



## GARDEN SCHEME POLICY

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The garden scheme is targeted at those most in need of assistance due to ill health, disability or old age. It consists of two elements:

- a grass cutting service and
- a top up service, in addition to the grass cutting service, which includes border maintenance, digging and pruning.

### 2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

#### 2.1 Board of Management

- To ensure that there is in place a Garden Scheme policy which meets the needs of specific groups of tenants, and of Almond Housing Association Limited (AHA Ltd.).

#### 2.2 Management

- Head of Housing Management: To manage the implementation of the policy and procedures on a day-to-day basis, advising the Board of Management, other Heads of Section and all employees as required on specific matters.

#### 2.3 Employees

- To ensure they have read and understood the policy and procedures, and to implement them as required in the course of their work.

### 3.0 ELIGIBILITY

3.1 To be eligible for the scheme, the applicant must be a tenant, and the applicant and any other members of their household must be:

- a) aged 70 years or over, **OR**
- b) aged 65–69 years and have a medical form signed by their GP, Health Visitor or District Nurse which describes the nature of their physical or mental disability and how the nature of the disability would prevent them from maintaining their garden (\*see Note), **OR**
- c) aged 15 – 65 years and:
  - be in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (which has been awarded as a consequence of a physical or mental disability, where the disability would impede their ability to maintain their garden), **or**
  - be in receipt of Employment Support Allowance or Personal Independence Payments, **or**
  - be in the 'No work related requirements' Universal Credit group, **OR**
- d) registered blind.

[\***Note:** If there is any difficulty in obtaining letters or forms from medical sources, e.g. due to charges, the Housing Officer (HO) will discuss the circumstances with the Housing Support Manager, failing whom the Housing Manager, as it may be that AHA Ltd. will meet the cost of such letters).

- 3.2 To be considered for the Scheme, there should be no able bodied member of the family aged 16 years or older living with the tenant. However, account will be taken of the household circumstances in each case, e.g. if the able-bodied household member also has carer responsibilities.
- 3.3 Consideration will also be given to people who are living on their own and are normally fit but who are temporarily incapacitated and unable to maintain their garden e.g. during a period of recuperation following an operation, or coping with mental health issues. This will be subject to appropriate medical evidence, if required, and each case will be considered on its own merits at the discretion of the Housing Support Manager or Head of Housing Management.

#### 4.0 SCOPE OF THE SCHEME

4.1 The Garden Scheme will normally cover the following services:

a) Grass Cutting Service

This will be a contract to cut the grass regularly during the growing season April to early October. It will also incorporate hedge trimming as appropriate.

b) Top Up Garden Maintenance Service

This will normally cover the following work, on request and following assessment by AHA Ltd:

- Grass cutting (where the only access for machinery is through the house)
- Hedge trimming
- Pruning of roses and shrubs
- General tidying of border areas
- Pruning of tree branches
- Weed spraying
- One-off works such as rotovating ground and planting grass seed
- Miscellaneous one-off tasks to minimise maintenance.

#### 5.0 REVIEW

5.1 The Head of Housing Management will ensure that this policy is reviewed by the Senior Management Team at least every five years.

<b>FIRST APPROVED IN</b>	<b>SEPTEMBER 1996</b>
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