

Estate Walkabout Procedure 2023

Introduction

- 1.1 This procedure outlines the responsibility of the Tenancy and Caretaking Service carrying out monthly estate walkabouts and its objective is to define what is expected from the Tenancy officers.
- 1.2 Estate walkabouts are an essential part of the work of the Tenancy officer. Residents and Tenancy and Caretaking Service are keen to have communal estate management issues progressed as quickly as possible. This will happen only if progress is monitored and interlocked with appropriate actions to prevent the risk issues being carried forward to successive estate walkabouts.

Estate Walkabouts allow local residents the opportunity to walk alongside key staff, the Tenancy officer, Repairs officer and Ward Coucillors. This is an important aspect of our commitment to involve residents, work in partnership, to listen to their opinions and ideas for the benefit of improving our estates.

- 1.3 An estate walkabout is an inspection of the exterior and communal grounds of an estate managed by Tenancy and Caretaking Service.
 - Streets of houses facing adopted footpaths or highways are not estates and do not need to be inspected.
 - Areas of houses served by extensive footpaths and walkways located on Tenancy and Caretaking Service managed housing land, such as those in Fieldway do need to be inspected.

2 Estate walkabout planning and preparation

- 2.1 The Operational Manager/Development Officer is responsible for programming a cycle of three estate walkabouts per year. Resident representatives can be selected from the Housing Involvement Database or formally constituted groups. The list of invitees should be compiled in consultation with the resident involvement and scrutiny team and filed centrally by each tenancy manager.

Action: Operational Manager

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- 2.2 Estate walkabouts should normally last about one hour up to a maximum of three hours and inspection areas need to be apportioned with that time allocation in mind.

Action: Operational Manager

- 2.3 Wherever possible, walkabouts are scheduled for the morning and should start by 10:00 a.m. and afternoon walkabouts at 2:00 p.m. to avoid clashes with duty rotas and the lunch-period.

Action: Operational Manager

- 2.4 Monday and Friday inspections should be avoided although the wishes of resident representatives should also be considered.

Action: Operational Manager

- 2.5 The Operational Manager should circulate the schedule of estate Walkabouts to all ward councillors in the area teams and members of the Tenant and Leaseholders Panel.

Action: Operational Manager

- 2.6 Tenancy Officers should advertise their schedules of the estate walkabout on noticeboards of their estates or blocks. They should circulate the schedules for the forthcoming year to resident representatives and other regular invitees on the list at least **10 days** before each walkabout, the tenancy officer, should invite ward councillors by email and resident representatives using the format in **appendix 1** and send email reminders to other officers due to attend, confirming the meeting point.

Action: Tenancy Officer

- 2.7 The scheduled dates for estate walkabouts are not to be varied without express written permission of the Operational Manager. Managers should avoid cancellation or postponement of estate walkabout.

Action: Team

- 2.8 The planned schedule of walkabouts should be stored centrally on SharePoint and accessible in read-only format to resident representatives and the resident involvement and scrutiny team.

Action: Operational Manager, maintained by Tenancy Officers

3 Conducting the estate walkabout

The tenancy officer will lead the walkabout party and be responsible for ensuring that all issues identified at the inspection are progressed.

- 3.1 The Tenancy officer will complete a walkabout checklist **appendix 2** identifying any issues to be addressed. Following the walkabout the tenancy officer will update all attendees of action taken to resolve any issue raised.

Action: Tenancy officer

- 3.2 The tenancy officer will complete an estate walkabout checklist **appendix 2** on site. The checklists are a summary not a detailed record of every issue identified and only relate to tenancy issues. At the end of the walkabout the tenancy officer will sign and date the checklist and the action plan **appendix 3** to formally record what issues were found.

Action: Tenancy officer

- 3.3 In the event that officers or residents cannot agree about an issue, this should be noted for further input from the tenancy manager.

- 3.4 Tenancy issues such as items stored in communal areas or untidy gardens should be followed up discretely after the inspection by the tenancy officer to avoid time consuming door knocking and confrontations during the walkabout. The tenancy officer should have with them the walkabout items in communal areas letter this letter may be delivered after the walkabout to alleviate the number of cases that need to be followed up once back into the office.

- 3.5 Operational managers will quality control the estate walkabout process by arranging spot checks on estates.

Action: Operational manager

4 Action after the estate walkabout

- 4.1 The Tenancy Officer should display the completed walkabout checklist **appendix 2** on the noticeboards within **15 working days** of the walkabout.

Action Tenancy Officer

- 4.2 The Tenancy officer should produce a tenancy action plan detailing items identified at the estate walkabout **appendix 3**. The tenancy officer must send the tenancy action plan to the resident representatives, ward councilors within **15 working days** of the estate walkabout. The Operational Manager should review the tenancy action plan prior to being sent.

The action plans are also to be saved in the electronic file accessible to the resident involvement and scrutiny team.

Action: Tenancy Officer and Operatonal Manager

- 4.3 The Tenancy officer to continually update the details in the estate walkabout spreadsheet after each process is complete.
Action: Tenancy officer
- 4.4 The tenancy officer will file all documents connected with the estate walkabout in the central electronic files, including those open to resident scrutiny i.e. invite letters and emails, checklist, tenancy action plans. Within 5 working days of Estate walkabout
Action: Tenancy officer
- 4.5 Tenancy officer to diarise a follow-up walkabout to monitor progress on any tenancy related issues identified if required. This should take place no later than **7 weeks** after the estate walkabout. The Tenancy officer to update the tenancy action plan with the outcome of any repairs and tenancy issues from the initial walkabout.
Action: Tenancy officer

5 Progress Review Meeting

- 5.1 The Tenancy Officer to schedule and lead an hour long Progress Review Meeting with Responsive Repairs Representative and Resident Representative, **8 weeks** after the Estate Walkabout to monitor progress and agree any remedial action to ensure all issue have been resolved or progressed satisfactorily before the next Estate Walkabout.
- 5.2 Notes of the meeting are to be kept by the Tenancy officer using the form in **Appendix 4**, copied to the Operational manager and placed on the central files with the other estate inspection records.
Action: Tenancy officer
- 5.3 Operational Managers should confirm with the Tenancy Officer that the Progress Review Meeting occurred **8 weeks** after the initial walkabout
Action: Operational Manager
- 5.4 The tenancy officer to revise and update the final tenancy action plan and be RAG rated. The Tenancy officer should attach a copy of the completed items on the action plan in the next invite of the walkababouts. Any uncomplete items must be carried forward in the next Estate Walkabout and recorded in the tenancy action plan.
Action: Tenancy Officer

ESTATE WALKABOUT CHECKLIST
Use one sheet for each block or street

Action required:

1. Inspect the block/area ensuring that all relevant points on the table below are checked.
2. Tenancy officer to record separate notes of non-repair action required. Repairs officer to record all repairs required.
3. Tenancy officer to sign and date checklist on site at the end of the inspection as a true record.

Estate / Area Inspected	Block or door Nos.	Block or Street Name	Ward

THOSE PRESENT	TITLE
	Operational Manager
	Tenancy Officer
	Caretaker
	Ward Councillors
	Repairs Officer:
	Resident Rep:

Estate care & communal repairs: (tick to confirm these were checked on the inspection)	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR
Grounds maintenance: (e.g. grass cutting/edging, flower bed, trees & weed control)			
Paving or potholes and signage			
Communal Repairs:			

OVERALL STANDARDS (please tick)	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR
INTERNAL CLEANING:			

LOCATION	ESTATE	BLOCK
ITEMS	INSPECTED YES/NO/N/A	COMMENTS
ROOF ACCESS SECURE		
TANK ROOM SECURE		
ELEC INTAKES SECURE		
FIRE DOORS/EXITS		

COMMUNAL LIGHTING		
COMMUNAL GLAZING & WINDOW FRAMES		
DRY RISERS		
LIGHTNING CONDUCTORS		
DUST CHUTE HOPPERS		
REFUSE CHUTES CLEAR		
REFUSE CHAMBER AREA		
OVERFLOWS & LEAKS		
BULK REFUSE REMOVAL		
LIFTS WORKING		
DRAINS AND GULLEYS CLEAR		
PAVING/WALKWAYS/FLOORING (Check for tripping or slipping hazards)		
ESTATE ROADS		
GRASS CUTTING, TREES, FLOWER BEDS, HEDGES		
COMMUNAL DOOR ENTRY SYSTEM		
ABANDONED VEHICLES		
PARKING/GARAGE AREAS		
SHEDS		
GRAFFITI		
ESTATE SIGNS		
PLAY AREAS		
INTERNAL COMMUNAL REPAIRS		
EXTERNAL COMMUNAL REPAIRS (such as walls and fences).		

I certify this is a true record of the inspection completed today

Tenancy Officer's signature:		Date:	
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CROYDON
www.croydon.gov.uk

Housing Directorate
Resident Engagement & Allocations
Zone 3A Bernard Weatherill House
8 Mint Walk, Croydon
CR0 1EA
020 8726 6100 ext. Tenancy Officer's
xxxxxx@croydon.gov.uk

Name
Address

Your Ref:xxxx
Our Ref: xxxx

23 December 2022

Dear resident

Resident invitation - Estate Inspection

I am writing to you to tell you about a planned inspection that will be carried out on your estate on date month year.

The inspection gives us an opportunity to monitor the standard of cleaning in all communal internal and external areas of the estates and identify areas for improvement. I will be joined by a repairs inspector who will raise any repairs needed and work with me to ensure that health and safety issues are addressed.

Whenever possible, I will also be joined on the walkabout by an operational manager or head of service, as well as some of your fellow residents. This invitation will be extended to your ward councillors and other council services, where applicable.

If you are available and would like to join the inspection, we will be meeting at xxxxxx and we will begin our walkabout at am/pm

The duration of the visit will depend on what we find on our walkabout. To enable me to prioritise the inspection route, please let me know in advance if there is a specific issue that you would like us to focus on. This will help me to ensure all concerns raised by residents are addressed during the visit

As the lead officer for the visit, I am responsible for ensuring all concerns observed during the walkabout are recorded and resolved. Items stored inappropriately in communal areas or unkempt private gardens will be recorded and addressed with the households concerned.

Within two weeks following the inspection, I will display the outcome of the walkabout on noticeboards on the estate or block. I will also distribute an action plan to those who attended, covering all areas of concern recorded during the visit, along with a target deadline for each issue to be resolved. This document will also include a breakdown of repairs requested, details of estate care and grounds maintenance tasks to be completed, and a summary of any tenancy management actions to be followed up as well as any improvements agreed.

Within eight weeks of the original visit, I will distribute a final briefing on the outcome of all areas of concern set out in the action plan. I will also invite feedback from attendees, find out what they thought about how the visit was conducted and whether we could improve the estate inspection process in any way.

I hope you will be able to join me for the visit, and I look forward to seeing you then.

Thank you,

Yours sincerely,

Tenancy officer's name
Tenancy officer

ESTATE WALKABOUT: RECORD OF PROGRESS REVIEW MEETING (PRM)

APPENDIX 4

Estate name					
Date of inspection:		Date of progress review meeting (2 months after inspection)		Next inspection date	

Attendance at PRM:

Tenancy officer: (name)

Responsive repairs representative: (name)

Resident representative (name)

PRM meetings are chaired and record kept by tenancy officer.

Note: record only items from the inspection still unresolved or outstanding at the time of the progress review meeting.

Repairs issues outstanding or unresolved				
Location	Details/description	Reason for non-completion	Remedial action needed before next inspection	Action by
Estate care issues outstanding or unresolved				

Location	Details/description	Reason for non-completion	Remedial action needed before next inspection	Action by

Tenancy issues outstanding or unresolved

Location	Details/description	Reason for non-completion	Remedial action needed before next inspection	Action by

Tenancy officer Signature:		Date distributed (within 5 days of meeting)	
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