

Housing Services Block Inspection Policy

Department	Housing Services
Responsible Person	Director of Housing
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Block inspections are an essential function to maintain the Council’s housing stock and in particular flatted accommodation and their communal areas.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 Block inspections in low-rise and medium-rise blocks are completed on a quarterly basis to facilitate the recording and resolution of communal repairs, fire safety checks and other estate management issues that may be identified during the block inspection.
- 2.2 Block inspections in high-rise blocks are completed on a weekly basis to facilitate the recording and resolution of communal repairs, fire safety checks and other estate management issues that may be identified during the block inspection.
- 2.3 Block inspections in high-rise blocks which have transitioned from a “stay put” fire policy to a “simultaneous evacuation” fire policy, are completed on a daily basis.
- 2.4 They also create an opportunity for identifying Council assets that would benefit from refurbishment, as a means of maintaining Council stock for the long term i.e. roof or guttering replacement, communal decoration etc.
- 2.5 The purpose of this document is to clearly define the council’s policy on block inspections to ensure the successful management and maintenance of Housing Services assets.

3. Definitions

Block Inspection	Referring to the inspection of the interior and exterior communal parts of blocks of flats or a mixture of flats and houses built on land managed by Housing Services. These homes or buildings often share facilities, grounds, and services; all of which should be considered as part of the inspection.
Low-rise block	A block comprising of two floors or less, including the ground floor
Medium-rise block	A block comprising of 3-5 floors, including the ground floor
High-rise block	A block comprising of 6 or more floors, including the ground floor
Quarters 1-4	1. January to March

- | | |
|--|--|
| | 2. April to June
3. July to September
4. October to December |
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4. Council assets that will be inspected

- 4.1 All blocks comprising of flatted accommodation require inspection on a quarterly basis. This includes low, medium, and high-rise blocks.
- 4.2 All Sheltered Housing schemes located in buildings managed by Housing Services require inspection on a quarterly basis. This should include inspection of internal communal areas such as communal halls.

5. Council assets that will not be inspected

- 5.1 Streets of houses facing adopted footpaths or highways are not estates and do not require inspection.
- 5.2 Areas of houses served by extensive footpaths and walkways located on Housing Services managed housing land, (i.e. houses with parcels of green space in front) do not require inspection.

6. What will be checked as part of the block inspection

- 6.1 As part of the inspection of the block the following will be checked:
- Any outstanding repair or estate management issues noted in a prior inspection.
 - The perimeter of the block including walls, ground, pathways, vegetation, bin areas, play areas, communal gardens, remote gardens, guttering, overflow pipes, communal windows and doors.
 - Door entry system and Fob entry system where applicable.
 - Trade button if visit is before 11am.
 - Notice board to ensure all necessary information is displayed including the fire escape plan.
 - Asbestos dot system sign.
 - Electrical intake cupboard.
 - Fire escape signs/No smoking signs on each floor within the block.
 - Fire safety inspection i.e. visual check of communal fire doors for any damages, check the Premise Information Box (PIB), and ensure there are no items in communal areas.
 - Internal communal areas.
 - Bike sheds, storerooms, communal halls and bin chute rooms where applicable.
 - Lifts.
 - Dry risers and caretakers water supply if applicable to ensure they are locked.

- CCTV cameras if applicable.
- 6.2 Any repair issues identified during the block inspection will be reported to the Council's Repairs service.
- 6.3 Any items being stored in the communal areas of the block, including the electrical intake cupboard and any other accessible areas/rooms, will be removed as per the Housing Services Removal of Items on Landings/Security Gate Policy.

7. Equality Impact

- 7.1 Applying this policy consistently and sensitively will ensure that all tenants and their household members in Council owned homes who have protected characteristics and/or are deemed vulnerable for other reasons receive services that are based on a recognition of their vulnerability. The Council will make all appropriate adjustments to the services they receive in order to mitigate any potential negative impacts on them and to ensure they receive fair and equal treatment from the Council as their landlord.