

Find it-Fix it Policy

Originator:	Policy and Strategy Team
Executive Management Team Approval Date:	January 2019
Review date:	January 2022

1	Introduction
1.1	One Vision Housing (OVH) aims to ‘provide homes that meet demand in safe and sustainable neighbourhoods ‘and ‘make a positive impact in the communities in which we operate’. To achieve these aims, OVH adopts a ‘whole community’ approach and is committed to taking action on all issues that may have a negative impact on the environment or people in areas where it manages properties.
1.2	The ‘Find it – Fix it Policy’ outlines OVH’s approach to dealing with all manner of estate issues, including those that are the responsibility of other agencies or bodies to put right.
1.3	The application of this Policy ensures compliance with the outcomes of the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England.
1.4	Access and Communication
1.4.1	OVH is committed to ensuring that our services are accessible to everyone. OVH will seek alternative methods of access and service delivery where barriers, perceived or real may exist, that may make it difficult for people to work for us or use our services.
1.5	Equality, Diversity and Human Rights
1.5.1	OVH is committed to ensuring that no person or group of persons will be treated less favourably than another person or group of persons and will carry out our duty with positive regard for the following core strands of equality; Age, Disability, Gender, Race, Transgender, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy and Maternity, Civil Partnership and Marriage, Religion and/or Belief.
1.5.2	OVH also recognises that some people experience disadvantage due to their socio economic circumstances, employment status, class, appearance, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or with AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.
1.5.3	OVH will also ensure that all services and actions are delivered within the context of current Human Rights legislation. Staff and others with whom we work, will adhere to the central principles of the Human Rights Act (1998).

1.6	<p>This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OVH Anti-Social Behaviour, Domestic Abuse and Harassment Policy • OVH Safeguarding Adults Policy • OVH Safeguarding Children Policy
2	Statement of Intent
2.1	<p>OVH will take a proactive approach to dealing with any physical issues on estates and areas where it manages housing stock. OVH will encourage all staff to recognise issues, which may blight the physical appearance of estates and to take appropriate action to get the issues addressed, including those that are the responsibility of other agencies to put right.</p>
2.2	<p>Where required, OVH will work in partnership with statutory agencies, residents and other landlords to make the most efficient use of resources and provide a joined up response to dealing with issues that may affect the physical appearance or use of amenities in areas where OVH has properties.</p>
2.3	<p>OVH will also consider the ‘non-physical’ issues, which may affect quality of life within estates and where appropriate offer additional support to tenants through its own resources and through referral or signposting to other organisations. The referral and signposting services may extend to non OVH residents.</p>
2.4	<p>OVH will train front line staff to be aware of safeguarding issues for vulnerable adults and children and to make appropriate referrals or raise alerts if they suspect abuse, neglect or exploitation is / has taken place in areas where it operates.</p>
2.5	<p>OVH will encourage all front-line staff that regularly visit properties and estates to be aware of potential criminal activity and to make appropriate reports / referrals to the OVH Anti-Social Behaviour and Community Safety Team or the Police as necessary.</p>
2.6	<p>In addition to ad-hoc observing and reporting, OVH will also operate formal mechanisms for capturing and acting upon estate issues that allow input from local stakeholders, including regular neighbourhood walkabouts, consultation on investment works and Neighbourhood Plans.</p>
2.7	<p>OVH will collate and analyse all intelligence from reports of neighbourhood issues (from all sources) to inform current and future plans for service delivery and resource allocation.</p>
2.8	<p>OVH will ensure that normal service standards will apply to any estate issues that are raised where OVH has responsibility for putting them right. This will include providing feedback to stakeholders who raise issues on the nature of actions taken and the likely timescales for completion.</p>
2.9	<p>OVH will take a zero tolerance approach to any wilful damage or blighting of areas where it has properties, including issuing of tenancy warnings, enforcement action and recharges. Where it proved that non-OVH residents are responsible, OVH will take civil action.</p>
2.10	<p>OVH will not accept liability / costs of remedial or replacement works for items or issues that are beyond its area of responsibility.</p>

3	Policy
3.1	<p>With a regular presence on estates, OVH staff are ideally placed to act as the ‘eyes and ears’ of communities and can play a vital role in ensuring the physical appearance is maintained, estates remain safe and that people receive the support they require to lead fulfilled lives.</p>
3.2	<p>Through regular meetings with line managers and the staff induction programme, OVH encourage all staff that work on-site as part of their normal duties to be constantly on the lookout for any issues that could negatively impact on estates’ appearance or quality of life for the local community.</p>
3.3	<p>Where OVH staff observe or become aware of physical and non-physical issues on estates they will, at the earliest opportunity, take the appropriate action including (Please refer to OVH Safeguarding Policies):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising jobs with the OVH Customer Service Centre or directly through Active Housing • Direct reporting (where responsibility may rest with other agencies, including the Local Authority or other statutory agencies) • Providing feedback to those raising issues on actions taken and expected timescales for completion (where known and if it’s in OVH’s control) • Setting in train action plans to resolve issues including partnership working, referral or signposting to other agencies (particularly where there may be support needs that are not being met) • Where appropriate initiating investigation into issues of concern and taking enforcement action • Assessing vulnerability of residents including capacity to understand any actions that might be taken against them (where necessary through assessment by Social Service Departments)
3.4	<p>The following is an indicative but not exhaustive list of the types of ‘physical’ estate issues, OVH staff will report and take action on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graffiti and fly posting • Fly tipping and excessive litter • Overgrown or unkempt gardens and outside spaces (OVH owned) • Abandoned vehicles • Broken glass, or drug paraphernalia • Derelict property • Burst water mains, blocked gullies and grids • Grounds maintenance
3.5	<p>Examples of ‘non-physical’ issues, OVH staff will report and take action on include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation of vulnerable adults or children (Refer to the OVH Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adults Policies and safeguarding roles for further information) • Suspected and repeated acts of school truancy • Suspected criminal activity • Support needs that are not being addressed

3.6	<p>In addition to the above ad-hoc reporting arrangements, OVH will also operate a number of more formal mechanisms for capturing estate issues. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The option for residents to take part in a series of regular ‘neighbourhood walkabouts’ with Neighbourhood Officer’s and other community stakeholders • Consultation on the development and review of OVH Neighbourhood Plans or ‘Local Offers’ – outlining local priorities and investment commitments 	
3.7	<p>Consultation on any new developments or major investment in an area including new build properties.</p>	
4	Implementation	
4.1	<p>All OVH staff need to be aware of the ‘Find It – Fix It Policy’ and the underlying principal of being constantly aware whilst on duty.</p>	
4.2	<p>The Neighbourhood Housing Manager will have ultimate responsibility for the operation of the Policy and supporting procedures.</p>	
5	Performance	
5.1	<p>There are no additional performance requirements as a direct result of the operation of this Policy.</p>	
6	Consultation	
6.1	<p>The Tenants Policy Review Group has been consulted in the development of this Policy on 20th December 2018. All staff have been consulted about the development of this Policy.</p>	
7	Review	
7.1	<p>This Policy will be reviewed every three years (from the date it is approved) by the OVH Executive Management Team to ensure its continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness or as required by the introduction of new legislation or regulation that impacts on OVH’s estate management responsibilities.</p>	
8	Equality and Diversity	
8.1	Was a full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) required?	Yes
8.2	When was EIA conducted and by who?	EIA Relevance Test completed by the Policy and Strategy Manager and the Policy Writer
8.3	Results of EIA	Relevance Test revealed the need to ensure adequate accessibility to estate monitoring services.

9				Scheme of Delegation			
9.1	Responsible committee for approving and monitoring implementation of the policy and any amendments to it	Executive Management Team					
9.2	Responsible officer for formulating policy and reporting to committee on its effective implementation	Director of Housing Services					
9.3	Responsible officer for formulating, reviewing and monitoring implementation of procedures	Director of Housing Services					
10				Amendment Log			
Date of revision:		Reason for revision:		Consultation record:		Record of amendments:	
21 December 2015		In line with the Review Schedule		See section 6		The whole Policy has been reviewed in line with OVH business practices.	
15 January 2019		In line with the Review Schedule		See section 6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A change at 3.3- Inclusion of staff ability to raise jobs directly through Active Housing • A change at 3.4- Inclusion of ;grounds maintenance' as one of the physical estate issues staff will take action on 	