

Neighbourhood Management Procedure

Purpose

This Procedure sets out how we will:

- Ensure our Neighbourhoods are clean, safe and that wider environmental issues are captured.
 - Involve Customers in identifying and addressing what is important to them.
 - Prevent and tackle all activity and behaviour that has a detrimental effect on the Neighbourhood.
 - Identify and implement improvements in our Neighbourhoods that help our customers thrive.
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Scope

This Procedure covers how we manage our Neighbourhoods external and communal spaces across all Bromford Housing Group and its subsidiaries.

Reference Documents

List of Referenced Documents
<u>Disposal of Goods Procedure</u>
<u>ASB & Tenancy Breach Procedure</u>
Fire Safety (currently under review)
<u>Home Ownership Consultation How To</u>
<u>Customer Alert Flags Procedure</u>
<u>Decant: Moving Customer Temporarily and Permanently Procedure</u>
<u>Incident, Near Miss and Hazard Reporting and Investigating Procedure</u>
<u>Legionella Safety Procedure</u>
<u>Permissions Procedure</u>
<u>Health and Safety Audit and Inspection Procedure</u>
<u>Electrical Safety Policy</u>
PEEPs Procedure (not yet written)

Responsibilities

Associate Directors are responsible for strategic oversight of this procedure.

Locality Managers and Team Leaders are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the procedure and ensuring it is adhered to.

Where the role of the Neighbourhood Coach and Locality Manager are described in this procedure, this also applies to other equivalent roles within schemes such as the Housing Worker and Service Manager.

All **colleagues** are responsible for acting in line with the principles of this procedure and associated methodology, tools, and systems and for completing necessary training set out in their learning pathway.

Legislative and Regulatory Requirements

- Neighbourhood and Community Standard 2015
- TORTS (Interference with Goods) Act 1977
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- The Charter for Social Housing Residents: Social Housing White Paper
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

1. Our Approach

Neighbourhood Coaching: We invest our time into working with customers through a coaching approach that enables them to gain or maintain control of their lives and do more for themselves and each other. This means that in the first instance NC/equivalent role/equivalent role will address any identified issues with the customer(s) involved first, allowing them the opportunity to put it right and prevent it from happening again before taking any enforcement action.

‘Don’t walk past it’: When out and about all our colleagues have an ‘eyes wide open’ approach and take responsibility for identifying and acting upon any issues or concerns that they identify in block and schemes. Training is provided on ‘hazard spotting’ and is available on the Learning Lounge.

Block Inspections: Our NC/equivalent role/equivalent role’s will proactively complete and record an inspection on all our blocks, dependent on the assessed risk, customer group vulnerability and property type. Inspections will be assigned to blocks as either:

- Priority Block Inspection – Conducted Monthly.
- Block Inspection – Conducted Quarterly.

The Block inspection entails a thorough inspection of the communal areas in and around a property to ensure it is free from damage, defect, issues, or fault. The inspection should involve:

- A thorough inspection of the internal and external areas of the scheme, the inspection should cover internal and external areas and should include:
 - Ensuring there are no defects or damage to any fixtures, equipment, or facilities,
 - Checking for potential issues, such as blockages or damage to drains,
 - Checking for any Health and safety risks or hazards,
 - Checking the standard of any services being provided e.g. gardening or cleaning,
 - Ensuring there are no fire risks or obstructions,
 - Highlighting any breaches of tenancy,
 - Considering any improvements,

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- Incorporating customer feedback or determining the best way of involving customers locally where appropriate,
 - Completing an **Inspection Form** and saving it to the Safety Hub
 - Taking photographs where appropriate,
 - Actioning and following up any issue that are identified.

Inspections should include identification of hazards and any follow up action that could cause environmental/property damage, injury, or harm for:

- External spaces
- Internal spaces
- Fire Safety
- Electrical safety

If any issues are identified during the inspection, the NC/equivalent role/equivalent role should determine a priority timescale against them from the following:

- Priority Immediate.
- Priority 1 Action raised (within 28 days)- The NC/equivalent role/equivalent role should send a photograph of the cleared area to their leader and the fire safety team.
- Priority 2 Action raised (within 6 months).
- Priority 3 Action raised (as Neighbourhood Improvement).

The NC/equivalent role/equivalent role should follow up any actions that they need request for repairs and set these to complete rather than live on Safety Hub. They can then be checked again next time the inspection is due and chased if necessary.

The LM's will be able to report on any outstanding block inspections and can run reports to see if any inspections are outstanding.

2. Prevention: Keeping our Estates Safe, Clean and Well Maintained

We have a proactive approach to ensuring that our neighbourhoods are clean, safe, and well maintained, this includes:

- Our Asset Compliance Team completing annual Fire Risk Assessments in all our schemes and blocks, with the NC/equivalent role/equivalent role being responsible for remedying any priority 1 actions identified because of customers leaving combustible materials or blocking escape routes within 28 days. See our Fire Safety Procedures (currently under review) for further information.
 - Fire Alarms should be tested weekly and Emergency Lighting tests should be completed monthly in all schemes where these exist see our Fire Safety Procedures (currently under review) and our Electrical Safety Policy for more information, a record of the test should be recorded on the **Online Safety Files**. Responsibility for completing this as follows:
 - West of England: tests are conducted by the Facilities Management Officer
 - Remainder of Bromford; tests are completed by either the NC or equivalent role.
 - Where Bromford is responsible, the NC/equivalent role's will carry out and regularly review; Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) /Person Centred Risk Assessment (PCRA) in blocks with a vulnerable client group setting out what action is required to ensure safe evacuation/rescue from the property in the event of an emergency.
 - A planned programme of tree inspection and maintenance on a 3 to 5 yearly timescale across Bromford.
 - Our completion of Legionella risk assessment and a programme of flushing and cleaning which is completed by contractors or the Asset Compliance Team for all communal shared washing facilities.
 - Cleaning and Service Contracts in place for maintaining shared communal facilities including such facilities as lifts.
 - A user agreement in place between Bromford and Customers using mobility scooters to ensure that they are safely used, insured, stored, and charged.
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3. Working with Customers

Neighbourhood Coaches should decide how best to engage and involve customers who are the eyes and ears on site. This may be in a structured way through joint inspections or helping them to spot and report issues - including identifying and requesting improvements.

4. Responding to Issues

Tenancy Breaches; should be addressed in accordance with the Anti-Social Behaviour and Tenancy Breach Procedure. Where breaches are caused or exasperated by the layout or design of the scheme, the NC/equivalent role should consider whether a Neighbourhood Improvement may help.

Repairs and Maintenance: damage, faults or wear and tear on existing items (e.g. windows, lighting) and should be requested via the Contact Team. (If tasking these can be tasked at Scheme Level, Block Level or Asset Level: using Classification: Repairs; 5-day priority unless Health and Safety risk.

Planned Maintenance: requests should be tasked through at Estate Level to the HI&C Data Team: using Classification: Planned/Cyclical Decoration. This should include photos showing current condition of the component that requires replacement or major work and an indication of priority. HI&C Data Team will review these requests and either add to relevant in-year or future programme.

Cleaning and Window Cleaning Service Contracts: Where this service is provided, these may be completed by our in-house teams, by contractors/managing agents or LA's depending on which part of the business they are in.

- **Legacy Bromford:** External contractors provide all cleaning and window cleaning services. An agreed detailed specification that can be found here; [P:\Cleaning and Window cleaning dates\Specification Sept 2014](#). and a schedule for each contractor setting out when they are due to complete cleaning on each scheme is available here; P:\Cleaning and Window cleaning dates.

If the NC/equivalent role has any concerns that the contractor is failing to comply with their agreed schedule and/or agreed specification, they should in the first instance direct their concerns to the Contractors Team Leader (the contact details of which can be found here [P:\Cleaning and Window cleaning dates](#)). If the contractor fails to rectify the issue or there are persistent issues identified by the NC/equivalent role, the NC/equivalent role should where possible gather evidence e.g. photographs and details of any prior conversations with the contractor and raise this with the Contracts Manager in the Asset Compliance Team.

- **Riverside:** Cleaning and Window Cleaning is delivered inhouse and there are also two sites where a Caretaking service is provided. The cleaning service is based upon an output specification; therefore the frequency of visits is flexible based on need with the block. There is an exception of some general needs blocks communal spaces that are completed monthly. A copy of the specification can be found here: [Cleaning Schedule for ILS](#). [Cleaning Schedule for GN](#).
- **Shannon Way:** Cleaning is provided by an external company Service Master. For queries about the contract contact: andrewlawson@bromford.co.uk

Landscaping works: this is completed by a mix of in-house teams and contractors. Generally, grass cutting takes place on a two-weekly cycle during the growing season which is April to October. The team are also responsible for leaf and moss clearance. There are currently different gardening standards in place across legacy Bromford, that are currently being aligned. In the meantime, any queries in relation to landscaping should be directed to the local landscaping work lead to follow up as follows:

- Legacy Bromford: landscaping@bromford.co.uk
- Riverside: dave.yabsley@bromford.co.uk
- Shannon Way: andrew.lawson@bromford.co.uk

Trees: There is a planned programme of tree inspections and works that differs by legacy organisation, any queries should be directed to the relevant team as follows:

	Inspection and Maintenance Cycle	Contact:
Legacy Bromford	5 yearly- covers all trees including those in gardens	landscaping@bromford.co.uk
Riverside	3 yearly – only covers trees in open spaces	dave.yabsley@bromford.co.uk
Shannon Way	3 yearly – only covers trees in open spaces	andrew.lawson@bromford.co.uk

Gritting: Bromford landscaping teams provide grit and bins and re-fill these, where a scheme does not have a grit bin these can be requested as a Minor Neighbourhood Improvement. Application of grit is completed by scheme staff in supported and sheltered accommodation and is left for customers to use where it is provided at General Needs schemes.

Requests to add new schemes onto Cleaning, Window Cleaning or Gardening contracts: should be made at least one month in advance using the New Gardening and Cleaning Contract Request Form and sent to the service contacts mailbox. A quote will then be sort from the relevant contractor and then sent to the NC/equivalent role for approval. The NC/equivalent role should decide the frequency of Communal Cleaning and the finance team will calculate the applicable service charge cost for customers for providing this service.

Personal Items Stored in Communal Areas:

Internal Areas: Where items are found to be in communal areas (for example bikes, pushchairs, mobility scooters, furnishings) the NC/equivalent role will refer to the Fire Safety Procedures (currently under review) which has a zero-tolerance approach. Any items that are combustible or are causing a blockage to an escape route will be considered a Priority 1 Fire Safety Action and must be recorded and resolved within 28 days in accordance with the Fire Safety Procedures (currently under review).

External Areas: Customers are not permitted to keep personal equipment such as pools, trampolines, play equipment or BBQs in the communal areas unless they are being always supervised. Such items should not be left out overnight.

In the first instance, the NC/equivalent role should attempt to establish who the items belong to, if the owner can be established, using a coaching approach the NC/equivalent role should attempt to identify and resolve the root cause of the issue and ensure the customer removes the item and understands the reason for this and the consequences of continuing to breach their tenancy/licence this way in future.

Where NC/equivalent role cannot get the items removed by the owner, either because they have failed to remove them, or the owner cannot be established / contacted then the TORTS process for removal of goods can be followed: (once disposal of goods how to is reviewed, I will move all of this into one procedure and will link from here instead of duplicating.)

See **Disposal of Goods Procedure** for removing goods left in communal areas.

Fly Tipping: any household items or refuse of more than a black bin bag is fly tipping and is an offence under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, if convicted it carries a large fine a potential imprisonment. There are a range of measures that can be taken to help prevent fly tipping including:

- Making use of any residents' groups/police schemes to share information,
- Identify customers who may be willing to act as an 'eagle-eye' to report perpetrators,
- Consider if physical deterrents such as lighting or fencing could be requested as a Neighbourhood Improvements,
- Further information on good practice in preventing fly tipping is available here; <http://www.tacklingflytipping.com/aboutfly-tipping/1474>

When addressing fly tipping, in the first instance the NC/equivalent role should.

- attempt to establish who is responsible for the fly tipping,
- take photographs and gather information form any witnesses,

If the perpetrator can be established and they live in a Bromford home the NC/equivalent role should attempt to identify and resolve the root cause of the issue. Fly tipping is a breach of tenancy/licence and can be dealt with as such. The NC/equivalent role should consider which tools are available to use as consequence:

- Perpetrator removes and properly disposes of fly tipping,
- Fly tipping is returned to perpetrator,
- Perpetrator pays Bromford as recharge to remove fly tipping,
- Enforcement action is taken under terms of Tenancy/Licence.

If the perpetrator does not live in a Bromford home, the matter can be reported to the Local Authority who may consider prosecution.

Removal of the fly tipping depends on where it is situated:

Public Highway bordering or part of our schemes:	It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to remove and dispose of all fly-tipped waste if it is on relevant land: which is any land where all the following apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it is open to the air on at least one side. • it is under their direct control. • it is publicly accessible (with or without payment) Contact the Local Authority to report the fly tipping and keep a record so that the issue can be followed up if no action is taken.
Land owned by Bromford:	Report it to the Local Authority as although they have no obligation to remove it, in some cases they may do so, and they also have the discretion to prosecute perpetrators. If the scheme has a service charge, the cost of removal can be apportioned to all properties. If there is a managing agent providing services, they must be informed so they can take action. Where necessary obtain quotes from contractors to remove the rubbish or if in-house teams or contractual arrangements exist to remove rubbish they should be tasked/instructed to do so.
Land owned by others	If fly-tipping has occurred on adjacent land, the owner should be identified by local investigation or via the Land Registry, keep a record so that the issue can be followed up if no action is taken. If no action is taken, other agencies can be contacted to support our request e.g. Councillors, Environmental Health, or the Fire Service if there is a fire risk.

Abandoned Vehicles: The Permissions Policy sets out when a customer requires permission to keep a vehicle at their property/scheme. A vehicle is likely to be abandoned if:

- it has no keeper on DVLA’s database and is untaxed - [check vehicle tax online](#)
- it is stationary for a significant amount of time.
- it is significantly damaged, run down or unroadworthy, its number plate is missing.

In the first instance, if the NC/equivalent role can establish who owns the vehicle, they should arrange for them to remove it, if the owner cannot be established, or the owner fails to remove it then it should be reported to the Local Authority.

It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to remove abandoned vehicles from:

- land in the open air (including private land)
- roads (including private roads)

It is likely that each Local Authority may require abandoned vehicles to be reported in a different way and therefore it is advisable to check their website. A record should be kept of the date and method of reporting. For further information see: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/abandoned-vehicles-council-responsibilities>

Abandoned Vehicles on Bromford’s Private Land

Where a vehicle has been abandoned on private land (e.g. a Bromford Car Park) the action depends on how the LA has interpreted their responsibility under the Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978. In the first instance contact the Local Authority as above. If both the LA and Police refuse to take responsibility for removal, then there are 2 options depending on where the vehicle is:

1. **If the vehicle is not on our land:** Identify who the land belongs to and ask them to remove it. There is advice on the [Land Registry Website](#) on how to do this.
2. **If the vehicle is on Bromford land:** and is un-roadworthy/ causing an obstruction/nuisance or is untaxed (check if its taxed or SORN [online](#)). Establish who the owner is (use [DVLA V888 Form](#) if necessary) If there is a keeper; make contact and arrange removal within a reasonable timeframe- open a Disposal of Goods Case in D365 to manage this.

Arranging Removal/Disposal: If the owner has been contacted and has failed to remove the vehicle or the DVLA have confirmed that there is no owner, and the vehicle is un-roadworthy and not of high value the **Disposal of Goods Procedure** should be followed this will include attaching a **TORTS Notice** to the vehicle and opening a Disposal of Goods Case in D365.

5. **Neighbourhood Improvements:** If colleagues identify something that they want to change or improve (e.g. extra fencing, parking, landscaping) then it is possible to request an improvement. The route to request the Neighbourhood Improvement depends on whether it is a **Minor** or **Major** Neighbourhood Improvement.

Minor Neighbourhood Improvements are:	Minor Neighbourhood Improvements are not:	How to Request
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimated at under £1000 - (they can exceed this if the colleague wishes to spend their budget in this way). • Something completely new (e.g. new fence/slabbing) • Upgrading an existing item (e.g. lighting, signage, changing a wooden gate to a metal one). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repairs to an existing item (e.g. fencing repair). • Large jobs (generally +£1000). • Planned works delivered by the Home Investment Delivery Programme (e.g. windows, door entry). • Cyclical works (e.g. decoration). 	Follow steps 1-7 below
Major Neighbourhood Improvements are:	Major Neighbourhood Improvements are not:	How to Request
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimated at over £1000. • New amenities (e.g. new fencing, lighting, security). • Significant upgrading of an existing provision (e.g. changing a gravel car park to tarmac, timber fence to metal railing, redesigned bin store). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small works under £1000. • Repairs to an item that already exists (e.g. fencing repair) • Tree surgery or planting. • Planned works delivered by the Home Investment Delivery Programme (e.g. windows, door entry). • Cyclical Works (e.g. decoration) 	Follow steps 1-10 below

Requesting a Neighbourhood Improvement

Step 1 Initial consultation with customers affected by the proposal: NC should complete an initial consultation including any potential effect on service charges. Evidence of this should be documented.

Stage 2 Complete Bid Form: NC should complete a **Bid Form** for each single item this should consider all practicalities of the proposal and including plans or sketches and photos (see **Practical Tips to Consider an Example Neighbourhood Improvement Bid Forms**) as much detail as possible should be included as colleagues considering the bid are unlikely to be familiar with the area. The completed Bid Form should be sent to the LM for approval on a Word document (not PDF).

Stage 3 Manager Approval: The LM should review the bid and decide whether to approve, decline or ask for more information. Only fully completed forms should be accepted. If approved the bid should be forwarded by the LM to their Locality Coordinator.

Stage 4 Bid Received by the Locality Coordinator: The Locality Coordinator will record the bid on their individual Locality Master Control Sheet and will pass it on the relevant team depending on the type of improvement. For minor improvements LoCo will send the form by email to the AD & Head of Service Delivery.

For major improvements the LoCo will: save the form in the appropriate Locality folder Neighbourhood Improvements; to input details into the Master Spreadsheet held in the same location; email the form to neighbourhood.improvementsmajor@bromford.co.uk

Stage 5 & 6 Preliminary Survey & Statutory Approvals:

If a survey is required depending on the type of improvement either the Service Delivery Team or Home Investment Delivery Team will:

- Survey and estimate the works, suggesting alternative options if they are available. This may take place on site with the NC or (if straightforward) over the phone.
- Obtain any statutory approvals if required these may include Building Regulations, Ownership, Covenants, Fire Regs, Highway restrictions and Planning permission.

Stage 7 Decision re viability of bid

- Depending on whether it is a Minor or Major Neighbourhood Improvement either the Service Delivery Team or Home Investment Delivery Team will decide whether the bid is viable and notify the LoCo by email - this should be within 5 working days. If the bid is declined the reason will be recorded on the spreadsheet.
- The LoCo will update the Locality spreadsheet and notify the NC of the outcome.
- The NC will update customers if the improvement will not be progressing.

Stage 8 Bid costed

- For Major Neighbourhood Improvement bids (delete, either Service Delivery or) Home Investment and Delivery will price any bids to be considered and prepare for submission at the quarterly Steering Group.

Stage 9 Approval by the Steering Group (Major Neighbourhood Improvement bids only)

All priced bids will be considered at the Steering Group meeting where they will be evaluated alongside other bids. The table below will be used to prioritise bids:

1 Health & Safety	Environmental, fall and tripping hazards that do not fall within day-to-day repairs and maintenance.
2 Safe & Secure	New or enhanced lighting, fencing works etc, to secure areas. New gates to communal areas to give additional security.
2 ASB	Any deterrent measures that will help resolve ASB issues or indeed specific cases submitted in conjunction with the Community Safety Team
3 Enhancements	Where estates look tired, improving communal area aesthetics, changing landscaping. New additions such as parking areas or footpaths.

- If limited budget prohibits bid progressing this will be deferred for later date.

- The NC/LM/Locality Coordinator will be updated of the outcome by email and the Master Control Spreadsheet and Locality spreadsheet updated.

Stage 10 - Further detailed customer consultation by the NC

- Before progressing to final consultation any service charge implication arising from the improvement must be determined via a request to the Service Charge Team to calculate- this should be completed within 5 working days. Should the works be approved, the Coach will follow up with the Service Charge Team to arrange for charges to be applied.
- If this is a mixed tenure scheme and if the improvement will benefit all customers (e.g. Leaseholders, Shared Owners, Freeholders with Charge etc.). Then all their views need to be established and considered.
- There are no strict guidelines on how consultation with customers should take place as long as those affected have been informed and can influence the decision. However, for homeowners there is a legal consultation period if the customer contribution is over £250. In this case the legal process set out in the Home Ownership Consultation How To must be followed. This service will be actioned through Legal Property Team.
- Customer feedback should be reviewed, and a decision made by the NC and LM on whether the improvement should go ahead. Usually an improvement will be carried out if most customers are in favour or it is necessary to carry out the works e.g. for Safety & Security reasons.
- Evidence of all consultation with all customers and partners should be stored against the case and kept for 12 months.

Stage 11 – Procurement and Ordering- Major Neighbourhood Improvement bids only

Works for all approved bids will be subject to the Group Procurement Requirements and will be ordered by the Home Investment Delivery Team.

Stage 12 - Dates work to be completed.

<p>For Minor Neighbourhood Improvement bids:</p> <p>The Service Delivery team will inform the LoCo of the expected-on site start date and completion dates, the LoCo will update the Locality spreadsheet and email the NC and the NC will share with customers.</p>	<p>For Major Neighbourhood Improvement bids:</p> <p>The Home Investment Delivery Team will inform the LoCo of the expected-on site start date, and completion dates update the Locality and Master spreadsheets and email the NC; and the NC will share with customers</p>
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Stage 13- Work undertaken

Stage 14- Post inspection/feedback

The NC or Surveyor will inspect and feedback by exception.

The NC should update patch information sheets with any changes to scheme – e.g. changes to codes, new CCTV, lighting etc and liaise with the Service Charge Team to ensure the service charges calculated in step 10 are applied.”

Document Details

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