

# Housing Services Tenant Garden Maintenance Policy

Department	Housing Services
Responsible Person	Director of Housing
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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The purpose of this Tenant Garden Maintenance Policy is to ensure that all Council tenants maintain their gardens and outdoor spaces to a safe, clean, and acceptable standard.
- 1.2 Well maintained gardens help create attractive neighbourhoods, reduce pest activity, and prevent hazards.
- 1.3 This policy also clarifies how the Council will respond when gardens become overgrown, accumulate rubbish, or breach tenancy conditions.

## **2. Standards for Garden Maintenance**

### **2.1 General Upkeep**

Tenants must keep their gardens regularly maintained and in a clean, tidy condition. Grass must be cut frequently enough to prevent it becoming long or unmanageable.

- 2.1.1 Hedges, shrubs, and plants must be trimmed to prevent overgrowth, obstruction, or encroachment onto footpaths, pavements, shared access routes, or neighbouring properties.
- 2.1.2 Gardens must not be allowed to become overgrown to the point where they harbour pests, create fire risks, or negatively affect the appearance of the area.

### **2.2 Rubbish, Waste, and Cleanliness**

Gardens must be kept clear of rubbish, waste, and unwanted items at all times. This includes household waste, furniture, appliances, building materials, tyres, scrap metal, or any items not intended for outdoor use.

- 2.2.1 Dumping or storing rubbish in gardens is strictly prohibited. Waste must be disposed of through the appropriate Council collection services and must not be burned, buried, or left to accumulate.
- 2.2.2 Tenants are responsible for ensuring that their garden does not attract vermin or create environmental or health hazards.

## 2.3 **Planting Guidelines**

Tenants are encouraged to use native species that support local wildlife.

2.3.1 Trees and large shrubs must not be planted close to buildings, fences, or underground services where they may cause structural damage or overshadow neighbouring homes.

2.3.2 Invasive species prohibited under UK law, such as Japanese knotweed, must not be planted or allowed to spread. Refer to website link for further information [Invasive non-native \(alien\) plant species: rules in England and Wales - GOV.UK](#) .

2.3.3 Any planting that may grow beyond the tenant's boundary must be managed to prevent encroachment.

## 2.4 **Structures and Installations**

Any garden structures including sheds, greenhouses, raised beds must be securely installed and comply with Council guidelines and planning regulations.

2.4.1 Tenants must seek permission from the council before installing large structures.

## 3. **Vulnerable Tenants**

3.1 The Council recognises that some tenants may be unable to maintain their gardens due to age, disability, long-term health conditions, or other vulnerabilities.

3.2 Where a tenant is identified as vulnerable, the council may:

- offer advice or signpost to support services,
- work with family members, carers, or support workers,
- explore eligibility for assisted garden maintenance schemes (where available),
- agree a reasonable plan for improvement.

3.3 Vulnerability does not remove responsibility, but the council will take individual circumstances into account before taking enforcement action.

## **4. Tenancy Conditions and Enforcement**

### **Breach of Tenancy**

- 4.1 Failure to maintain a garden to the required standard is a breach of tenancy conditions. This includes allowing gardens to become overgrown, failing to remove rubbish, creating hazards, or causing nuisance to neighbours. The council has a duty to act where garden conditions negatively impact the community.

### **Rechargeable Works**

- 4.2 If a tenant fails to act within the specified timeframe, the council may arrange for the garden to be cleared, cut back, or made safe. The cost of this work will be recharged to the tenant. Rechargeable works may include grass cutting, hedge trimming, rubbish removal, pest control, or clearance of hazardous vegetation.

## **5. Equality Impact**

- 5.1 Applying this policy consistently and sensitively will ensure that all tenants and their household members in Council owned homes who have protected characteristics and/or are deemed vulnerable for other reasons receive services that are based on a recognition of their vulnerability. The Council will make all appropriate adjustments to the services they receive in order to mitigate any potential negative impacts on them and to ensure they receive fair and equal treatment from the Council as their landlord.