



Boundary Treatment Policy

SER-POL-30

Version 1.0

Date approved: 19 November 2013

Approved by: Board

1. Aims of this policy

- 1.1 This policy is intended to set out the responsibilities shared between Southway Housing Trust and its residents in respect of boundary fencing. These obligations are based on the Trust's tenancy agreement.
- 1.2 The policy will explain what a tenant should do if they require a minor repair to fencing or gates, and the service they can expect if they have fencing that is beyond minor repair.
- 1.3 The policy will explain the type of fencing that the Trust will install and the typical materials used. It will describe the Trust's preference for the retention of living hedges and privet fencing, over hard landscape fencing.
- 1.4 Finally, the policy will highlight the process for residents to follow when they wish to erect their own fencing.

2. Our commitment

- 2.1 The Trust is committed to ensuring that the appearance and security of our communities is maintained and where possible enhanced through the repair and replacement of fencing, where those repairs are the Trust's responsibility.
- 2.2 As a principle however, the Trust and our customers are rightly proud of the green appearance of our communities achieved by mature hedging forming the majority of our property boundaries, and we will seek to preserve these over fencing wherever possible.

3. Responsibility for Fencing

- 3.1 Under the terms of our Tenancy Agreement, generally the maintenance of boundaries and fencing is the responsibility of the tenant.
- 3.2 Southway Housing Trust only has a legal responsibility for the maintenance and repair of fencing and gates where this has been installed by the Trust.
- 3.3 We will occasionally make an exceptional decision to provide new or replacement fencing. This is done on the basis of an exceptional need such as:
 - (a) The property is in an exposed or vulnerable location, such as a busy main road or railway embankment

- (b) The household is made up of elderly or vulnerable people, whose quality of life would benefit from the provision of fencing
- (c) The work is required to reduce incidences of anti social behaviour, in accordance with an action plan agreed by the Trust

4. Fencing Repair and Replacement

- 4.1 For any fencing installed by the Trust, we will repair and maintain this in accordance with the Tenancy Agreement.
- When a fence which is the Trust's responsibility only needs minor repairs, it will be repaired to match the existing fencing and will not be replaced with a different type of fencing. Minor fencing repairs can include the replacement of up to two fence panels or six metres of fencing.
 - Any work in excess of that deemed to be a minor repair would be classed as planned maintenance and considered as part of a wider programme of work.
- 4.2 Any fence that is dangerous may be taken down and 'made safe'.
- 4.3 In exceptional circumstances (see above), the Trust may decide to replace fencing that is beyond repair.
- 4.4 If damage to fencing is due to willful neglect we will deal with the repair under our current Rechargeable Repairs Policy.

5. Service Standards

- 5.1 Our target time for completing minor repairs to fencing will be 10 working days from the time the repair is ordered.
- 5.2 In deciding on the type of boundary to be installed the Trust will take into consideration neighbouring boundaries, so that works are in keeping as far as is reasonably possible with their surrounds. Boundary work will generally involve retaining existing hedges and privets in accordance with the Trust's Environmental Sustainability Strategy.

6. Permission to install fencing

- 6.1 Tenants who wish to install their own fencing must first request permission from the Trust.
- 6.2 The Trust will require that any fencing is installed upon correct boundary lines, as directed by the Trust, and that the necessary planning permissions have been sought if appropriate, and that immediate neighbours directly affected by works have been consulted. Consideration will also be given to whether or not the fencing requires the removal of an existing hedge and the general condition of the hedge.
- 6.3 If a tenant receives permission from the Trust to erect fencing, the tenant will continue to be responsible for its upkeep and replacement thereafter.

POLICY REVIEW HISTORY	
<i>To be completed during each review</i>	
Previous versions (version number – approved by – approval date – title if different)	
N/A	
Date of last EIA:	N/A
Review lead by:	David Squires & Dennis Wellington
Main points or amendments made and reasons	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy position formalised to allow officers to respond quickly, definitively and consistently to requests, and to better manage residents' expectations. ▪ The policy clarifies the following main points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fencing and boundaries are generally the responsibility of the tenant, - Southway will deal with acute Health and Safety requests relating to fencing on a responsive basis, - Southway will undertake a limited minor repair service to existing fencing and gates, - Southway will maintain, repair and replace fencing that it has fitted since 2007, - In exceptional circumstances Southway will repair and renew fencing that it has not installed itself. 	
Next review due:	Q3 2016/17