Arawak Walton Housing Association
Home Visit Policy

Approved by	Tenant Experience Committee
Date of Approval	02 November 2026
Date issued to Staff	03 November 2026
E&D impact Assessed	Yes
Date of Next Full Review	November 2029
Policy Ownership	Head of Tenant Services
Legal Review	No
Version	1.0
Corporate Objectives	• Customers and Communities: Providing excellent services, listening to tenant voices, and ensuring safe homes.

1. Introduction

1.1 Arawak Walton recognises the positive impact that a decent home has on our tenants' health and wellbeing.

1.2 Our homes consist of:

- **Communal Schemes:** Homes with an element of communal space.
- **General Needs:** Houses and flats in isolation or in neighbourhoods
- **Sheltered schemes:** Homes for people aged 55+

1.3 This policy sets out our approach to accessing our homes so that we maintain in regular contact with our tenants and can identify any issues that need to be addressed.

1.4 We will comply with the Regulator of Social Housings' Consumer Standards:

- Safety and Quality Standard
- Transparency, Influence & Accountability Standard
- Neighbourhood and Community Standard

2. Aims

2.1 We aim to access every home at least once every two years so that we:

- Maintain direct communication with tenants
- Check on tenant wellbeing and assist with any support needs
- Keep household information up to date to enable us to understand who lives in our properties and to help us deliver quality and timely services that are tailored to individual needs.
- To identify any issues with the tenancy or the condition of property that are impacting a tenant's enjoyment of their tenancy. For example, repairs, damp and mould, unreported ASB, any tenancy support needs.
- Help identify any customer support needs and where necessary refer them onto specialist agencies for individual support.
- Identify households who are occupying properties that no longer meet their needs and provide support if they wish to move.
- To identify and deal with any unauthorised property alterations and to ensure compliance with health and safety requirements.
- To promote Safe Homes
- To promote fire safety advice and prevention
- To make sure tenants know how to report anti-social behaviour, including that reports can be made anonymously
- To enable customers to raise any concerns they have with us or request information about our services.

3. Policy Statement

3.1 We will carry out a 2 year rolling programme of Home Visits based on the second anniversary of the tenancy start date. Tenancies less than a year old will be excluded from this process. These tenants will have visits in line with our starter tenancy policy. We have various other ways to keep in contact with our tenants who have tenancies more than 12 months old but less than 2 years e.g:

- Gas servicing
- Tenancy Management (rent arrears)
- Repairs monitoring.

3.2 Where a tenant has a disability, a long-term health condition, or another additional support need, we may agree a more frequent visit cycle – for example annual visits, or a lighter-touch phone check between visits – either at the tenant's request or where a need is identified through a previous Home Visit. This does not change the standard two-year cycle for other tenants.

3.3 Household Information

During the Home Visit we will be reviewing and updating the information we currently hold on our tenants, which will include who lives in the household and their relationships to each other, dates of birth and sex. In addition to household information, we will also ask about the households equality and diversity information including ethnicity, disabilities, sexual orientation, gender and belief. This is to ensure that we can plan our services better and that we are complying with our Public Sector Equality Duties. We will also ask about any reasonable adjustments tenants may need to the services we provide to enable them to better access and use our services. This may include adjustments to how we communicate (language, medium etc), awareness of health issues and any vulnerabilities.

3.4 Property Condition

Home Visits provide an opportunity to assess the condition of our properties including external areas and identify any outstanding repairs or any issues with damp, mould and condensation and ensure they are reported and dealt with.

Tenants are expected to:

- Keep the interior of the home clean and in a good state of decoration.
- Keep and maintain gardens, trees, lawn, and hedges in a neat and tidy condition.
- Make good any damage caused to fixtures and fittings or structure of the property by a member of the household or a visitor to the home.
- Report any repairs to the Association in a timely manner.

3.5 Safe Homes

The Home Visit provides an opportunity to promote safe homes and have a discussion with the tenant about fire safety and fire prevention. The tenancy audit will enable us to identify any safety concerns within the property and to work with the tenant to resolve these. The visit is also used to check the tenant knows how to report anti-social behaviour and that reports can be made anonymously.

3.6 Identifying Tenant Needs

The Home Visit is an opportunity to identify any support needs a tenant may have. Where we identify support needs the housing officer will work with tenant to put in place a support plan. Where we need another agency to provide support and help we will make appropriate referrals.

3.7 Tenancy Fraud

Under the Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013 it is a criminal offence to sub-let or part with possession of social housing. The Home Visit will enable us to check that the person or people living at the property are the tenant(s) and their household members. We will ask tenants to provide identification during the visit to ensure that the correct person is living in the property. Where we suspect the person or people living in the property are not the tenant or members of the tenant's household, we will take action under the Act.

3.8 Property Suitability

The Home Visit provides an opportunity to ensure the tenant's home is still meeting their and their households needs and to discuss with the tenant any options that may be available to them. A property may no longer meet their needs if its too large, too small or their health has changed making the property difficult to live in.

3.9 Under Occupation

Tenancy audits may identify households who are living in a home with more bedrooms than they need. Where this is the case, we will offer information and support on moving to a smaller property, particularly where a household is struggling to manage or afford the property. This may include information on mutual exchanges or signposting to organisations such as Manchester Move.

3.10 Over Crowding

Home Visits may identify households that are overcrowded. If households are overcrowded, we will offer information and support on mutual exchanges, or signposting to organisations such as Manchester Move.

3.11 Changes to Health

Over the lifetime of a tenancy a person's health may change making the property unsuitable for the tenant's or tenant's household. Where this is the case, we can discuss with the tenant options that are available including disabled adaptations, moving to a property more suitable to their needs or referrals to other agencies that may be able to provide support to enable the tenant to remain in their current property.

3.12 Breaches of Tenancy

Whilst not being the main driver for carrying out home visits, they may identify where a tenant is in breach of their tenancy. This may occur during the visit or as a result of us failing to gain access to a property.

Where we identify tenancy breaches as part of the home visit we will take appropriate action to ensure the tenancy conditions are being complied with. If we suspect there has been a breach of tenancy but the tenant refuses access or to cooperate, we can take appropriate legal

action to enforce this.

3.13 Carrying out Visits and Access

Tenants will be given appropriate notice of the visit in writing. The letter will clearly state the purpose of the visit. We may also carry out home visits without notice with the permission of the tenant, as part of our normal activities. If written notice has been given and we are still unable to access the property we will take appropriate action to access the property including coinciding home visits with other visits such as gas and electrical safety checks, stock condition surveys or other appointments. We may also apply to the County Court for access.

3.14 Information and Confidentiality

We will notify the tenant of the reason why we are carrying out the home visit and the purpose of collecting the information. We will also inform them about how the information will be treated. This information will be included in the letter informing them of the visit and will be discussed at the visit.

3.15 Inclusion and Accessibility

We will ensure support is available to vulnerable tenants or tenants who may have difficulties understanding information through internal support mechanisms or the use of external agencies and/or support workers; this includes the use of British sign language, alternative formats and alternative languages where necessary.

4. Legal Context

4.1 Arawak Walton does not operate in isolation and this Policy has been written with consideration of obligations imposed by National legislation and other strategies. In particular:

4.2 Housing Acts 1985 & 1996
4.3 ASB, Crime and Policing Act 2014
4.4 Housing Act 2004
4.5 Equality Act 2010
4.6 Crime and Disorder Act 1998
4.7 Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
4.8 Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
4.9 Equality Act 2010
4.10 Data Protection Act 1998
4.11 Consumer Standards

5. Related Policies

5.1 The Home Visit Policy has clear links to many of AWHA's strategies, policies, and action plans, in particular:

5.2 Allocations & Lettings Policy
5.3 ASB & Hate Crime Policy
5.4 Asset Management Strategy
5.5 Business Plan
5.6 Complaints Policy
5.7 Data Protection Policy

5.8 Domestic Abuse Policy
5.9 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
5.10 Health and Safety Policy
5.11 Repairs & Maintenance Policy
5.12 Safeguarding Policy
5.13 Tenancy Management Policy
5.14 Voids Management Policy

6. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

6.1 The association will ensure that this policy is applied fairly and consistently. We will not directly or indirectly discriminate against any person or group of people in line with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. We will act sensitively towards the diverse needs of individuals and communities and will take positive action where appropriate.

6.2 An Equality Impact Assessment of this policy has been undertaken and no adverse impacts have been identified.

7. Performance Monitoring & Review

7.1 The Home Visit Policy will be reviewed every three years, or when there's a significant change in legislation (whichever is soonest).

7.2 Baseline: the Tenant & Estate Management Survey 2026 found that 83% of respondents were satisfied that Home Visits are helpful and supportive, 81% were satisfied with the notice given, and 83% were satisfied with staff approach and empathy. Tenants gave similarly positive feedback on home visits at the Tenant Quality Panel's estate management meeting on 25 June 2026. These figures will be used as the baseline against which future Home Visit performance is measured.

7.3 AWHA will set annual targets for key performance indicators which are challenging, and these will be monitored via the Operations Management Team, Wider Leadership Team, and Members Committee.

7.4 Performance information relating to the use of legal actions and satisfaction levels and will be publicised on the website and in the tenant newsletter. Indicators that will be monitored include but are not limited to:

- Tenant Satisfaction Measures (RSH)
- Number of New issues arising
- Percentage of issues successfully resolved.
- Satisfaction with the outcome
- Satisfaction that residents were kept up to date
- The time taken to resolve the issue
- Tenant awareness that ASB can be reported anonymously (2026 survey baseline: 55%)