

# Glen Oaks Service Improvement Group



## Estate Management Scrutiny Report

September 2017

[www.glenoaks.org.uk](http://www.glenoaks.org.uk)

**The Glen Oaks Service Improvement Group  
would like to express our *thanks* to everyone who assisted us to  
carry out and report on our  
Estate Management Scrutiny Project including:**

Glen Oaks Staff Members; Glen Oaks Board Members;  
Glen Oaks Tenants; Tenants Information Service (TIS);  
Research Resource; and SIG Members .



thank you

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# Executive summary

The Glen Oaks Service Improvement Group (SIG) was established in 2015 and we are the first scrutiny group representing tenants and service users of Glen Oaks Housing Association.

This is our **third scrutiny report** and it provides an independent review of Glen Oaks Estate Management services, standards and processes. The SIG has a committee of 7 tenants and service users and our remit includes:

- To independently review and monitor Glen Oaks Housing Association housing and technical service delivery and performance to support service improvement.
- To make recommendations and report progress on scrutiny work to Glen Oaks Senior Management Team and Board.

As the standard and condition of our estates are the first impression tenants, prospective tenants and others have of Glen Oaks communities, it was agreed that this provided an excellent opportunity for a SIG scrutiny project.



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SIG has identified a number of recommendations it wishes Glen Oaks to consider - identified on page 8 of this report.

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## The scope of the review included:

- To carry out an independent review of Glen Oaks Estate Management Standards and Services.
- To identify areas of good practice and recommend improvements identified.

As part of this scrutiny project the SIG carried out the following activities:

- A review of the Estate Management Policy and Procedures.
- A review of the contract specifications for close cleaning and landscaping maintenance.
- A review of satisfaction, complaints and performance information.
- Meetings and discussions with Glen Oaks staff, Chief Executive and Board representative.
- Participation in Estate Walkabouts with Glen Oaks staff.
- A review of information provided to tenants and customers including:

Estate Management section of website  
Tenants handbook  
Estate Action Plans for Arden, Darnley and Pollok  
Letters to tenants regarding estate management

- A survey of staff and Board members to understand their awareness of estate management services, seek views on good practice and identify any areas for improvement.
- A survey of 89 tenants carried out on our behalf by **Research Resource**.

# Foreword

Welcome to SIG Estate Management Scrutiny Report. Over the last 12 months our group has been reviewing the Glen Oaks Housing Association estate management services, standards and practices.

The SIG was established in 2015 and we have been working with Glen Oaks Housing Association to **make a difference to the services provided** to tenants and customers across the communities served by Glen Oaks.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff, board members and tenants who participated in the review, making it a positive and worthwhile exercise.

Also to thank Laura Strang and Martha Hutcheson from Glen Oaks Housing Association (GOHA) and Sharon Donohoe from **Tenants Information Service (TIS)** who have supported our group throughout this process.

Last, but not least to thank the SIG members for all their voluntary time and commitment.

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**SIG Members were delighted to win TIS National Excellence Award: 'Most Inspiring Scrutiny Newcomer' in 2017**

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## Introducing Glen Oaks Service Improvement Group:

The Service Improvement Group is made of tenants who responded to a Glen Oaks recruitment drive with tenants and applicants interested in participating in tenant scrutiny.

**Supported by TIS**, the SIG participated in scrutiny awareness and training and developed a SIG Terms of Reference, which includes a code of conduct.

Building on the success of our previous scrutiny projects looking at Customer Care (as it relates to accessing housing application forms) and a review of the Glen Oaks Lettable Standard and Void processes, **the SIG has now concluded our estate management scrutiny project.**

SIG members were delighted to scoop the top prize at the 2017 TIS National Excellence Awards in the category of **Most Inspiring Scrutiny Newcomer.**

The award recognises **excellence in scrutiny practice** that others can learn from and will inspire future tenant Scrutiny development throughout Scotland. The group were thrilled to be rewarded for their outstanding improvement or change to tenants, service users, the wider community, and housing services.



# Our role

The main role of the SIG is to operate on behalf of tenants and service users to ensure that the landlord provides services that **meet the needs of tenants and other customers** and that are of the highest standard;

- To independently review and monitor Glen Oaks Housing Association housing and technical service delivery and performance to support service improvement.
- To make recommendations and report progress on scrutiny work to Glen Oaks Senior Management Team and Board.
- To independently review and monitor housing and technical service delivery and performance.
- To collect evidence to enable housing and technical services to be monitored.
- To make recommendations to senior managers and Board members on how housing and technical services can be improved.
- To work with the landlord organisation to provide a range of opportunities for tenants and other customers to give their views.
- To monitor and review agreed action plans.
- To tell other tenants what the Service Improvement Group is doing and encourage them to get involved.



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TIS provides our group with specialist independent advice and training to develop our skills and knowledge to be effective.

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# Our core standards

Our work is based on the following core standards:

Being **accountable** to tenants and customers; being **transparent**; reflecting the **needs and aspirations** of tenants and service users; respecting the decision making role of the Board and Senior Management Team; and **making recommendations** based on evidence gathered.





The Tenants Information Service (TIS) provides our group with **specialist independent advice and training** to develop our skills and knowledge to be effective.

Laura Strang and Martha Hutcheson, from Glen Oaks Housing Association provide Link Officer Services to the group, ensuring that we have access to relevant information and Glen Oaks colleagues to deliver our scrutiny work. The Link Officer roles also ensure that Glen Oaks colleagues, tenants, and customers are kept up to date with the groups' scrutiny work.

## The scrutiny process

As part of our scrutiny project, we carried out a **policy and procedural** review; a review of **information provided** to tenants and customers including a tenants handbook and estate action plans website;

- A review of **performance** including, annual return on the Charter, satisfaction survey results, complaints and compliments information, and SIG independent survey to tenants (carried out on our behalf by Research Resource).
- Estate inspections.
- A review of **close cleaning and landscaping maintenance** contract specifications.
- Meetings with staff.
- **Surveys** of staff and Board Members.



**Our estate management scrutiny project had 3 definitive steps for each exercise**

## Three definitive steps

Our scrutiny project had 3 definitive steps for each exercise:

- Summary
- Findings
- Recommendations

**Section 4** of this report provides a summary of our key recommendations and **section 5** provides details of our findings and recommendations.

# Our key recommendations

The **key recommendations** outlined in this section, are not indicated in order of priority, but rather are listed to follow each area of work carried out and are referred to in **more detail in section 5** of this report.

## Key recommendations



GOHA introduces clear systems to record, report, and monitor progress in relation to estate management issues and concerns.

1. GOHA reviews and updates the **Estate Management Policy** in line with the findings detailed in this report.

2. GOHA considers changing the name of the policy to “**Managing our Neighbourhoods and Environment**”.

3. GOHA works with SIG to **update and improve** estate management information to tenants and other customers, including a review of the tenants’ handbook and website.

4. GOHA works with SIG to **streamline process** of dealing with estate management issues with tenants, particularly in relation to standard of gardens and closes. Including introduction of use of photos, postcards, and review of letters issued (please see section 5 XX of report for more detail).

5. GOHA introduces **clear systems** to record, report, and monitor progress in relation to estate management issues and concerns.

6. GOHA **reviews staff workloads** to ensure staff have enough time available to carry out estate inspections on a regular basis to a high and consistent standard across all neighbourhoods.

7. GOHA considers **moving responsibility for the garden scheme and landscaping contract** to officers responsible for carrying out estate inspections rather than the technical team who does not have this responsibility.





8. GOHA reviews and improves the **specifications of landscaping and close cleaning contracts** as detailed later in this report.

9. GOHA ensures **regular reports** are received from contractors detailing work carried out and that this is monitored by GOHA as and when work carried out.

10. GOHA introduces a more **regular schedule of tenant satisfaction surveys** in relation to close cleaning, perhaps on a rolling programme across neighbourhood on the day of or day after work carried out. The aim of this is to allow more regular information and updates to be reported and acted upon.

11. GOHA ensures garden maintenance and close cleaning services received by tenants are **value for money and affordable** and that service users pay for the actual cost of the service and it not subsidised by other rent payers.

12. GOHA ensures a **regular review of tenants using garden maintenance services** and provides revised information to contractor.

13. GOHA works with the GCC, SIG, and tenants to **ensure improvements to back courts and bin areas** in Arden along with the introduction of improved opportunities for recycling.

14. GOHA works with GCC to provide **clear and easy to read understand information** as to what item should be disposed of in each bin and how to deal with bulk uplift items and opportunities for disposal of items out with their own bins such as charitable donations and access to GCC waste and recycling centres.

15. GOHA works with GCC to **increase and improve** access to on street bins.




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GOHA ensures a regular review of tenants using garden maintenance services and provides revised information to contractor.

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## Key recommendations

16. GOHA works with tenants, residents and others to **improve our open spaces**.



17. GOHA works with local people and others to **improve the community garden area** in Arden. Such as the removal of unsightly wooden blocks.



18. GOHA **removes the bricks set out as a design feature** in the community garden area in Pollok.



19. GOHA works with local people and others across all communities to investigate the potential of developing community initiatives such as **community gardens, allotments, community facilities, play areas**.



20. GOHA works with all tenants, residents, staff, Board Members and contractors to ensure they are **aware of the importance of estate management** and encourage them to report any issues noted whilst in our neighbourhoods (creating a culture of collective responsibility for the maintenance and improvement of our communities as well as homes).



21. GOHA continues to work with GCC and owner of derelict pub in Arden to demolish and **make better use of this land** and improve aesthetics of this area overall. This could include use of new planning rules in development and use of Compulsory Purchase Orders. Future developments could include new build housing for rent or community facilities.



22. GOHA **increases staff visibility in our neighbourhoods**, particularly those doing estate inspections, repairs and maintenance work or inspections. This should include the introduction of new staff jackets in brighter more visible colour that used at present that link to GOHA's Corporate Branding.



GOHA works with local people and others to improve the community garden areas.



**23. GOHA Board Members accompany SIG members on estate inspections** to increase understanding of positive and more challenging aspects of estate management and neighbourhoods and increase awareness of this from a tenant perspective.



# Findings and recommendations

The SIG reviewed Glen Oaks Housing Association Estate Management Policy, the Scottish Social Housing Charter, specifically Outcome 6: Neighbourhood and Community, which identifies that:

**Social landlords, working in partnership with other agencies, help to ensure that tenants and other customers live in well maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe.**



**Social landlords, working in partnership with other agencies, help to ensure that tenants and other customers live in well maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe.**

## Findings: Policy Review

1. Glen Oaks staff were very helpful in explaining the Estate Management Policy and Standards.



2. Glen Oaks staff were helpful in responding to and clarifying any questions the SIG had during the review.



3. The Association has an **Estate Management** Policy that was approved in June 2015.



4. Glen Oaks staff were very helpful in explaining the Estate Management **Policy and Standards**.



5. The Estate Management Policy provides details on how Glen Oaks manages the estates and provides some information regarding the responsibilities of the Association, contractors, tenants and others in the pursuit of “**attractive, well maintained, safe and secure neighbourhoods**”.



6. A **tenant satisfaction survey** in relation to close cleaning is carried out on an annual basis on a rolling programme that allows all tenants to respond at least once during the year.



## Recommendations: Policy Review

1. It would be helpful to review the policy prior to June 2018, in partnership with the SIG and other service users, and consider a possible name change to “**Managing our Neighbourhoods and Environment**” as we consider that not everyone has a clear understanding of the term “Estate Management” or what this entails.

2. It would be helpful to have an **easy to read and plain English** version of the policy that is provided to tenants and available on Glen Oaks Housing Association web site and in the office. This could be called “Managing our Neighbourhoods and Environment: our roles and responsibilities”. This should **clearly identify** the responsibilities of the Association, tenants and customers, Glasgow City Council and others.

3. In reviewing the policy the SIG noted the following:

- a. The **policy requires an update** to reflect the new Scottish Social Housing Charter launched in April 2017.
- b. The links to other policies, references to the Charter, Scottish Housing Regulator Landlord Reports and Glen Oaks Annual Report to Tenants should be made as **web links** and / or direct the reader to where this further information can be accessed.
- c. The policy name could be changed as above.
- d. The policy **structure, layout and use of graphics or photographs could be improved** to ensure it is more user friendly and easier to read and identify examples of standards expected and not acceptable in terms of gardens, closes, streets etc.

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Information on how to access the policy in other community languages or other formats should be included on the front cover.

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4. Information on **how to access the policy** in other community languages or other formats should be included on the front cover.

5. GOHA works with the SIG to **review information** provided to tenants and customers.

# Findings and recommendations

The SIG reviewed the Glen Oaks Tenants Handbook and noted that it contains a section on Estate Management.

In addition **we reviewed the annual reports** to tenants, estate action plans and the estate management section of the Association's web site.



**33 cases of Antisocial Behaviour investigated and 81.9% resolved within Glen Oaks agreed targets.**

## Findings: Tenants handbook & information to tenants

1. The Tenants Handbook provides information to tenants in relation to estate management under the headings of **"Respect for Others"** and **"The Environment"**.

2. The annual reports provide details of tenant satisfaction levels recorded over the year:

- a. 2014/2015 – **95% satisfied** that neighbourhoods are a good place to live.
- b. 33 cases of Antisocial Behaviour investigated and **81.9% resolved** within Glen Oaks agreed targets.
- c. 2015/2016 – **95.5% satisfied** that neighbourhoods are a good place to live. Increase of 0.5% noted as positive as well as comparison with Scottish Average of 86%.
- d. **23 cases of Antisocial Behaviour investigated** and 90.7% resolved within target, compared to Scottish Average of 86.6%.

The reduction in cases investigated and increase in issues resolved within target and above Scottish Average is very positive.

3. The annual estate action plans for each neighbourhood **provides good information** to tenants and other customers.

4. There is an **estate management section** on the web site.



## Recommendations: Tenants handbook & information to tenants

1. It would be helpful to **review and revise the current handbook** to ensure it is more up to date and more user friendly, including use of info graphics and pictures.

Consideration could also be given to the development of a handbook that is a series of “stand alone” leaflets that come together to form the handbook and can be revised and circulated as and when required and not simply when the whole handbook is due for review and renewal.

2. The SIG considers it would be **helpful in future** annual reports Glen Oaks that advises of:

- a. Comparisons from previous 2 years and shows increases and decreases
- b. Comparisons are made for same period with the Scottish Average
- c. How tenant and customer feedback, SIG reports and other factors have been used to improve services, policies and procedures, including a “you said, we did” section.

3. Various sections of the estate action plans provide the same information. It may be helpful to **consider providing one estate action plan** that contains the common information, with pages then dedicated to each area. **Note:** the SIG considers this may provide financial savings to GOHA.

4. It would be helpful to provide the estate action plan information in **other languages and formats that are easy to access** and use.

5. It would be helpful if GOHA developed a “button” on the web site that allowed tenants and other customers to **access documents in their own languages**.




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It would be helpful to review and revise the current handbook to ensure it is more up to date and more user friendly, including use of info graphics and pictures.

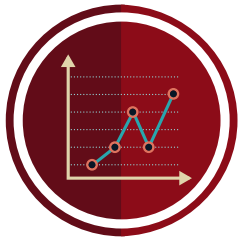
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## Recommendations: Tenants handbook & information to tenants

16. It would be helpful if the Estate Management section on the website was updated to:

- a. Reflect the revised policy, procedures and tenants handbook
- b. Provide Positive and negative examples of estate management to identify standards expected by using pictures and info graphics
- c. Demonstrate estate inspection checks being carried out by staff
- d. Raise awareness of health and safety issues could arise as a result of poor estate management such as items or dirt in closes, rubbish left outside bins, fly tipping
- e. Demonstrate improvements made
- f. Provide clear roles and responsibilities of Glen Oaks, Tenants & Customers, Glasgow City Council and others
- g. Provide a brief explanation of service standards and expectations of contractors responsible for close cleaning and landscaping maintenance



There was a reduction in Antisocial Behaviour cases investigated from 33 in 2014 / 2015 to 23 in 2016 / 2017.

## Findings and recommendations

The SIG reviewed estate management performance review information including: the Annual Return on the Charter; Annual Performance Reports 2014 - 2015, 2015 -2016, 2016 - 2017; close cleaning satisfaction report; and landscaping maintenance complaints/issues raised.

### Findings: Performance Information Review

1. Tenant satisfaction with the neighbourhoods that we live in has increased from **90%** in 2014 / 2015 to 91.2 in 2016 / 2017.

2. Tenant satisfaction with the neighbourhoods we live in during 2016 / 2017 **is higher than the Scottish Average of 80.6%.**

3. There was a reduction in Antisocial Behaviour cases investigated from **33** in 2014 / 2015 to **23** in 2016 / 2017.

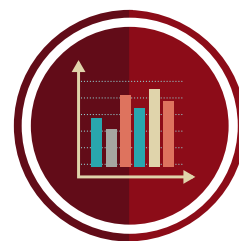
4. In 2016 / 2017, **89.9% antisocial behaviour instances were resolved** within target, compared to Scottish Average of 87.2%.

5. **Annual tenant satisfaction surveys** regarding the close cleaning service are carried out.

6. Glen Oaks **responds to issues raised by tenants and customers** regarding close cleaning and landscaping maintenance, advises contractors and seeks service improvements where required.

7. Annual Reports to Tenants **provide information on the performance** for the previous year.

8. **Issues or complaints notified to GOHA do not seem to be recorded, reported or monitored** in the same as other services such as repairs, new tenant issues or reports to Police And Community (PAC) meetings.



In 2016 / 2017,  
**89.9% antisocial  
behaviour  
instances were  
resolved within  
target, compared to  
Scottish Average of  
87.2%.**

## Recommendations: Performance Information Review

1. It would be helpful if future Annual Reports to Tenants were **reviewed in partnership** with the SIG to include comparative data for the previous two years and demonstrate increases and decreases as well as comparisons to the Scottish Average.

2. It would be helpful if **close cleaning satisfaction surveys were carried out on a more regular basis** across the Arden stock and linked to the programme of how this service is delivered. For example, a rolling programme of telephone or postal surveys carried out on the day or following day that close cleaning is carried out to more accurately record satisfaction levels and complaints.

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## Recommendations: Performance Information Review

3. It would be helpful if GOHA worked with the contractor to **ensure a laminated schedule for close cleaning is posted in all closes** and updated and replaced as required.

4. It would be helpful if all **staff and tenants were made aware** of the close cleaning specification and schedule in order to increase awareness of standard of work expected and time/dates/regularity of when this work should be carried out.

5. It would be helpful if Glen Oaks **developed systems** to further improve and collect data regarding complaints and issues raised. For example feedback from satisfaction surveys should be recorded and reported to the relevant team and any contact with the Association regarding the close cleaning should be recorded and responded to as a complaint or compliment (not just as an issue). This information should then be used to monitor the service, identify weaknesses, and introduce improvements where required.

6. It would be helpful if Glen Oaks **advised tenants of how complaints and compliments have been used to monitor and improve the service**. This could include a “You Said, We Did” section in the web site, annual reports to tenants and estate action plans among others.

7. It would be helpful if GOHA worked with the SIG to **introduce a clear reporting and monitoring system for Estate Management** to include:

- a. Items that are GOHA responsibility
- b. Items that are GCC responsibility
- c. Items that are tenant or owner responsibility

The SIG recommends that where tenants and others report issues that are GCC responsibility that GOHA staff should report these issues to GCC and record and monitor as above, as well as advise people to report directly to GCC.



It would be helpful if all staff and tenants were made aware of the close cleaning specification and schedule.

# Findings and recommendations

The SIG carried out Estate Walkabout Inspections with GOHA staff during this scrutiny project. Walkabout inspections were conducted in **Arden (2), Darnley (1), and Pollok (1)**.

The reason for agreeing to carry out two inspections in Arden and one each in Darnley and Pollok was to ensure walkabout inspections were carried out in each area and to reflect the significantly higher number of properties in the Arden area.

## Findings: Estate Inspections

1. GOHA staff were very helpful to group members in providing their time to organise and accompany us on the walkabout inspections and respond to questions

2. GOHA staff have ideas on what could help improve estate management in our neighbourhoods.

3. GOHA staff have access to a **mobile phone app** that can report issues directly to Glasgow City Council whilst on walkabout inspections.

4. GOHA staff who participated in the inspections:

- a. Were **knowledgeable** of the issues and areas requiring attention.
- b. Were **clear on their roles and remit** in relation to Estate Inspections and Estate Management overall.
- c. Provided information on **how issues and concerns are addressed**.
- d. Understood that Estate Management can be a challenge for the Association and its tenants and customers as not all aspects of what ensures our “neighbourhoods are well maintained and safe” are covered under the responsibilities of the Association.

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GOHA staff were very helpful to group members in providing their time to organise and accompany us on the walkabout inspections.

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## Findings: Estate Inspections

5. GOHA staff are not as visible in neighbourhoods as previous. The SIG considers this is due to:

- a. The change from red to blue jackets which has reduced visibility and association with GOHA.
- b. Staff dealing with other duties.

6. Estate management in terms of refuse disposal, collection, and opportunities for recycling are **significantly more challenging** in closes than in own door properties.

## key issues identified



Cutting left behind after cuts – SIG consider this is not acceptable and that contract spec may need to be changed to address this.

### Area: Pollok

- Some pavements are damaged, issues with broken or missing lamppost bins, poor weeding at edges of grassed areas / pavements / open spaces.
- Community garden area in a poor condition.
- SIG noted that properties in Pollok are houses, rather than flats. SIG consider this may mean different estate management issues / opportunities between areas.
- Cutting left behind after cuts – SIG consider this is not acceptable and that contract spec may need to be changed to address this.
- Weathering at brick wall needs to be addressed
- Overall the open spaces maintained by GCC are poor, with GCC not taking care of them to a good standard
- Issues at area of shared lane access with Scottish Power – SIG considers responsibility needs clarified and action taken



## Area: Arden

- Weeding and edging at pavements, slabbed areas and bollards poor  
Litter at sides of properties
- Paths and pavements in poor condition / cracked / weeds etc.
- Lamp post bins missing or damaged
- Wheelie bins dumped at grassed area
- Generally back courts and bin stores in poor condition
- Old bin stores left in back courts are not big enough for wheelie bins
- Lots of bags and rubbish not put in bins and are therefore left behind by  
Cleansing Service after bins emptied
- Some back courts do not seem to have drying area posts
- New wheelie bins in Arden do not seem to be working
- Some issues with overgrown gardens and fly tipping
- Community garden area is poor, especially where “sleeper stairs” are and  
raised wooded block feature
- Some tenants are working hard to keep gardens in a very good condition  
however others are not. (SIG very concerned at potential health and safety risk  
indicated by oil cans dumped in garden)
- Some closes have items left in them i.e. prams, toys etc. (again SIG concerned  
re Health and Safety risks caused by this)




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**Some tenants  
are working hard  
to keep gardens  
in a very good  
condition however  
others are not.**

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## Area: Darnley

- SIG noted that there are significant difference in the condition of estates  
between Darnley and Arden. This may be due to type of properties mainly  
houses rather than flats
- Condition of roads and pavements poor in some places
- High levels of litter in burn
- Some gardens were full of rubbish
- There are not a lot of on street bins in area
- Some tenants are working hard to keep gardens in a very good condition,  
others are not

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## Recommendations: Estate Inspections

1. GOHA and SIG present findings of this scrutiny report to Glasgow City Council and Elected Members.

2. It would be helpful if GOHA **increased staff visibility in neighbourhoods** through:

- a. The introduction of **new staff jackets/uniforms** that reflect GOHA's corporate brand and that are more visible and clearly identifiable with GOHA.
- b. **Increasing** the number of estate inspections taking place.
- c. **Introducing estate inspections/walkabouts with local people.** The aim of this would be to encourage people to take ownership of issues and communities, assist tenants to report issues and concerns and assist GOHA and local people to identify potential solutions to issues raised and work together to improve our communities.

**NOTE:** This could assist GOHA and tenants identify expenditure priorities for environmental expenditure and area budgets where available.



It would be helpful if GOHA increased staff visibility in neighbourhoods.

3. It would be helpful if GOHA provided **clear information to tenants and other residents** as to GOHA responsibility to carry out estate inspections, the aim of the inspections, what is reviewed, actions taken if issues noted and how tenants and residents could work with GOHA to improve the area and ensure issues are reported to the relevant agency such as GOHA, GCC and others.

4. It would be helpful if GOHA **improved the open spaces/community garden** areas that the Association is responsible for such as:

- a. Remove the wooden steps/seats in the Arden community garden
- b. Addressed weathering to wall in Pollok
- c. Remove bricks as feature of community garden in Pollok
- d. Improved maintenance of shrubbed areas, hanging baskets, planters across all estates

**NOTE:** as it is costly to maintain hanging baskets the SIG recommends that where these are in poor condition that they are removed.

5. It would be helpful if GOHA **promoted the use of the GCC app** to report issues with tenants, customers, staff and Board Members.

**Through email and text message** updates, updates at staff and Board meetings, articles in newsletters, estate action plans, web site and inclusion in tenants handbook information.



## Findings and recommendations

The SIG reviewed the letters sent to tenants regarding estate management issues and concerns noted during estate inspections carried out by staff.

### Findings: Letters to tenants

1. Staff **advise tenants of issues and concerns in relation to closes and gardens** upon their return to the office after estate inspections take place. In some cases this can mean it takes a day or maybe a few days, before tenants receive letters regarding the issue or concern.



2. SIG considers that there are **too many letters** and that this makes the process of dealing with issues lengthy.



**SIG considers that there are too many letters and that this makes the process of dealing with issues lengthy.**

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### Recommendations: Letters to tenants



Staff take photos of issue or concern with date and time stamp on photo and send this to the tenant along with the letter issue after postcard.

1. It would be helpful if GOHA **reviewed and improved the processes** for dealing and communicating with tenants in relation to estate management. The SIG recommends the following to be included in a newly developed procedure:

- The **development of postcards** that can be immediately put through tenants doors when issues noted. This would include date and time of inspection, issue to be addressed, timescale for next inspection to check improvement made (within 2 days)
- Staff **take photos** of issue or concern with date and time stamp on photo and send this to the tenant along with the letter issue after postcard.
- The process of letters and communication to tenants regarding estate management issues should be **streamlined and letters revised**. The SIG recommends changes to the process such as:
  - >> Card though door at time issue noted
  - >> Letter with photo and time issue noted same or next day, with information re follow up inspection within 7 days
  - >> Warning letter after second inspection
  - >> Process whole should take 2 – 3 weeks at most

**NOTE:** SIG considers that letters re Estate Management issues should also be sent to sharing owners and owner occupiers.

## Findings and recommendations

The SIG carried out a review of the close cleaning and landscaping maintenance contracts GOHA currently has in place with Caledonia Maintenance Services.

During this review the SIG identified that although the content of the contracts are generally good, that we **do not** consider that all aspects of these contracts are being implemented by the contractor to the **highest standard** that should be expected by GOHA and tenants and monitoring of the delivery of these services could be improved.

### Findings: Landscaping Maintenance Contracts

1. Generally the SIG considers the content of the specification and schedules is good. It is **our view that if all aspects were delivered to a high standard the estates would be in a good condition**.

2. The clause regarding “failure” by contractor to deliver a high standard of work in a **one - month period is good.**

3. The contract detail in terms of **sweeping and de-littering** covers what is required.

3. The contract indicates there is a **regular review which is positive.**

5. It is positive that the contractor should **provide an inspection report.**

6. The SIG understands that having **long term contracts with providers can better pricing for GOHA**, but have some concerns that in such situation operatives can become “a bit complacent” in their delivery, which is why we consider extensive monitoring by GOHA is required.

7. The SIG considers it is **positive that the contract includes cleaning of bin stores**, however identified that there are bigger issues in relation to bin stores that require to be addressed.

Our comments and recommendations on this are detailed elsewhere in this report **(page 27).**




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The SIG considers it is positive that the contract includes cleaning of bin stores, however identified that there are bigger issues.

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## Recommendations: Landscape Maintenance Contracts

1. Although the SIG considers the content of the specification is generally good, during our estate inspections we identified that **not all aspects of the contract are being met to an acceptable high standard** and therefore recommend that GOHA improves its internal monitoring processes regarding the contract implementation.

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## Recommendations: Landscape Maintenance Contract

2. The SIG recommends that GOHA **reviews the contract specification** to include:

- a. a quarterly review period
- b. high quality weeding around fences, posts and in open spaces
- c. collection and removal of cuttings (off site and not in tenants bins as seems to practice in some areas at present)
- d. de-littering around areas of shrub beds
- e. looking after shrubs on a monthly basis (during growing season)



3. It would be helpful if GOHA **developed a checklist for staff to allow them to check if work has been carried out to a high standard** or not with a tick or a cross, detail date of inspection, dates of when issues reported to contractor / rechecked by GOHA, completed etc. This information should then be used for recording and monitoring purposes.

4. It would be helpful if GOHA **ensured the contractor produced an inspection report** on a monthly basis.

5. In terms of **bin store cleaning**, the SIG recommends that this should be carried out **more than once a month**.

6. Where a garden service is provided, the SIG noted that the contractor disposed of cuttings in tenants' bins and in some cases, bin bags were left outside the bins and therefore not removed by GCC. GOHA is therefore required to ensure that **the specification includes removal of cuttings off site**.

7. It would be helpful if GOHA provided tenants and staff will **clear schedules** of when work will be carried out, to allow everyone to understand, monitor and report issues.

It would be helpful if GOHA developed a checklist for staff to allow them to check if work has been carried out to a high standard.



8. It would be helpful if GOHA ensured that details of tenants requiring the garden service are **updated on a monthly basis**.

9. It would be helpful if **GOHA advised tenants of any changes to schedules of work to accommodate public holidays**.

### Findings: Close cleaning contract

1. The SIG considers the **content of the close cleaning** specification details what is required.

2. The SIG is **pleased to see that the contract details** what work will be carried out on a weekly and monthly basis.

It would be helpful if GOHA ensured that staff inspected the work carried out on the day or day after this was completed.

### Recommendations: Close cleaning contract

1. It would be helpful if GOHA ensured that **staff inspected the work** carried out on the day or day after this was completed.

2. It would be helpful if GOHA **provided clear details of work to be carried out**, along with timescales to tenants.

3. It would be helpful if GOHA **worked with the contractor to provide a laminated close cleaning schedule** posted in all closes which is updated and replaced as

4. It would be helpful if GOHA **reviewed the schedule for close cleaning and requirements** to identify whether or not consideration could be given to whether less regular close cleaning being carried out in the summer and more in the winter would be a good idea.



**Improved recoding of estate management issues and complaints from staff, tenants, customers, Board Members and others would benefit the Association, our tenants and other customers.**

Reports could then be made **monthly** to senior management and forwarded to GCC, contractors and others with responsibility for the service based on actual evidence of reports.

GOHA could then use this to **monitor progress and communicate this to tenants** as to what action has been taken, not been taken and why.

The detail of the **reports could then be used to identify if changes are required to service specifications**. Such as assessment of whether or not the 2 weekly grass cutting service is being delivered or weeding being carried out and whether or not consideration could be given to whether less regular close cleaning being carried out in the summer and more in the winter would be a good idea.

## Findings and recommendations

The SIG carried out a survey with GOHA staff and Board members in relation to estate management and would like to **thank everyone for their participation in this work**.

### Findings: Feedback from staff/Board member meetings & surveys



It was identified that all although Staff and Board Members consider the areas are generally okay, that all areas would benefit from improvements.

1. Staff and Board Members understand that estate management is a **vital service** provided to tenants and other customers and that this is the first impression people have of our neighbourhoods and is the first port of call for current and potential customers.

2. Some Board and Staff members indicated that estate management **has become less of a priority due to financial and other workload pressures**, with staff identifying that they “have too little time” to do estate inspections.

3. It was identified that all although Staff and Board Members consider the areas are generally okay, **that all areas would benefit from improvements**.

4. **Not all staff seem to be aware** of what is meant by estate management.

5. Not all staff with responsibility for carrying out estate inspections are aware of the content of the landscaping maintenance and close cleaning specifications or garden maintenance service.

6. Responsibility for the garden maintenance scheme is with the **technical team**, not officers responsible for carrying out estate inspections.

7. Staff do not use an inspection checklist when carrying out estate inspections.

8. Staff identified **estate management strengths** as;

- Partnerships with others
- Garden competition
- Contract services

9. Staff identified **estate management weaknesses** as;

- Not all Estate Management issues are GOHA responsibility
- Lack of response from GCC

10. Staff and Board Members identified that **some improvements could include:**

- Area budgets
- Weekly de-litter
- Ensuring staff, tenants and other customers have clear information on estate management responsibilities and to whom issues or complaints should be reported
- Sanctions
- Introducing a schedule of inspections that tenants are clearly aware of

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Responsibility for the garden maintenance scheme is with the technical team, not officers responsible for carrying out estate inspections.

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## Findings: Feedback from staff/Board member meetings & surveys

1. GOHA **reviews staff workloads** to ensure staff have enough time available to carry out estate inspections on a regular basis to a high and consistent standard across all neighbourhoods.



2. GOHA ensures that estate management once again **receives the priority** it deserves in terms of staff, Board Members, tenants and other customers.



3. GOHA considers **moving responsibility** for the garden scheme and landscaping contract to officers responsible for carrying out estate inspections rather than the technical team who does not have this responsibility.



4. GOHA considers **introducing an estate management checklist** that can be used consistently by all officers across all neighbourhoods



5. GOHA informs all staff and contractors as well as tenants that they have a **responsibility to report estate management issues, complaints or concerns** and advises that these will be recorded, monitored and reported to GCC as required.



6. GOHA ensures that **staff ideas or suggestions for improvements are recorded**, listened to and acted upon where possible in partnership with the SIG, tenants and others.



GOHA ensures that estate management once again receives the priority it deserves in terms of staff, Board Members, tenants and other customers.



# Findings and recommendations

The SIG developed a questionnaire for tenants and were very pleased that GOHA agreed to use Research Resource to independently carry out the questionnaire on our behalf.

This was conducted as a telephone survey. **89 tenants responded** to the survey across all areas and full details are available on request to Martha Hutcheson, Corporate Services Manager by telephone on 0141 620 2705 or by email at [Martha.Hutcheson@glenoaks.org.uk](mailto:Martha.Hutcheson@glenoaks.org.uk).

The main findings of this survey are as follows:

## Findings: Feedback from SIG survey to Tenants

**1. Overall, respondents felt that their neighbourhood was a good place to live** with 93% stating it was either a very good or fairly good place to live.

**2. When asked about environmental services provided by Glen Oaks, respondents were most satisfied with:**

- a. Close cleaning (90%)
- b. Cleaning of close windows (90%)
- c. Garden service (where applicable (83%))
- d. Landscaping service/ open space maintenance (79%)

**However, satisfaction was lower with regard to:**

- a. Standard of bin stores (Arden only) (59%)
- b. Maintenance of bin stores (Arden only) (63%)
- c. Maintenance of back courts (Arden only) (70%)
- d. Maintenance of back courts (Arden only) (71%)

**3. 89% of respondents were either very satisfied or fairly satisfied** with Glen Oaks management of the neighbourhood they live in.



**Overall, respondents felt that their neighbourhood was a good place to live with 93% stating it was either a very good or fairly good place to live.**

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## Findings: Feedback from SIG survey to Tenants

4. With regard to other aspects of the neighbourhood, respondents were most satisfied with:

- a. Opportunities to recycle household waste (94%)
- b. Public transport (92%)
- c. Feeling of safety (89%)
- d. Street lighting (89%)

Satisfaction was lower with regard to:

- a. Play facilities (74%)
- b. Emptying of bins (83%)
- c. Community facilities (84%)



Overall, 60% of respondents said that they would 'highly recommend' their neighbourhood as a place to live to family and friends.

5. When asked about perceptions of problems, most likely to be perceived as a serious problem were:

- a. Dog fouling (33% reported this as a serious problem)
- b. Pot holes (32%)
- c. Rubbish and litter (15%).

6. 81% stated that they agreed that their neighbourhood was a place where people from different backgrounds can get on well together.

7. Overall, 60% of respondents said that they would 'highly recommend' their neighbourhood as a place to live to family and friends.

8. Almost three quarters of respondents (74%) stated that they feel part of a close knit community.



9. When asked if they would like to do more as a community in their neighbourhood, **52% said they would like to do fun days**, 36% a community garden project and 34% an allotment project.

10. **Respondents believed that a variety of things would make them more likely to walk about the estate more.** Respondents were most likely to state that more seating (32%), followed by cleaner streets and pavements (24%), better pavements (21%) and then more/ better traffic crossings (20%) would help. 52% said that nothing would encourage them to walk more as they feel they already walk about.

11. 81% stated that if they noted an issue, concern or problem with the environmental or cleansing services in their area they would always report this. **The majority (88%) stated that they would report this to Glen Oaks.**

12. **21 respondents stated that they have reported an issue**, concern or problem with the environmental or cleansing services in the area. Of those, 13 were satisfied with the way it was dealt with, 2 neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 6 were dissatisfied.




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**When asked if they would like to do more as a community in their neighbourhood, 52% said they would like to do fun days**

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### **Recommendations: Feedback from SIG Survey to Tenants**

1. GOHA management team and Board members read the full report submitted to the SIG by Research Resource.

2. GOHA management and board work with SIG to **investigate potential for improving satisfaction levels and responding to the ideas provided by tenants** within the feedback contained in this survey.