

Tree & Grounds Maintenance Policy

Policy Owner:	Contract Manager – Grounds Maintenance	Strategic Sponsor:	Director of Planned Maintenance & Investments
Exec Owner:	Chief Property & Investment Officer		
Approval Body: Magenta Board, Leadership Board (full Board or member)	Leadership Board Sponsor	Date Approved by Approval Body:	01/07/2026
Date endorsed by EIA Review Group:	23/04/2026	Date Endorsed by the Policy Forum:	27/05/2026
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1.0 What is this policy for?

The intention of this policy is to ensure Magenta Living complies with all legislation, best practice and health and safety guidance in relation to the management and checking of all ‘green’ spaces and trees that are its responsibility.

Magenta Living will operate a regular inspection regime for all communal trees. Trees identified as presenting a risk will be subject to further inspection or remedial works to ensure they are made safe, with all works undertaken by competent, appropriately qualified and trained contractors.

Magenta Living will not fell or cut trees unless they pose health and safety risks to people and property or it’s causing damage or disturbance to pathways and footpaths.

2.0 Details of the policy

2.1 Legal Responsibilities

Where requests are received on trees that are protected by the Tree Preservation Order (TPO) under the Town and Country Planning Act (1990,

and as amended), Magenta Living will apply for a written consent from the local authority before taking any action as required.

Magenta Living acknowledges that bats and nesting birds often use trees for nesting or roosting and all bat species and birds at nest are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which makes disturbance of either class of species an offence.

Some sites may fall within areas designated to protect wildlife, such as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Sites of Scientific Interest (SSSIs), or may be covered by local Biodiversity Action Plans, which may include trees as habitats.

Magenta Living will abide by the Highways Act 1980 in terms of safe highways, which includes removing obstructions or damage to the highway infrastructure caused by its trees.

We have no authority to intervene in a dispute between neighbours regarding trees. However, Part 8 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Order Act (2003) gives Local Authorities the powers to deal with complaints or disputes about high hedges affecting residential properties.

2.2 Climate Change & Our Environment

An integral part of climate change and environmental improvement we have established £20k planned tree works programme over 3 years to take our tree stock to over 3500 trees inclusive of replacements. Magenta Living will seek to plant two new trees for every tree removed from its communal grounds and open spaces.

Investing correctly in trees and green spaces is vital given the changing climate. Trees are one of the few assets that appreciate with age as their amenity and contribution to health and wellbeing increases. Some of the main benefits from trees are listed below:

- Reduce the amount of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) improving air quality
- Absorption and interception of Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) from diesel engines
- Provide shade reducing the urban heat island affect
- The physical shape and structure of a tree can reduce wind speeds. The effect of this can be even greater where trees are planted in groups or avenues
- Trees intercept rainfall, decrease surface run off and therefore reduce potential flood risk
- Enhance the natural distinction between green belt and urban areas
- Benefit wildlife trees provide a habitat and food source for a broad range of mammals, birds and insects.

2.3 Communal Gardens and Trees

Magenta Living is responsible for effective maintenance of communal land it owns or manages including trees and hedges. Magenta Living will carry out maintenance work on communal gardens on scheduled basis in accordance with the approved specification i.e. twice a month in summer and the summer visits will include grass cutting, weed control, hedge pruning and strimming walls and fence lines. One winter visit between November and February will consist of hard pruning of shrubs, mechanical and chemical weed control, edging of pathways in communal areas to reduce egress of weeds and grass onto pathways.

Magenta Living operates a risk-based approach to tree management on communal land, which includes formal inspection undertaken by a competent arboriculture contractor and informal inspection carried out by Magenta Living.

Magenta Living have commissioned competent and qualified arboriculture contractors to carry out a tree survey every 3 years of trees on communal areas that it owns or manages so that any foreseeable hazards can be identified and made safe within the recommended timescales.

Magenta Living also encourages colleagues, through our 'see it, fix it' approach, and members of the public to report tree defects that can visually be identified such as health, condition and structural weakness or circumstances in relation to trees that pose risk or danger to people or property.

Where reports are received from colleagues or members of the public, Magenta Living will inspect the tree which may involve sending a competent contractor to make further assessment, if necessary and take appropriate action. Where it is proven that the tree defects were due to neglect or deliberate damage by a Magenta Living customer, we will recharge them accordingly for work needed to rectify the problem or may seek civil redress if they are non-Magenta Living customers.

2.4 Circumstances for Magenta Living to Consider Tree Management Works

Magenta Living will consider carrying out tree maintenance works if confirmed by a competent contractor or officer that the tree is:

- Overhanging roads (below 5.2 metres)
- Overhanging footpaths and/or signage
- Touching an adjacent structure
- Affecting stability of structure
- Diseased
- Structurally unsafe
- Preventing access
- Significantly damaged

- Potentially hazardous to health
- Dead
- Outgrown space allocated

Magenta Living will not carry out tree maintenance work for the following reasons:

- Blocking out sunlight
- Too large
- Dropping leaves in gardens
- Sap falling onto paths or cars
- Overhanging gardens
- Affecting TV reception
- Fruit falling from tree tenants' gardens and trees

Tenants are responsible for the maintenance of their gardens (which include lawns, hedges, shrubs and trees) including keeping it clean and tidy. We can provide grass cutting, hedge cutting and herbicide treatment on a fortnightly cycle and between March and November. This is a chargeable service available to our tenants who are no longer able to maintain their gardens.

Where tenants report problems with a tree in their garden, Magenta Living will send an officer or contractor to inspect the tree and where necessary, conduct further risk assessment and take appropriate action.

Magenta Living will retain a record of all inspection and work conducted on tenants' trees for future reference. If the inspection reveals that the tree or hedge does not need maintenance work, Magenta Living will inform the customer about the findings and remind them of their responsibility to keep and maintain their garden including trees and hedges in a neat and tidy condition as stipulated in their Tenancy Agreement.

Where the inspection identifies tree defects or issues that pose significant risk to people or property, Magenta Living will carry out the work, as soon as a tree surgeon is available, but no later than 24 hours.

Where the tree does not pose a significant risk to people or property, Magenta Living will advise the customer of the situation and seek to obtain an agreement to do the work as part of our annual planned maintenance programme.

If it is found that it is customer's responsibility to maintain the tree or the cause of the tree defects were due to the customer's neglect or wilful damage, Magenta Living will look to recharge them for the work it carried out to make the situation safe.

Dependent on the severity of the situation, Magenta Living will consider instigating legal proceedings, if the customer fails to provide access to their premises for Magenta Living to carry out the work.

Where the customer is deemed to be vulnerable and they cannot do the work themselves, Magenta Living will use its discretion to carry out tree maintenance that is the customer's responsibility. Each case will be reviewed on its merits, and Magenta Living will make decisions based on individual's personal circumstances i.e. their physical health, limited finances or ability to seek help from others.

Private owned trees and hedges where the tree that is causing problems is on privately owned (neighbouring) land, Magenta Living may write to the owner and advise them of the situation and obtain an agreement to carry out the work or make the situation safe within a specified time dependent of the severity of the circumstances.

If a private owner fails to do the work within the agreed period, Magenta Living will escalate the case to the local authority or seek civil action against the owner.

Where it is urgent to act due to significant and immediate risk or danger to people or property, Magenta Living will in consultation with the owner occupier, decide to carry out the work to make the tree or hedge safe, if it is possible to do so. If the private owner refuses to work with us, Magenta Living reserves the right to seek civil redress to resolve the situation.

2.5 Grounds Maintenance and Service Charges for Specialist Supported Housing (SSH)

Scope of Responsibility: Magenta Living retains full responsibility for all grounds maintenance, landscaping, and arboriculture (tree) works across its entire portfolio of Specialist Supported Housing (SSH) properties.

Initial Assessment and Service Charge Determination: Prior to initial occupation of any SSH property, a comprehensive landscape inspection and assessment will be conducted. This assessment will form the basis for calculating the annual service charge, which covers the projected costs of grounds maintenance services. This charge is subject to review for eligibility by the relevant Housing Benefit authority.

Annual Review and Cost Management: Service charges will be reviewed annually to reflect the actual costs incurred for the preceding year and to set the budget for the forthcoming period. This ensures that charges remain cost-reflective, transparent, and provide value for money in accordance with regulatory requirements.

2.6 Japanese Knotweed

Magenta Living will inspect communal garden/spaces and premises of void properties for presence of Japanese knotweed and will take appropriate action in line with the relevant regulations, if applicable. Where reports about presence of Japanese knotweed are received from tenants or members of the public, Magenta Living will inspect the premises to make further assessment if it's necessary to take further action.

3.0 Who was consulted and how was it done?

3.1 The proposed policy was discussed with SLT in May 2026. Their views have been fully considered and incorporated where applicable/appropriate within the body of the policy.

3.2 We undertook external consultation from Magenta Voice:

The proposed policy was discussed with residents in February 2026, via Magenta Voice. Their views have been fully considered and incorporated where applicable / appropriate within the body of the policy.

4.0 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

4.1 We believe all people should be treated with dignity and respect regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including, nationality, ethnic or national origins), religion, belief or non-belief, sex, or sexuality or by association with someone with any of these characteristics or perception of having any of these characteristics.

4.2 The EIA was completed on 13/04/2026. It was reviewed by the Equality Impact Assessment Review Group on 23/04/2026 and the final agreed rating was green. (See the full EIA document for further details).

NB A policy does not HAVE to be green to be approved

5.0 How we make sure this policy is effective

5.1 This policy's effectiveness will be measured using customer feedback, Contract Management Plans and KPIs, monitoring delivery of the tree planting programme, monthly budget monitoring.

Magenta Living will keep records of the following:

- All trees in its communal areas including condition and maintenance work carried out on them
- Number of trees and hedges maintained because of assessments of customer requests in a year
- Magenta Living will monitor the tree management budget throughout the year to ensure value for money is achieved.

6.0 Colleague Training

6.1 For this policy -

- No mandatory training is required

7.0 Documents related to the policy

- Recharge Policy
- Repairs & Maintenance Policy
- Empty Homes Policy
- Lettable Standard Policy
- Sustainability & Decarbonisation Strategy
- Anti-Social Behaviour Order Act (2003) part 8

8.0 Version control / Amendment log

Date of change:	Revised Version Number:	Change made:	Reason for change:
Nov 2021	1.0	New Policy	N/A
Apr 2026	1.1	Minor amends and wording changes	Policy Review
		Section 2.5 added	Policy Review