details on the measure reported are found at Appendix 1.

10.3 Strategic Drivers

The Scottish Government National Performance Framework (NPF) is Scotland's wellbeing framework and sets out a national purpose and vision for Scotland, with outcomes aligned to measure progress towards achieving this. Neighbourhood management is most closely aligned with the national outcome which states: '***we live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe***'.

This communities outcome outlines that '*Our communities are shaped by the quality and character of the places we live in and the people we live among. In this outcome we recognised that to be healthy and happy as a nation we must nurture and protect our local resources, environments and all who live in them*'.

11. Policy review and consultation

Neighbourhood management is an area of development nationally at this time, therefore, in the first instance, we will review this policy after 1 year to allow for any ongoing development within the wider housing sector to complete and be incorporated into this policy document. Following this review, we will move to a review frequency of every three years. Reviews will consider legislative, performance and good practice changes.

More regular reviews may be considered where, for example, there is a need to respond to new legislation / policy guidance or any recommendations from learning reviews.

We have developed this policy in consultation with key stakeholders, including customers and staff from Wheatley Homes South.

12. Policy awareness and training

The policy will be rolled out to staff within Wheatley Homes South as part of wider good neighbourhood management sessions.

A detailed communication programme will accompany the launch of the policy, where internal and external channels will be utilised to raise awareness of the policy and the benefits application of the policy will bring to support our ambition of creating thriving neighbourhoods.

13. Performance monitoring and reporting

We will measure and monitor neighbourhood management concerns reported to us to establish the types of issues being raised, as well as identify any trends or thematic areas established. This insight will allow a greater understanding of areas impacting good neighbourhood management and the types of suitable and effective resolution methods available. It also helps identify any areas for improvement.

This information will be considered as part of our wider neighbourhood management approach.

Customer satisfaction with our neighbourhoods and areas for improvement will also be measured and embedded through established structures across the organisation such as our customer stronger voices programme and scrutiny panel.

14. Confidentiality and Data Protection

In certain circumstances and subject strictly to conditions set out in the Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulations and any other applicable data protection legislation, personal information may be shared by Wheatley Homes South with other organisations and partners. Before Wheatley Homes South can share personal information, it must consider all legal implications of doing so, not simply the terms of the applicable legislative requirements. Appendix 2 of the Wheatley Group Data Protection Policy must be considered.

Once a decision has been made as to whether or not information should be shared, that decision must be recorded, together with the reasoning behind that decision. Where a decision was taken to share the information, this will be on a “need to know” basis and an audit trail must be kept.

Staff members must consult the Group Data Protection Policy and if in doubt, seek advice from the Group Information Governance Team.

15. Complaints

Our aim is to get it right first time, however, where there is any dissatisfaction with this policy or its operation, customers can make a complaint.

A summary of the Complaints Policy and Procedure is available on the Wheatley Homes South website.

Appendix 1

Scottish Social Housing Charter – Annual Return of the Charter Indicators relative to neighbourhood management.

Indicator number	Charter Description
13	<p>Percentage of tenants satisfied with the landlord's contribution to the management of the neighbourhood they live in.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="539 584 1351 680">i. Number of tenants who were asked: 'Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your landlord's contribution to the management of the neighbourhood you live in?'<li data-bbox="456 685 1351 882">(ii) Number who responded:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="547 719 762 748">(a) very satisfied<li data-bbox="547 752 767 781">(b) fairly satisfied<li data-bbox="547 786 999 815">(c) neither satisfied nor dissatisfied<li data-bbox="547 819 807 848">(d) fairly dissatisfied<li data-bbox="547 853 799 882">(e) very dissatisfied