

ESTATE AGREEMENT

Between

**LONGFORD AND AVON
RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**

And

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL

2000

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Estate Agreement is an agreement between Cannock Chase Council and Longford and Avon Residents Association. It sets out the level of services the Council will provide for the estate and the commitment of the Residents' Association to building up good working relationships with the Council. The current agreement has evolved from two years as a pilot Estate Agreement. It is anticipated that reviews will continue to affect this document in the future to ensure that it remains relevant and reflects changing practices and expectations.

Longford and Avon Residents' Association covers the following area: -

Longford Green, Avon Road, Derwent Grove, Dee Grove, Don Grove, Tame Grove, Longford Road Flats nos. 158A – 164 A and St John's Close.

Some of the benefits of the estate agreement are: -

- An Estate Agreement provides the Residents Association with a greater influence on local services without the demands involved in taking direct management of the Estate.
- It provides residents with information about levels of service in a format, which is clear and understandable.
- It addresses local needs by concentrating on those services, which matter most to local residents.
- It involves residents in monitoring local services and providing useful feedback for the Council.
- It gives staff a chance to explain the services they are trying to provide and encourages the development of a sense of partnership between staff and residents.

2. THE REPAIRS SERVICE

The agreement aims to increase tenants' awareness about the repairs service and to involve the residents in the monitoring and the improvement of the service.

Reporting of repairs

When repairs are reported in person at the Area Housing Office, the tenant will be provided with a receipt. This receipt lists the repairs reported. An appointment for either a morning or afternoon visit by the repairs inspector is arranged with the tenant at the time the repair is reported. Where repairs are reported by telephone receipts are posted out for all categories of repair except for urgent repairs. Inspector's appointments are made by telephone at the time of reporting. Tenants will receive written confirmation of the work to be carried out, following the inspectors visit.

When will the work be done?

There are four priorities for repairs-

Priority one	Emergency repairs	within 24hours
Priority two	Urgent repairs	within 3 working days
H	Handy van	within 3 working days
4	Any other non – urgent Repair.	40 working days

Examples of repairs for Handy Van

Blocked sink or bath

Small bricklaying, tiling, plumbing, plastering and carpentry jobs.

Gas Servicing

All gas appliances will be serviced every 12 months. If this has not been done, contact Steve Sheratt in the Housing Surveyors section (Tel 01543 464581), and a service will be arranged.

External Contractors

External contractors carry out certain types of maintenance works on behalf of the Council, such as the servicing of gas appliances. All contractors are required to carry identification, and to provide the same standards of quality. Tenants with any doubts at all about anyone claiming to be working on behalf of the Council should check before allowing them in. Always phone the Council on the number below; do not use a number given by the contractor.

Who to contact

When a repair is outside the time limit, or you have any query about the progress of your repair,
Your first point of contact is Adele Vine, Housing Assistant
(Cannock Area Housing Office) on 464443.

Monitoring

The Residents Association will hold monitoring meetings with the local Housing Manager to discuss the performance of the Repairs Service. The Council will provide performance information about the Repairs Service in the area .

3 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

The catchment area of the Residents Association includes grassed and planted areas, which are the responsibility of different departments and different authorities – Housing (Cannock Chase Council) and Highways (Staffordshire County Council).

The aim of this agreement is to provide information about the grounds maintenance services that are the responsibility of the Housing Department.

The older persons grass cutting scheme

Tenants who are eligible will have grassed areas cut fortnightly During the season, starting March / April and ending in late September.

The contractors will cut to the full extent, take away grass cuttings and clear footpaths. They will trim the edges of the lawns where this is practical.

Longford Green

Grounds maintenance at Longford Green includes grass cutting, looking after the hedges and flowerbeds, and the de-weeding of pavements and garage area.

During the season, the grass is litter picked prior to mowing and this includes litter picking at the base of the hedges. The contractor will take away grass cuttings and clear footpaths.

Other features of the grounds maintenance at Longford Green are:

- the flower beds and rose beds are hoed and weeded 14 times during the summer period
- roses are pruned twice per year and the soil cultivated
- seasonal bedding of the plants takes place in the spring and summer
- hedges are pruned once each year during the summer

- The paved areas, drying areas and garage site are sprayed at least once a year and must meet the requirements of the Environmental Protection Act (Note: the area may not be totally weed free all the time).

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Who to contact

If you have a complaint about the grounds maintenance service, contact Janet Baldasera (Housing) or Bob Carding (Leisure Services – Contract Monitoring Officer) on 464325.

Monitoring

The Residents' Association will receive a copy of the contractor programme and will monitor performance. An Estate walkabout with residents and Bob Carding will take place in spring and summer on dates to be mutually agreed.

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4 TENANT PARTICIPATION

To gain recognition from the Council, the Residents' Association has a constitution that allows for regular meetings, a commitment to equal opportunities and audited finances and a majority of its committee members are council tenants.

Resources

The Council provides the Residents' Association with an annual grant and training opportunities. Photocopying, stationery and the use of computer facilities are available at the Tenants Resource Room at the Housing and Health Advice Centre in Park Road Cannock. A part time administrative support worker is available at the above to assist associations with newsletters, leaflets, letters etc.

A meeting place is provided at Mosswood Street Neighbourhood Office, for which the association is a key holder. The Neighbourhood Office is available for social events, which the Association may choose to hold.

Consultation

Through its membership of the Chase Tenants' and Residents' Federation, the Residents' Association is consulted on all major issues of housing policy at open meetings and by circulation of reports.

The Residents' Association is invited to send a representative to the Housing Liaison Group. This meets quarterly and enables discussion with Councillors and Senior Housing Officers on Housing policy. Members of the Association are also entitled to attend the Annual Tenants Conference.

Members of the Association are encouraged to join the Compact Panel.

Attendance at meetings

The Residents Association meets at least four times each year. The following staff will attend meetings when requested, providing one month's notice has been given: -

- the local Housing Manager (or an appropriate representative from the housing office) is available to attend all meetings.
- The Tenant Participation Officer will attend at least 4 meetings a year.
- A Council Officer involved in Housing Strategy and Urban renewal will attend at least one meeting a year, to discuss matters of housing policy of which prior notice is given.

Estate walkabout

The Estate Management Officer(s) will inspect the catchment area of the Association on a 3 monthly basis. Representatives of the Association will accompany the E.M.O. at times, which are mutually convenient, but not less than twice each year. Following the walkabout, the E.M.O. will inform the Residents' Association of the issues identified and the action that has been taken.

The Residents' Association may contact the Council on behalf of individual members. When requested the Council will send the Association a written reply within 10 working days.

Each year the Council will consult the Association with regard to spending of the Cannock Area minor works budget.

Who to contact

If you have any queries about Tenant Participation, contact **Trish Griffiths, Tenant Participation Officer, on 467167** or **Martyn Swann at the same number.**

5 TENANTS RESPONSIBILITIES

As a community, tenants have a responsibility to help the Council ensure that everyone on the estate can enjoy peace and security in their own home.

When disputes between neighbours occur, the Council will seek to assist tenants to resolve their differences amicably. The services of a Mediation Provider may be used. However when it is necessary to take action, tenants should support the Council by reporting promptly any incidents of anti-social behaviour, by assisting in the gathering of evidence e.g. keeping an incident diary and by co-operating with the Council Officers who are investigating these matters.

Tenants can assist the Council to maintain properties in a good state of repair. This includes keeping gardens tidy, reporting repairs promptly and accurately to the Cannock Area Housing Office and undertaking 'small repairs' which are defined in the Council's Repairs Handbook and are the tenants responsibility. Please note that repairs should not be reported to the Councils' workmen.

All tenants must act in accordance with their tenancy agreement in all matters related to their tenancy, including the payment of rent and ensuring the good conduct of all people living in or visiting their home.

6 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

If you have a complaint about any of the services included in this estate agreement contact **Janet Baldasera (Cannock Housing Office) on 464317**. If you are still not satisfied, contact **Ian Tennant (Head of Housing and Community Development) on 464210**.

7 MONITORING OF THE AGREEMENT

Every 4 months there will be a monitoring meeting between the Residents' Association and the local Housing Manager. From this meeting a written report will be forwarded to the Housing Liaison Group.