

Code of Conduct for Contractors



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Introduction

Code of Conduct for Contractors

Cornerstone Property Management are committed to ensuring consistently high levels of service to our residents. This is why we appoint contractors with high performance standards who we can form beneficial working relationships with.

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards that contractors will deliver to our clients' estates. Contractors (plus any subcontractors used) must comply with these and a breach of any of the terms shown in this Code of Conduct may result in the contractor no longer receiving work from Cornerstone.

From time to time, certain activities will need to be contracted out to external contractors due to a lack of resources and/or expertise available, or in the case of an invitation to tender required due to regulations. Irrespective of which contractors are appointed and commissioned, the expectations regarding health and safety, customer service and quality of service are set at very high standards, and Cornerstone are striving to maintain these week in week out at all of the properties managed.

Section 1 – Cornerstone’s Requirements and Expectations

Quality of Service

Providing consistently high levels of service and the standards stated in this document are key for our contractors to adopt. Cornerstone have high expectations from the clients, leaseholders and residents, and strive to consistently meet and exceed these.

Our ethos stems from the true belief in our company’s core value: to provide consistently high levels of service that we ourselves would expect. Part of the way we achieve this is to ensure that the cleaning, maintenance, gardening and health and safety are all managed professionally and in compliance with the regulations.

Consequently, contractors are required to provide the following for approval and to be commissioned for any work:

- Registration Form (fully completed and dated)
- Copies of up-to-date documents for Employers Liability, Public & Products Liability, etc.
- All relevant accreditations for your specialist works
- References (preferably from works carried out at residential developments)

They also receive a copy link shows our site safety rules:

<https://cornerstonepm.box.com/s/af230ds2kxssv0r4gm707g6h1qqfcgth>

We expect our contractors to deliver the promises we make to the residents on our repairs, maintenance and major works. This requires a comprehensive assessment of the works required, cost-efficient quotation then scheduling the work appropriately. Once appointed, the contractors are expected to:

- Provide a clear outline of the works planned.
- Schedule the work from start date and time through to completion.
- Conduct themselves as discretely and courteously as possible.
- Ensure that all areas are clean, safe and any hazardous materials kept secure.
- Minimise noise, smells and intrusive lighting.
- Refrain from inappropriate comments to and in the company of residents.
- Ensure all plant equipment/tools have test certificates and users are fully trained.
- Adopt all relevant H&S standards and CDM Regulations 2015 to minimise risk.
- Keep the property manager regularly updated with any snagging and incidents.

Completing the works in line with these recommendations helps to ensure quality of service and the residents’ safety, security and satisfaction.

Selection of Contractors

Before any company works on behalf of Cornerstone's clients, checks will be undertaken to ensure that the company has all relevant skills, experience, accreditations, plant equipment and tools, staff and subcontractors required to attain the necessary standards of service.

Copies of all relevant registrations and accreditations will need to be kept up to date, and confirmation of operatives of each company being able to complete their tasks checked from time to time.

Whenever major works are required and the Section 20 consultation starts we will be required to provide an invitation to tender. This document is used to assess a number of potential service providers (contractors) capable of carrying out and completing the work in accordance with the schedule, budget arranged and quality of service.

There are a number of guidelines and rulings which need to be adhered to within this process, and we will assist with these when we assess which of the contractors showing interest will be suitable and form part of the short list being considered.

Work Arrangements

Contractors (and subcontractors) must provide some form of identity card showing the name, address and telephone number of their company, and a photograph which should be displayed clearly. All site attendees should be presentable in their appearance, and equipped with all necessary personal protective equipment.

Whenever part of their works, contractors are responsible for supplying and bearing the cost of all necessary plant, scaffolding, staging, temporary covering, dust sheets, tarpaulin, disposable 'overshoe' protectors, tools, equipment, transport, labour and materials for the proper execution of works. Contractors must also leave the site clean and tidy (see Section 2 below).

All materials used and workmanship applied should be in accordance with the appropriate British, European or International Standards (BS, EN, ISO), and the most suitable materials, plant and equipment which can be reasonably obtained used whenever possible (see 'Sustainability').

Contractors must ensure that they can meet the completion date deadlines for their works. If this needs changing, e.g. due to adverse weather conditions, Cornerstone (and the resident if necessary) must be informed and the appointment rescheduled to a different date. A contractor must also inform Cornerstone as soon as possible if work cannot be completed for any reason, e.g. the unavailability of parts or materials, or the resident has requested another date and time. Consistent failure to complete works within the agreed time may result in a suspension of work orders from Cornerstone.

Defects

The contractor will be expressly responsible for defects in either workmanship or materials supplied and/or fixed for a minimum period of six calendar months following the date of completion (this may vary depending upon the terms of the contract with Cornerstone).

There may be exceptions here such as damp proofing or timber treatment, or works where a guarantee of a lesser period applies. The contractor shall be required to make good, at their expense, any defects or faults which may appear within that period, including any damage to an adjoining property.

Health and Safety

Cornerstone have always viewed the good practice in regard to health, safety and environmental matters as one of the most essential aspects of property management. It is crucial that the health and safety of the residents and visitors are in no way put at risk and that all contractors and subcontractors take their share of the responsibility.

Consequently, contractors must conform to all relevant health and safety legislation and standards and produce a method statement, ensuring that:

- Risk assessments are undertaken and adequate precautions taken, including first aid provision.
- Their employees and the residents are provided with the information and instructions needed to ensure health and safety.
- Their employees are provided with training on health and safety risks and precautions to take, particularly in relation to residents, children and any other vulnerable people.
- When site teams are deployed, a member of the team is responsible for compliance, rules laid down by the property manager, plus all health and safety legislation.

Contractors should halt work immediately if any incidents are caused or seen, or encounter any hazards which they are unqualified for or uncertain of addressing (e.g. asbestos) and should notify the property manager of the problem. Failure to do so may result in the contractor no longer receiving work from Cornerstone.

Both standards of work and health and safety will be checked regularly, and this will also include views and opinions obtained from the leaseholders and residents. Upon full completion of the project or works, a check will be carried out to ensure quality of service and all aspects of health and safety have been accomplished as expected.

In certain cases – such as major structural works - advice from a surveyor or structural engineer may be required prior to completion and authorisation of final payment.

Value for Money

Contractors must ensure competitive pricing and invoices that accurately detail the work delivered. Cornerstone review all invoices as a matter of process to ensure they reflect work undertaken. In cases where it is suspected that a contractor has committed fraud or attempted fraud then we will conduct an investigation, informing the police where appropriate, and taking action against the contractor in question.

Monitoring Performance

Contractor performance will be continuously monitored by Cornerstone's property managers. Reviews will be conducted on a regular basis in order to assess the following:

- Deadlines for completion of work
- The quality of work
- Any complaints
- Key performance indicators and areas for improvement
- Health and safety procedures

The meetings provide an opportunity for Cornerstone and contractors to discuss the operation of the contract (when applicable) and develop a beneficial working partnership. Consistent poor performance may result in the contractor no longer receiving work orders.

Invoices

Invoices should be clearly written and sent across to the accounts department following completion of the work. Cornerstone will provide guidance as to how invoices should be written, including the correct client name for each property and the request that the work completed is clearly outlined.

If there are deliberate attempts to obtain payment for work not done or not authorised, Cornerstone shall take whatever action is necessary and shall recover all losses suffered and costs incurred from the contractor.

Insurance

Contractors must maintain up-to-date insurance, including adequate protection for the safety of residents, occupiers and the general public, and indemnify Cornerstone against all injury and death to persons and damage to property. Where required, professional indemnity insurance should not be less than £1 million.

Equality and Diversity

Cornerstone operate with diverse communities within the estates that are served and equality and diversity is present in various ways. This requires that everyone has equal access to our services, and that this also applies to our approach when appointing contractors.

Contractors should ensure that they operate in a non-discriminatory way when recruiting and appointing staff and subcontractors for work on site. Contractors must ensure a commitment to equal opportunities and treat all residents with equal respect whatever a person's race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion, sex, age, sexuality, physical or mental disability, state of health, appearance, marital status or family circumstances. Contractors must also accommodate, when applicable and so far as possible, any special needs of residents.

Sustainability

Contractors should ensure their commitment to environmental sustainability in the residents' blocks and apartments.

This should include:

Transport - the use of low carbon emission vehicles wherever practicable, and planning of work to minimise travel distances.

Waste - a complete clearance of waste on site, and the recycling of materials wherever possible.

Materials - the use of materials which involve the minimum environmental and social impact, wherever possible, e.g. recycled materials, and timber using various certifications such as the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) or the Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC).

Energy - initiatives to improve the energy efficiency of their work activities.

Monitoring - maintaining appropriate information on the above activities to enable their performance to be monitored.

Data Protection

The GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) came into effect on 25th May 2018 and replaced EU Data Protection laws, including the UK Data Protection Act (1998). Cornerstone produced a document entitled Privacy Policy & Compliance with the GDPR for the company to follow, and the contractors are required to maintain a duty of care when processing and storing information relating to the residents within the properties Cornerstone manages.

Information relating to these residents should:

- Be held only for the purpose of delivering the specific service requested by Cornerstone, and not used for any unrelated purposes.
- Be subject to appropriate security measures to guard against loss or unauthorised access, for example being kept in a locked cabinet or encrypted if stored electronically.
- Not be kept for longer than necessary, and disposed of in a fully confidential manner.
- Not be transferred outside the company without the express permission of Cornerstone.

Section 2 – Working at Our Client’s Properties

Customer Focus

The maintenance and repairs we arrange are set at standards which meet the residents’ needs and our expectations. This means that contractors are required to:

- Attend to appointments scheduled for all repairs and visits.
- Notify us (or the residents if agreed to) with 24 hours’ notice where unavoidable delays arise.
- Complete repairs to a high standard, within the specified target time, and within one visit wherever possible.
- Respect the overall environment of the estate, the individual flats, the contents and the residents themselves.
- Maintain the work and ongoing approach in a consistently friendly, helpful, considerate, informative and professional way.
- Prepare for and follow all health and safety procedures when on site.

Access to Properties

Works on site may be either in communal areas (internal and external) or inside the residents’ property. Whenever access to the residents’ apartments is required, advanced appointments should be arranged with as much notice as possible. If you cannot obtain access, a calling card must be left requesting a call back from the resident to rearrange or Cornerstone contacted to arrange another appointment.

If the second visit does not enable access either, a calling card should again be left and Cornerstone informed.

If you are running late, you must notify us or the resident immediately. If an appointment has to be rescheduled or cancelled for any reason you must notify the resident immediately, and arrange a new appointment as promptly as possible. It should not be left to Cornerstone or the resident to call and chase.

If the resident does not allow access to their home to carry out the works, do not object to this or argue with the resident. Simply contact Cornerstone with immediate effect to address this delay and reschedule if necessary.

Approach to Residents

At times there will be works required inside the properties of residents who are elderly with limited sight or hearing, vulnerable or have learning disabilities for example. Cornerstone will provide as much information as possible (whenever we ourselves are aware), to ensure that the contractors are confident and comfortable working on behalf of these people. Should you have any concerns about a resident’s vulnerability and are unsure how to proceed contact Cornerstone for advice.

Standards on Site

You are expected to maintain a friendly, helpful, considerate, informative and professional approach whenever conducting any works for our residents. Anger, rudeness and over-familiarity are not acceptable.

The inconvenience caused to residents (or the occupants of adjoining properties) during your work should always be minimised. Causing excessive noise or leaving doors and windows open unnecessarily is not acceptable. And at no time should audio equipment (including headphones) be played in or around occupied homes, unless the residents have given prior consent.

You should always take adequate precautions to protect the environment you work in, including the buildings, their surrounds, all communal areas and the residents' properties. A clean working environment must be maintained, and any damage will be the responsibility of the contractor. This includes the interiors of the homes of the residents, for which the resident should be asked to move breakable/valuable items to a safe place prior to the works to avoid any damage.

Contractors will be directly liable for any damage caused to such property.

Reasons for any incomplete works carried out should be made clear to the residents and Cornerstone, with the date and time of return to complete the works then scheduled and confirmed.

Health, Safety and Welfare

Planning and following all safe working practices while on our client properties to ensure the safety and well-being of our residents (and children) is imperative.

Cornerstone strive to forewarn residents with as much notice as possible about forthcoming work being undertaken, when the work is scheduled for, who will be conducting it and the preventative measures being used. In the case of an emergency callout, we expect the contractor to assist with the protective measures necessary to ensure a safe working environment.

When you encounter any work situation you are unprepared for, and feel is unsafe, or have concerns about the health, safety or welfare of any residents, you should contact Cornerstone directly or via your employer. No works should proceed until the contractor and Cornerstone are satisfied that the work is safe.

For guidance, the following link shows our site safety rules:

<https://cornerstone-pm.app.box.com/s/af230ds2kxssv0r4gm707g6h1qqfcgth>

Misbehaviour and Threats

You should notify Cornerstone of any incidents involving the residents' misbehaviour, use of racist or sexist remarks, innuendoes, or use of illegal drugs, etc. Conversely, Cornerstone will investigate any allegations made by the residents or staff of contractors misbehaving or causing harassment. Full co-operation from contractors will be expected as part of this process.

If you feel threatened, you should withdraw immediately, leaving your work in as safe a condition as possible, and report the situation immediately to Cornerstone.

Confidentiality

You must treat all residents' details such as names, addresses and telephone numbers as strictly confidential, and under no circumstances disclose any information whatsoever regarding their circumstances, lifestyle, health details, etc., to any third party.

Gas and Electricity Used

If the use of gas or electricity is necessary you must seek permission from the resident before connecting to their supplies. Where significant gas or electricity is needed, both you and the resident should take meter readings and you should reimburse the resident for the cost of energy used.

Leaving and Finishing Work

If work is incomplete over a period of time or overnight you must warn residents of any potential hazards and take necessary steps to ensure the safety of the public. You should ensure that the resident is fully informed about when you will return to the property, and no tools or equipment is to be stored within an occupied property overnight. Tools and equipment left in unoccupied (void) properties are the responsibility of the contractor.

Contractors using ladders must apply the Work at Height Regulations 2005, and remove them from site every night whenever possible. If any need to be left overnight, ensure that they are securely lashed and covered so that they cannot slip or be used by any residents or children.

If scaffolding is used, the handover certificate will be needed from the erector followed by regular inspections with a log completed. The removal of any scaffolding should be timely, i.e. removed as soon as it is no longer required.

All debris must be cleared at the end of each day and as soon after completion of work as practicable, leaving the work area as clean and tidy as possible. Should keys for any of the properties be handed to you by the residents or estate agents, for example, they must be returned as soon as possible.

The security of the premises is your responsibility whilst the keys are in your possession. You must take all reasonable care to prevent unauthorised entry into the property.

Monitoring Performance

This is an important role for Cornerstone and is regularly undertaken to ensure that standards are maintained at the level expected by all parties involved. You should always allow reasonable access for Cornerstone staff or other relevant personnel, e.g. the leaseholders or landlords, to inspect the work in progress and upon its completion.

Acceptance of Code of Conduct for Maintenance Contractors

I/We as sole proprietor/director of the company named below, hereby give confirmation that we have received, have read and agree to abide by the Code of Conduct issued by Cornerstone Property Management.

I/We also confirm that all relevant employees of this company will be provided with a copy or summary of this Code of Conduct and will be made aware of the consequences of a breach of the terms contained therein.

Company Name:

Address:

Post Code:

Signed:

Date:

Name:

Position:

Please return to:

Cornerstone Property Management Ltd

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