

## NOTICE OF MEETING

# CABINET MEMBER SIGNING

**Monday, 19th January, 2026, 1.30 pm - - Alexandra House, 10 Station Road, London, N22 (watch the live meeting [here](#))**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Sarah Williams**

### **1. FILMING AT MEETINGS**

Please note that this meeting may be filmed or recorded by the Council for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site or by anyone attending the meeting using any communication method. Although we ask members of the public recording, filming or reporting on the meeting not to include the public seating areas, members of the public attending the meeting should be aware that we cannot guarantee that they will not be filmed or recorded by others attending the meeting. Members of the public participating in the meeting (e.g. making deputations, asking questions, making oral protests) should be aware that they are likely to be filmed, recorded or reported on. By entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings.

The Chair of the meeting has the discretion to terminate or suspend filming or recording, if in his or her opinion continuation of the filming, recording or reporting would disrupt or prejudice the proceedings, infringe the rights of any individual or may lead to the breach of a legal obligation by the Council.

### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive any apologies for absence.

### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

A member with a disclosable pecuniary interest or a prejudicial interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the authority at which the matter is considered:

- (i) must disclose the interest at the start of the meeting or when the interest becomes apparent, and
- (ii) may not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must withdraw from the meeting room.

A member who discloses at a meeting a disclosable pecuniary interest which is not registered in the Register of Members' Interests or the subject of a pending notification must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days of the disclosure.

Disclosable pecuniary interests, personal interests and prejudicial interests are defined at Paragraphs 5-7 and Appendix A of the Members' Code of Conduct

**4. URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chair will consider the admission of any late items of Urgent Business. (Late items of Urgent Business will be considered under the agenda item where they appear).

**5. DEPUTATIONS / PETITIONS / QUESTIONS**

**6. GARAGE ALLOCATIONS POLICY (PAGES 1 - 14)**

**7. CLEAR COMMUNAL AREAS POLICY (PAGES 15 - 28)**

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Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> January 2026

**Report for:** Cabinet Member Signing — November 2025

**Title:** **Adopting a new Garage Allocations Policy**

**Report authorised by:** Jahedur Rahman, Director of Housing

**Lead Officer:** Chris Vavlekis, Head of Estates and Neighbourhood Services

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Report for Key/  
Non Key Decision:** Key

**1. Describe the issue under consideration**

- 1.1 The Council is transforming landlord services for its own tenants and leaseholders. To support that process, the Council is undertaking a full review of all policies relating to its tenants and leaseholders in its role as the landlord.
- 1.2 The new Garage Allocations Policy aims to support the provision of excellent garage services that ensure the widest possible opportunity for everyone who wishes to have a garage. It outlines how Haringey Council, and/or its nominated agent(s) will allocate garages and manage applications for garages.
- 1.3 This report seeks approval for adoption of the policy.

**2. Recommendation**

That the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning, and Deputy Leader of the Council:

- 2.1 Adopt the draft Garage Allocations Policy at Appendix 1 to come into effect from xx 2025.

**3. Reasons for decision**

- 3.1 This newly drafted clear and accessible policy provides guidance (including enforcement) on how Haringey Council manages the common areas of its council housing
- 3.2 The new policy will help the Council meet the Social Housing Regulator's consumer standards, specifically the Tenancy Standard and the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard.

**4. Alternative options considered**

- 4.1 **We could have continued with an out-of-date policy for the allocation of the Council's garages.** This option was rejected because it would not meet the Council's needs to produce a clearer, more transparent policy or the needs of its tenants. Introducing this new policy will assist the Council to meet the Social Housing Regulator's safety and quality standard to take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of tenants in their homes and associated communal areas. This option would also not meet our commitment to introduce updated policies in the Housing Strategy 2024 – 2029 and the Housing Improvement Plan 2023.

## 5. Background information

- 5.1 In June 2022, the Council brought most of the landlord and housing services back in house that had been run on its behalf by Homes for Haringey, its Arm's Length Management Organisation. The Council immediately began a process of reviewing that service provision and in April 2023 Cabinet adopted a comprehensive Housing Improvement Plan backed by significant financial investment. Amongst many other commitments, that plan committed to reviewing housing policies including garage allocations.
- 5.2 The Regulator of Social Housing's Standards requires that Registered Providers of Social Housing (RPs) must demonstrate that they understand the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard requirement to deliver fair, reasonable, accessible and transparent policies.
- 5.3 The Council has included thorough research into best practice in social housing, and engagement in an interactive process of policy development with key stakeholders across the Council.
- 5.4 Council officer service leads from Estates and Neighbourhoods, Income Management, Tenancy Management, Home Ownership and Support and Wellbeing were all involved in the development of this policy.
- 5.5 Council tenants and leaseholders were engaged in the design of the policy's content as part of the new resident engagement structure, which is overseen by the Resident Voice Board (RVB). The RVB is the resident forum that assists the Housing Service by providing strategic influence on customer-facing housing strategy and policy as well as giving a resident perspective on the quality of housing services with the aim of improving customer satisfaction and organisation performance (housing services).
- 5.6 In January 2025, the RVB reviewed and approved the newly developed policy incorporating their recommendations including clarifying the Council's approach to inspecting garages.
- 5.7 Following approval of this policy and subject to resources and funding, the Council are planning to audit and improve their processes for garage management including increased digitisation of the process, improve their understanding and use of their garage stock, and make improvements to managing the garage waiting list

### **Key provisions of the draft Garage Allocations Policy**

- 5.8 The aim of the policy is to set out how the Council will:
- Manage its garage stock effectively by maximising the number of garages in use and preventing garages from falling into disrepair or being misused.
  - Ensure garages are allocated fairly and efficiently to maximise rental income.
  - Operate a garage letting system that is easy to understand and transparent.
- 5.9 The policy confirms that anyone over the age of 18 can apply to join the Garage waiting list and that joint applications will be accepted based on the following priorities:
- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>Priority 1</b> | Any current Haringey Council garage licensee required to move garages as a result of disrepair, demolition, disposal or regeneration. |
| <b>Priority 2</b> | Any Haringey Council tenant or leaseholder living on the estate where the garage has become available.                                |
| <b>Priority 3</b> | Any Haringey Council tenant or leaseholder not living on the estate where the garage has become available.                            |
| <b>Priority 4</b> | Any other non - Haringey Council tenants or leaseholders including businesses.  |
- 5.10 The conditions for renting a garage, such as following the Council's garage licence agreement and paying rent, in addition to the approach to ending a garage tenancy are all also outlined.
- ## **6 Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2024-2026 High level Strategic outcomes'?**
- 6.1 The recommendations in this report will support the Corporate Delivery Plan's theme 5, "Homes for the Future", and in particular its commitment to provide reliable, customer focused resident housing services and to undertake a full review of all policies relating to our tenants and leaseholders in our role as their landlord.
- 6.2 The recommendations in this report will also support the 2024-2029 Housing Strategy's second strategic objective, improving housing quality and resident services in the social housing sector, in particular commitments around transforming services to our tenants and leaseholders, and designing those services with them.
- ## **7 Carbon and Climate Change**
- 7.1 The recommendation to adopt this new policy supports delivery of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan and becoming a net zero carbon borough by 2041 through commitments to improve garage safety.

## **8 Statutory Officers comments (Director of Finance (procurement), Head of Legal and Governance, Equalities)**

### **Finance**

- 8.1 The aim of this policy is to facilitate effective management of the garage stock and ensure fairness in its allocation.
- 8.2 The implementation of this policy and any associated cost will be contained within the existing service budget.

### **Director of Legal & Governance**

- 8.3 The Director of Legal & Governance has been consulted in the drafting of this report and comments as follows.
- 8.4 The Council is required to meet relevant Standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing, as detailed in the body of the report.
- 8.5 Residents have been engaged in the development of the policy as set out in the body of the report. The policy as developed is in officers' view more transparent and comprehensive in setting out the policy. The substantive practice of allocating garages however has not significantly changed from that obtaining previously.
- 8.6 There is no legal reason why the Deputy Leader should not adopt the recommendation in this report.

### **Strategic Procurement**

- 8.7 Strategic Procurement have been consulted in the preparation of this report. Strategic Procurement note that the recommendation in section 2 of this report is not a procurement decision and therefore have no objections to the report recommendations.

### **Equality**

- 8.8 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not
  - Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not

- 8.9 The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex, and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.
- 8.10 Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.
- 8.11 The policy considered here will apply to all current, existing, and new garage Licensees. Many of the garages are let to council tenants and leaseholders living in Haringey council housing, private residents and businesses. Haringey Council's tenant population shows the following characteristics compared to the wider borough population:
- a significantly higher proportion of young people (under 24) and older people (over 50).
  - a significantly higher proportion of individuals who have a disability under the Equalities Act.
  - a slightly higher proportion of individuals who report their gender identity as different from sex registered at birth.
  - a significantly lower proportion of individuals who are married or in a registered civil partnership.
  - a significantly higher proportion of individuals who identify as Muslim, and slightly higher proportion of individual who identify as Christian, Buddhist or another religion. This is countered by a significantly lower proportion of tenants who don't associate with any religion or identify as Jewish, Hindu or Sikh.
  - a significantly higher proportion of female individuals.
  - a significantly lower proportion of individuals who report their sexual identity as something other than Straight or Heterosexual.
- 8.12 The Garage Allocations Policy makes no changes to operational practices and is being updated to reflect the insourcing of the council housing function. The proposed policy is not anticipated to have impacts on groups that share the protected characteristics or other disadvantaged groups.

## **9 Use of Appendices**

Appendix 1 — Garage Allocations Policy

## **10 Background papers**

- **Haringey Housing Strategy 2024 – 2029:**  
[https://new.haringey.gov.uk/sites/default/files/202405/haringey\\_housing\\_strategy\\_2024 - 2029.pdf](https://new.haringey.gov.uk/sites/default/files/202405/haringey_housing_strategy_2024_-_2029.pdf)
- **Housing Services Improvement Plan:**  
<https://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/documents/s138660/Appendix%201.pdf>

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# GARAGE ALLOCATIONS POLICY

December 2025

## Contents

1	Introduction	2
2	Aim of the policy	2
3	Garage lettings	2
4	Conditions for renting a garage	3
5	Paying rent	4
6	Ending a garage tenancy	4
7	Links to other policies and strategies	5
8	Resident co-design and engagement	5
9	Equalities	5
10	Reviewing the policy	6
11	Legislation	6

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy applies to garages owned and managed by Haringey Council and to all current, existing, and new garage licensees.
- 1.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the relevant garage licence agreement.
- 1.3 When we use the terms 'we', 'our', and 'us' in this policy we mean Haringey Council.
- 1.4 We manage garages in Haringey and many of these are let to our council tenants and leaseholders living in our council housing, private residents and businesses.
- 1.5 Management of the forecourt areas outside the garage is our responsibility. Any repairs required to these areas should be reported to us online by using 'My account' on our website and by phone. If criminal damage has been caused, we will seek compensation for any repair costs and will seek this through taking legal action if evidence is obtained.

## 2 Aim of the policy

- 2.1 The aim of this policy is to support the provision of excellent garage services that ensure the widest possible opportunity for everyone who wishes to have a garage. The policy outlines how Haringey Council, and/or its nominated agent(s) will allocate garages and manage applications for garages.
- 2.2 This policy sets out how we will:
  - Manage our garage stock effectively by maximising the number of garages in use and preventing garages from falling into disrepair or being misused.
  - Ensure garages are allocated fairly and efficiently to maximise rental income.
  - Operate a garage letting system that is easy to understand and transparent.

## 3 Garage lettings

- 3.1 Anyone over the age of 18 can apply to join the Garage waiting list and joint applications will be accepted. Applications can be made [on our website](#).
- 3.2 Applicants are required to let us know every 24 months if they want to be removed from the waiting list if they no longer want to be considered for a garage. Our aspiration is to send notifications to these people to remind them.
- 3.3 Those on the waiting list should keep us informed of any changes to their communication details e.g. email, telephone and address. We will take no responsibility where an offer is made using the communication details we have on our system. but the applicant has not received this.
- 3.4 Applicants may only have one active application on the waiting list at any given time. This will be for one let only.
- 3.5 When a garage becomes available and more than one person on the waiting list has indicated a preference for that garage, we will prioritise allocations based on the length of time an applicant has been on the waiting list, on a first come first served basis.

3.6 Our garage lettings system allocates garages based on the following priorities:

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>Priority 1</b> | Any current Haringey Council garage licensee required to move garages as a result of disrepair, demolition, disposal or regeneration. |
| <b>Priority 2</b> | Any Haringey Council tenant or leaseholder living on the estate where the garage has become available.                                |
| <b>Priority 3</b> | Any Haringey Council tenant or leaseholder not living on the estate where the garage has become available.                            |
| <b>Priority 4</b> | Any other non - Haringey Council tenants or leaseholders including businesses.  |

3.7 When a garage becomes available, the highest applicant on the waiting list will be contacted and offered the garage. They are required to accept the offer immediately or lose the offer and we will re-let the garage to the next person on the waiting list.

3.8 Unpaid rent or other housing debts will impact on a Tenant's/licensee's ability to rent a garage or until they clear any debts they owe to the Council.

3.9 When a garage licensee falls into arrears and does not agree a plan with the Council to clear the arrears, we will terminate the licence and repossess the garage. In this case, they would be served with a notice to quit, which will give them 7 days to remove their belongings.

3.10 Our tenants may be eligible for a rent reduction if they are also a pensioner or have a disability and receive Mobility Allowance, Disability Living Allowance/ or Personal Independence Payments. If tenants are in receipt of Employment and Support allowance this would not qualify for a rent reduction.

3.11 We will inspect void garages prior to letting. We may also request to inspect let garages with reasonable notice to check for defects, health, safety and maintenance requirements.

## 4 Conditions for renting a garage

4.1 Garages are let in accordance with the Council's garage licence agreement, this includes but is not limited to the following conditions:

- Keeping the garage's fixtures and fittings (including the garage door) in good repair and condition.
- Licensees store goods in garages at their own risk. We will insure the structure of the garage. The tenant is responsible for insuring their own vehicle and personal possessions together with any property stored in the garage.
- Only use the garage for storage in compliance with the garage licence agreement and any relevant environmental, health and safety regulations and/or applicable planning controls. If we find any issues that would breach the garage licence agreement, we will enforce and look to recover our costs.

- It is the tenant's responsibility to ensure the garage is secure and notify the council of any issues with locks.
- Garages cannot be sub-let and must not be used for any criminal or illegal purpose.
- Not make any alterations or additions to the garage, or the compound area in which the garage is situated, without the prior written consent of the Council.
- Notify us immediately of any defect or repair needed to the garage, compound area, drains and other services.
- Not use the garage for any trade, business or antisocial activities from the garage or within the garage area.

## **5 Paying rent**

- 5.1 Licensees are responsible for paying the garage licence fee one month in advance by Direct Debit on the next available Direct Debit date, as set out in their garage licence agreement.
- 5.2 We will take a zero-tolerance approach to arrears.
- 5.3 If payment in advance is not made then the let cannot be agreed e.g. a manual payment would be required at time of let.
- 5.4 Internal licence arrangements are required to pay the garage licence fee one year in advance by the end of the financial year in March.
- 5.5 The rent levels for each garage will be set in April annually by us and may be higher for non-tenants or leaseholders of Haringey Council
- 5.6 If the licensee falls into arrears, we expect immediate clearance of the arrears or we will terminate the licence and repossess the garage. In this case, they would be served with a Notice to Quit, which will give them 7 days to remove their belongings. We will seek to recover our costs for the clearance and disposal of items, along with any rent arrears.
- 5.7 When the notice expires, we will change the locks and re-let the garage to the next person on the waiting list. If we find goods or personal possessions in the garage, we will dispose of them if they are not collected within 28 days as outlined in 5.6. We will seek to recover our costs for the clearance and disposal of items, along with any rent arrears.

## **6 Ending a garage tenancy**

- 6.1 We may terminate a garage license by giving one weeks' notice, in writing, to end on a Sunday, or with immediate notice if the Licensee is in breach of their licence.
- 6.2 The licensee may terminate a garage tenancy by giving one weeks' notice, in writing, to end on a Sunday.
- 6.3 The garage must be returned clean and tidy, failure to clear the property of personal belongings or rubbish may result in a charge to the Licensee.
- 6.4 In the event of the Licensee's death, their next of kin/ estate trustee (if known) will be given a mutually agreed reasonable period of time to terminate the garage license and return the keys. The weekly Licence Fee will still be payable until the keys are returned.

## 7 Links to other policies and strategies

- 7.1 This policy links to and should be read together with the following Haringey Council policies:

[Housing Arrears Policy](#)

Hoarding policy

[Housing Income Collection Policy](#)

[Responsive Repairs Policy](#)

## 8 Resident co-design and engagement

- 8.1 **When did you discuss development of this policy with residents?**

At a meeting of the Resident Voice Board in January 2025.

- 8.2 **What did they tell you?**

They told us that the policy should also mention Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in addition to the Disability Living Allowance as a way of qualifying for rent reductions. They also asked how often the garages are inspected by us.

- 8.3 **How has what residents told us informed development of this policy?**

Section 3.10 of the policy has been updated to note that tenants may be eligible for a rent reduction if they are also a pensioner or have a disability and receive Mobility Allowance, Disability Living Allowance/ or Personal Independence Payments.

Section 3.11 of the policy confirms that we will inspect void garages prior to letting. We may also request to inspect let garages with reasonable notice to check for defects, health, safety and maintenance requirements.

## 9 Equalities

- 9.1 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

9.2 The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex, and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.

9.3 Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

9.4 This policy makes no changes to operational practices. It is being updated to reflect the insourcing of the council housing function. There are no known equality issues with current provision, and it is not anticipated that there will be disproportionate impacts on any protected characteristics, disadvantaged communities or vulnerable residents.

## **10 Reviewing the policy**

10.1 We will review this policy every three years unless earlier events or legislation require an earlier update to this policy.

## **11 Legislation**

11.1 Section 24 of the Housing Act 1985, which governs Local Authorities power to determine rent for the tenancy or occupation of properties, does not apply to garages.

11.2 We can therefore fix what we consider to be a reasonable rent in respect to the letting of our garages.

11.3 Other relevant legislation includes but is not limited to:

- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 – Section 41
- Torts (Interference with Goods) Act 1977

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**Report for:** Cabinet Member Signing — November 2025

**Title:** **Adopting a new Clear Communal Areas Policy**

**Report authorised by:** Jahedur Rahman, Director of Housing

**Lead Officer:** Scott Kay, Assistant Director Repairs and Compliance

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Report for Key/  
Non Key Decision:** Key

**1. Describe the issue under consideration**

- 1.1 The Council is transforming landlord services for its own tenants and leaseholders. To support that process, the Council is undertaking a full review of all policies relating to its tenants and leaseholders in its role as the landlord.
- 1.2 The new Clear Communal Areas Policy provides guidance (including enforcement) on how Haringey Council manages the common areas of its council housing.
- 1.3 This report seeks approval from the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning for adoption.

**2. Recommendation**

That the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning, and Deputy Leader of the Council

- 2.1 Adopt the Clear Communal Areas Policy to come into effect from xx 2025.

**3. Reasons for decision**

- 3.1 This newly drafted clear and accessible policy provides guidance (including enforcement) on how Haringey Council manages the common areas of its council housing
- 3.2 The new policy will help the Council meet the Social Housing Regulator's consumer standards, specifically the Tenancy Standard and the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard.

**4. Alternative options considered**

- 4.1 **We could have continued with an out-of-date policy for the Council's communal areas or not had a policy at all.** These options were rejected because it would not meet the Council's needs or those of its tenants. Introducing this new policy will assist the Council to meet the Social Housing Regulator's safety and quality standard to take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of tenants in their homes and associated communal areas. This option would also not meet our commitment to introduce updated policies in the Housing Strategy 2024 – 2029 and the Housing Improvement Plan 2023.

## 5. Background information

- 5.1 In June 2022, the Council brought most of the landlord and housing services back in house that had been run on its behalf by Homes for Haringey, its Arm's Length Management Organisation. The Council immediately began a process of reviewing that service provision and in April 2023 Cabinet adopted a comprehensive Housing Improvement Plan backed by significant financial investment. Amongst many other commitments, that plan committed to reviewing housing policies including income management.
- 5.2 The Regulator of Social Housing's Standards requires that Registered Providers of Social Housing (RPs) must demonstrate that they understand the following:
- a. The Safety and Quality Standard requires RP's to take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of tenants in their homes and associated communal areas.
  - b. The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard requirement to deliver fair, reasonable, accessible and transparent policies.
- 5.3 The Council has included thorough research into best practice in social housing, and engagement in an interactive process of policy development with key stakeholders across the Council.
- 5.4 Council officer service leads from Estates and Neighbourhoods, Income Management, Tenancy Management, Home Ownership and Support and Wellbeing were all involved in the development of these policies.
- 5.5 Council tenants and leaseholders were engaged in the design of the policy's content as part of the new resident engagement structure, which is overseen by the Resident Voice Board (RVB). The RVB is the resident forum that assists the Housing Service by providing strategic influence on customer-facing housing strategy and policy as well as giving a resident perspective on the quality of housing services with the aim of improving customer satisfaction and organisation performance (housing services).
- 5.6 The RVB inputted to the development the policy from an early stage with broad outlines and approach agreed in July 2024 by residents. Proposals for the policy were well-received and generated a range of feedback and

recommendations that have been incorporated into the policy. This included confirming the following points:

- The importance of providing clear, consistent communication to inform tenants and leaseholders of the need to keep communal areas clear.
- The need to clarify how the policy links to the Council's fire safety policy including fire safety approach and reasons for not storing items in the communal areas.
- It was questioned how the clear communal areas policy would be enforced. There was also support expressed for the policy's managed approach instead of having a zero-tolerance approach.

5.7 In November 2024, the RVB reviewed and supports the newly developed policy incorporating their recommendations.

### **Key provisions of the draft Clear Communal Areas Policy**

5.8 The aim of the draft policy is to support the effective management of the communal areas of our council housing for the safety of tenants, leaseholders and other users of our premises.

5.9 A section on roles and responsibilities includes points such as the Council's legal duty to ensure that all means of escape and fire routes are always kept clear. It covers tenants' responsibilities to follow Health & Safety Advice provided by the Council and to accept responsibility for their goods in accordance with their Tenancy Agreement, Lease or Licence Agreement.

5.10 Explaining the following two legal powers the Council can use to support with keeping the communal areas of its council housing clear is the focus of one section:

- 1) A Permanent TORT notice which outlines that the Council as the Landlord has the legal powers to remove unapproved items immediately, dispose of removed items immediately without storing them and refuse to return any removed items to the owner.
- 2) Section 41 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 includes powers to refuse to provide compensation for the material loss of any items.

5.11 This is followed by section detailing the 'managed approach' to items stored in the communal areas of our council housing, which outlines the expectation that communal areas are kept clear.

5.12 A section on applications to store items in communal areas (in exceptional circumstances) follows. This confirms that tenants and leaseholders must seek and receive written permission from the Council before storing an item in the communal areas of council housing. It also notes that in some buildings the Council will designate specific identified areas that are suitable for the storage of bicycles only.

5.13 A section on alternative storage options confirms that the Council will consider the storage needs of tenants and leaseholders including in relation to

accessibility. It confirms that where additional storage is required, this will be considered subject to both funding and the ability to site a facility safely.

- 5.14 A section on communication commits to informing all tenants and leaseholders about the need to keep communal areas clear.
- 5.15 A recharges section outlines that in line with the Tenancy Agreement, Lease or Licence Agreement, where a reasonable request for removal of items from the communal areas has not been followed, tenants and leaseholders must pay the reasonable recovery and storage costs and the reasonable removal and disposal costs.

## **6 Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2024-2026 High level Strategic outcomes’?**

- 6.1 The recommendations in this report will support the Corporate Delivery Plan’s theme 5, “Homes for the Future”, and in particular its commitment to provide reliable, customer focused resident housing services and to undertake a full review of all policies relating to our tenants and leaseholders in our role as their landlord.
- 6.2 The recommendations in this report will also support the 2024-2029 Housing Strategy’s second strategic objective, improving housing quality and resident services in the social housing sector, in particular commitments around transforming services to our tenants and leaseholders, and designing those services with them.

## **7 Carbon and Climate Change**

- 7.1 The recommendation to adopt this new policy supports delivery of the Council’s Climate Change Action Plan and becoming a net zero carbon borough by 2041 through commitments to improve building and fire safety of our council housing.

## **8 Statutory Officers comments (Director of Finance (procurement), Head of Legal and Governance, Equalities)**

### **Finance**

- 8.1 There is no additional financial implication as a result of adopting this policy. It is anticipated that any cost incurred as a result of implementing any aspect of it will be contained within the existing service budget.

### **Director of Legal & Governance**

- 8.2 The Director of Legal & Governance has been consulted in the drafting of this report and comments as follows.
- 8.3 The Council is required to meet relevant Standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing, as detailed in the body of the report.

- 8.4 The Torts (Interference with Goods) Act 1977 enables the Council by notice to require the owner of goods left in common parts to remove them on pain of the Council seizing and selling them, accounting to the owner for the balance of the proceeds after recouping the costs of storage and sale.
- 8.5 Section 41 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 gives the Council the power to seize title to goods found on Council, including housing premises by notice to the owner.
- 8.6 There is no legal reason why the Deputy Leader should not adopt the recommendation in this report.

### **Procurement**

- 8.7 Strategic Procurement have been consulted in the preparation of this report Strategic Procurement note that the recommendation in section 2 of this report is not a procurement decision and have no objections to the recommendations.

### **Equality**

- 8.8 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not
  - Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not
- 8.9 The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex, and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.
- 8.10 Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.
- 8.11 The policy considered here will apply to Council tenants. Haringey Council's tenant population shows the following characteristics compared to the wider borough population:
- a significantly higher proportion of young people (under 24) and older people (over 50).
  - a significantly higher proportion of individuals who have a disability under the Equalities Act.

- a slightly higher proportion of individuals who report their gender identity as different from sex registered at birth.
- a significantly lower proportion of individuals who are married or in a registered civil partnership.
- a significantly higher proportion of individuals who identify as Muslim, and slightly higher proportion of individual who identify as Christian, Buddhist or another religion. This is countered by a significantly lower proportion of tenants who don't associate with any religion or identify as Jewish, Hindu or Sikh.
- a significantly higher proportion of female individuals.
- a significantly lower proportion of individuals who report their sexual identity as something other than Straight or Heterosexual.

8.12 The Clear Communal Areas Policy makes no changes to operational practices and is being updated to reflect the insourcing of the council housing function. The proposed policy is not anticipated to have impacts on groups that share the protected characteristics or other disadvantaged groups.

## **9 Use of Appendices**

Appendix 1 — Clear Communal Areas Policy

## **10 Background papers**

- **Haringey Housing Strategy 2024 – 2029:**  
[https://new.haringey.gov.uk/sites/default/files/202405/haringey\\_housing\\_strategy\\_2024 - 2029.pdf](https://new.haringey.gov.uk/sites/default/files/202405/haringey_housing_strategy_2024_-_2029.pdf)
- **Housing Services Improvement Plan:**  
<https://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/documents/s138660/Appendix%201.pdf>

# CLEAR COMMUNAL AREAS POLICY

November 2025

## Contents

1	Introduction	2
2	Aim of the policy	2
3	Roles and responsibilities	3
4	Our legal powers	3
5	Managed Approach	4
6	Applications to store items in communal areas (in exceptional circumstances)	4
7	Alternative storage options	4
8	Communication	5
9	Recharges	5
10	Resident co-production and engagement	5
11	Equalities	6
12	Reviewing the policy	6
13	Legislation and guidance	6
14	Links to other policies	6



# 1 Introduction

This policy applies to Haringey Council tenants, leaseholders and visitors in the communal areas of our council housing.

For the purposes of this policy communal areas are defined as the internal areas of our council housing. This could include the following: landings, corridors, hallways, stairwells communal open balconies and shared facilities.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance (including enforcement) on how Haringey Council manages the common areas of its council housing. We recognise that many tenants wish to personalise communal areas to make them more homely and welcoming.

As such we take a 'managed use' approach to the use of communal areas as opposed to a 'zero tolerance' approach.

The likelihood of a fire or other health and safety incident occurring in a communal area is strongly influenced by resident and visitor activities. The storage of items within the communal areas can increase the risk of fire spread and restrict access to emergency services or for those who may be escaping the building.

Smoking is not permitted in any communal areas in any property type.

When we use the terms 'we', 'our', and 'us' in this policy we mean Haringey Council.

# 2 Aim of the policy

The aim of this policy is to support the effective management of the communal areas of our council housing for the safety of tenants, leaseholders and other users of our premises.

This policy sets out how we will:

- Minimise, remove or mitigate against health and safety risks (including fire risk) for our tenants, leaseholders, visitors, colleagues and emergency services.
- Limit the items permitted to be stored in communal areas to reduce health and safety risks (including fire risks).
- Confirm our legal powers of having a permanent TORT notice in place to identify, remove and dispose of any items stored in communal areas deemed to represent a fire risk or any other health & safety risk without our prior written permission.
- Communicate with our tenants and leaseholders on the need to keep communal areas clear.
- Work with tenants and leaseholders to ensure the provision of sufficient storage options where required.

### 3 Roles and responsibilities

#### The Council's responsibilities

As the landlord, we have a legal duty to ensure that all means of escape and fire routes are kept clear at all times.

It is therefore important that communal areas are kept free from any obstruction or fire risk.

These areas include the following: landings, corridors, hallways, stairwells and shared facilities.

We are responsible for providing fire safety information including in our communal areas and escape routes and ensuring that the communal areas are kept clear.

#### Tenant responsibilities

Tenants must accept responsibility for their goods in accordance with their Tenancy Agreement, Lease or Licence Agreement.

Tenant responsibilities include:

- Keeping the communal areas clear and free from obstruction
- Following any relevant Health & Safety Advice provided by us
- Not interfering with equipment or cause any obstruction within the communal areas and/or escape routes
- Report any repairs or potential hazards in communal areas. Tenants can report repairs to us online by using 'My account' on our website and by phone.

### 4 Our legal powers

We have two following legal powers available to us to support us in keeping the communal areas of our council housing clear:

- 1) A "Permanent" TORT notice pursuant to the Torts (Interference with Goods) Act 1977 is in force for the communal areas of our council housing and is how this policy will be enforced.

A TORT notice is on permanent display at the entrance of all the communal areas of our council housing. This provides us with legal powers covering the communal areas of our housing which designates these as clear areas allowing us as the Landlord in appropriate circumstances to:

- remove unapproved items immediately,
  - dispose of removed items immediately without storing them,
- 2) The other power we can use is under Section 41 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982. This includes powers to refuse to provide compensation for the material loss of any items.

## 5 Managed Approach

We adopt a 'managed approach' to items stored in the communal areas of our council housing and limit the types of items that are allowed to reduce health and safety risks (including fire risks).

In practice, this means our expectation is that communal areas are kept clear.

Each application to store an item in communal areas will be assessed individually.

All items must not obstruct fire exits and emergency routes or add to the fire risk of the building.

## 6 Applications to store items in communal areas (in exceptional circumstances)

Tenants and leaseholders must seek and receive written permission from us before storing an item in the communal areas of our council housing.

In some buildings we will designate specific identified areas that are suitable for the storage of bicycles only.

Tenants and leaseholders can apply by contacting our Fire Safety team and we will aim to respond within 10 working days.

Tenants and leaseholders may have the right to appeal against our decision to refuse them permission to store items in a communal area.

Where we approve an application for a bicycle to be stored in a communal area, this is at our discretion and will be kept under review and may be revoked at any time subject to safety and/or changes in regulation or policy

## 7 Alternative storage options

We will consider the storage needs of our tenants and leaseholders including in relation to accessibility. Where additional storage is required, we will consider any request to put in place alternative storage options subject to safety and space with no guarantee of approval.

Additional storage provision and options that may need to be considered and provided include the following:

- Secure bicycle, motorbike and moped parking areas
- Secure pram-sheds
- Secure parking and charging areas for mobility scooters
- Storage areas for miscellaneous items including tenants and leaseholders work equipment or children's toys.

The provision of safe storage areas will be subject to both funding and the ability to site a facility safely. In addition, although every effort will be made to provide facilities, where this is not possible it will not prevent the implementation of the clear zone or the removal

of non-permissible items.

## 8 Communication

We will regularly communicate with all tenants and leaseholders to inform tenants and leaseholders of the need to keep communal areas clear.

The principles of the Clear Communal Areas Policy will be regularly communicated to tenants and leaseholders which will include:

- Notices in the Communal Areas of our council housing
- Updates in Homes zone
- Updates via Rent/Leaseholder correspondence
- Regular communications will be ongoing to promote the safety message including enforcement to all tenants and leaseholders.

## 9 Recharges

In line with the Tenancy Agreement, Lease or Licence Agreement, where a reasonable request for removal of items from the communal areas has not been followed, tenants and leaseholders must pay the reasonable recovery and storage costs and the reasonable removal and disposal costs.

We recognise that there will be a proportionate level of recharge based on the item(s).

## 10 Resident co-production and engagement

### **When did you discuss development of this policy with residents?**

At meetings of the Resident Voice Board in July and November 2024.

### **What did they tell you?**

The importance of providing clear, consistent communication to inform tenants and leaseholders of the need to keep communal areas clear. They also told us of the need to clarify how the policy links to the Council's fire safety policy including fire safety approach and reasons for not storing items in the communal areas.

It was questioned how the clear communal areas policy would be enforced. There was also support expressed for the policy's managed approach instead of having a zero-tolerance approach.

### **How has what residents told us informed development of this policy?**

The policy includes section 8 on communication added in response to resident engagement. This outlines the policy approach and methods the Council will use to inform tenants and leaseholders of the need to keep the communal areas of our council housing clear e.g. displaying notices in the Communal Areas of our council housing.

Section 4 confirms that having a permanent tort notice in place is the main way the clear communal areas policy will be enforced.

## 11 Equalities

The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex, and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.

Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

This policy makes no changes to operational practices. They are being updated to reflect the insourcing of the council housing function. There are no known equality issues with current provision, and it is not anticipated that there will be disproportionate impacts on any protected characteristics, disadvantaged communities or vulnerable residents.

## 12 Reviewing the policy

We will review this policy every three years unless earlier events or legislation require an earlier update to this policy.

## 13 Legislation and guidance

As the landlord, we will ensure that we act in accordance with best practice and statutory requirements as follows:

- Building Regulations 2010
- Building Safety Act 2022
- Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022
- Housing Act 2004
- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire safety) Order 2005
- TORT (Interference of Goods) Act 1977

## 14 Links to other policies

[Council feedback policy](#)

[Electrical safety policy](#)

[Fire and Structural Safety Policy](#)

[Gas & Heating Safety Policy](#)

[Vulnerable tenants and leaseholders policy](#)

