



CARETAKING

Estate Services Peer Review Photobook
As used by Croydon Council

MARCH
2024



FOREWORD

When I became Mayor, I prioritised listening to our tenants and leaseholders and working with them to scrutinise, monitor and improve our housing services to make them more responsive and better for everyone who uses them.

To help with this, we have worked with our residents and Housemark, leaders in inspection management, to develop a set of standards for the maintenance, cleaning and caretaking of internal and external communal areas of our estates.

This guide will be used by housing staff to monitor and improve the caretaking service on our estates, and by residents who complete inspections of their local area as part of our neighbourhood voice scheme. And soon an app will be available, allowing any residents to score the service and provide feedback.

A huge thank you goes to all our residents who have helped develop the standards and this photobook. Your support and commitment will drive improvements in all our estates, helping to make them places residents feel proud to live in.

Jason Perry

Executive Mayor of Croydon

Working with our residents and Housemark to develop this set of standards is an important milestone in our drive to transform housing services in Croydon and make our homes places residents are proud to call home.

Our neighbourhood voice scheme is a great way for residents to tell us how we are doing when it comes to looking after and maintaining where they live.

Feedback helps us to improve our estates and make them great places to live, and soon members of our neighbourhood voice scheme will be able to score cleaning and maintenance services through an app, making the process easier and faster!

If you live in a council owned block or estate and are interested in getting involved in neighbourhood voice, I encourage you to contact us and join our team of residents driving up standards in Croydon housing.

Email: residentinvolvement@croydon.gov.uk

Call: 020 8726 6000 ext. 44524

Thank you to everyone involved in helping us develop these standards and I look forward to meeting more of you as we work together to improve Croydon housing.

Lynne Hale

Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes



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Internal Elements

1. Security of tanks and meter rooms

We are only able to Grade this task as A or D (pass or fail – Score 1 or 4), as we are checking to ensure the tank and meter rooms are kept locked. In circumstance where we identify an unlocked room, this would be a service failure.

Grade A

A typical example of such A Grade conditions below: This tank room is clearly locked.



Grade D

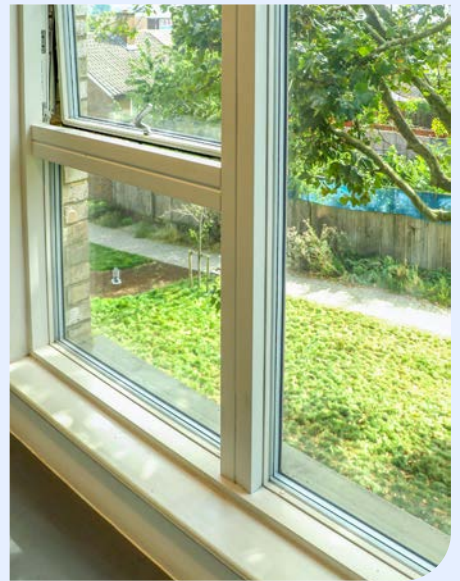
A typical example of such D Grade conditions below: This tank room is clearly not secured



2. Cleanliness of windows

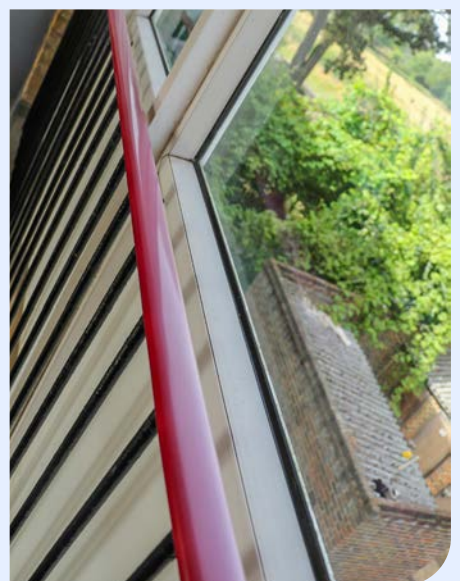
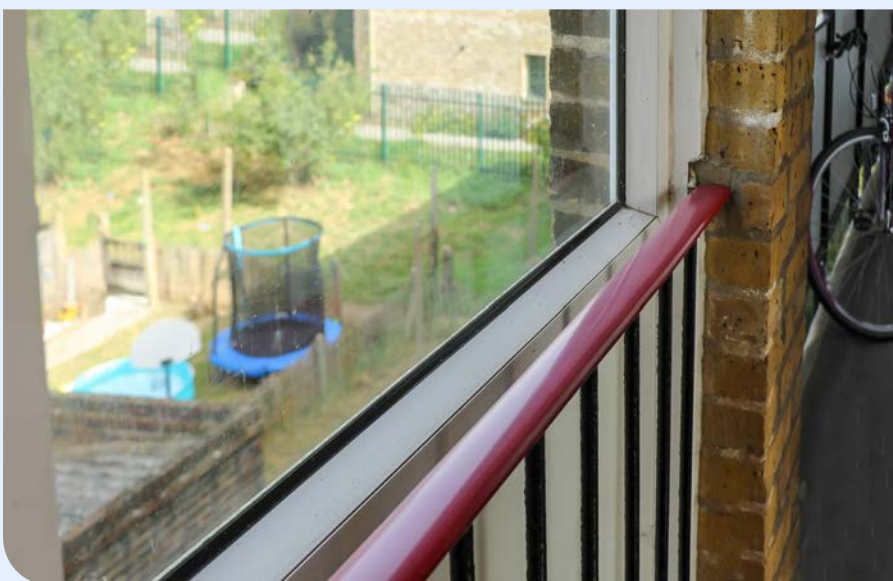
Grade A

The window has no dirt, dust, cobwebs and the general level of cleanliness is excellent. The condition of the window, its frame or sill, should not affect the judgement of its cleanliness.



Grade B

The window is as we expect it to be, generally in as acceptable a condition as the cleaning cycle would permit.



Grade C

The condition of the window is poor (e.g. water streak on inside if the window). There may also be evidence of dust and dirt on the inside of the window or the sill or the surroundings of the window. Generally it would appear that the window has not been cleaned within the last 2 months.



Grade D

The condition of the window is very poor (e.g. frame and glass are covered in excessive cobwebs, dust & dirt). Generally, the window score a "D" if there is no evidence the window has been recently cleaned and is in a condition to which would be deemed a service failure.



3. Cleanliness of windows and window boards

Grade A

This is where we expect to find the condition of the **ledges** in excellent condition (totally dust and dirt free).

The 'finger test' (rubbing one's finger over the window sill) will often determine the standard of cleanliness of window sills and frames.



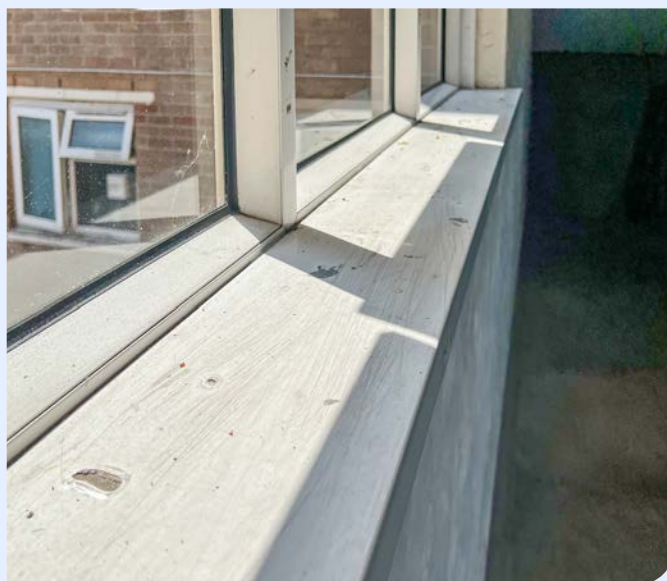
Grade B

The **ledges** are in good condition as we expect it to be, typically no more dirt or dust than you would expect as the cleaning cycle permits.



Grade C

The **ledges** and window sills are in poor condition, with high build-up of dust and dirt e.g. evidence of old cobwebs, insects, dirt and litter.



Grade D

The condition of the ledges is totally unacceptable, with excessive amount of dirt, dust and grime. It would also score a "D" if it was in a hazardous condition (e.g. broken glasses or mirror or sharp objects).



4. Working Light Conditions (Internal)

Grade A

This is where the cleanliness and condition of the light bulbs, shades and covers are in excellent condition and have obviously been recently cleaned, probably as part of cyclical maintenance.



Grade B

This is where the light bulbs, shades and covers are in a reasonably good condition (or as good as we expect it to be given the cleaning and maintenance cycles), the light appears to be working (see the note at the end of this section) and the general area around the light is clean. It will have typically no more dirt and dust than you would expect and we may find a few cobwebs. There should be evidence that it has at least been attended to recently.



Grade C

The light shade is in poor condition and there is evidence of old cobwebs and very dirty casings and surface.



Grade D

The casing and shade is in very poor condition throughout the building/block and the shade have apparently not been cleaned for some time. There may be broken covers, evidence of dead flies inside and more cobwebs than would be deemed acceptable.

Note: This is a very difficult element to score as often when inspections take place the lights are not on (during daylight hours).

For the purposes of this exercise whilst we are judging the cleanliness of estate services a communal light that even if is clean but it is OBVIOUSLY NOT WORKING it must merit a FAIL and therefore a score of C or D in the element.



5. Cleanliness of Light Fittings (Internal)

Grade A



Grade B



Grade C



Grade D



6. Sweeping & washing of stairs, landing, entrance halls & lobbies

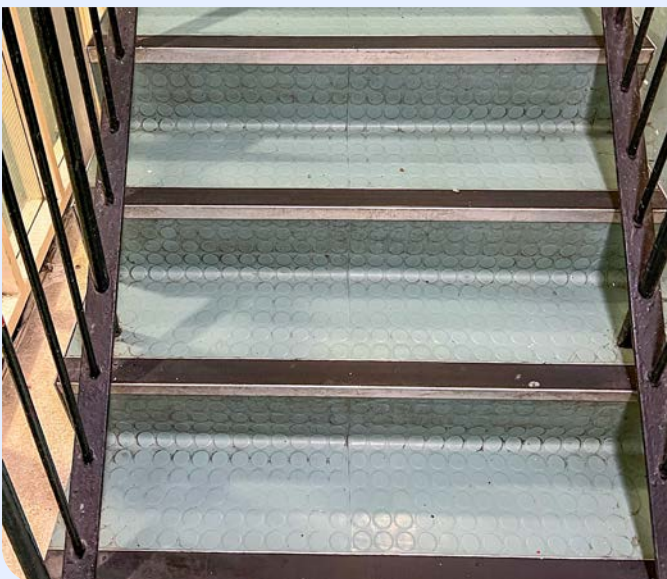
Grade A

There should be no dirt, dust, detritus or litter on the stairs and landings. Generally the handrails, bannisters etc should be in good condition and there should be evidence that they are swept and mopped regularly and are clean to the touch.



Grade B

The stairs and landings etc may not be in a condition that warrants an "A" score, but there is no dirt, dust, detritus or litter evident. The stairs should be generally clean to the touch and as clean as the cleaning cycle permits.



Grade C

There may be evidence of dust or detritus along the edges of the stairs and in the corners landings etc. There will be little evidence of recent sweeping or mopping.



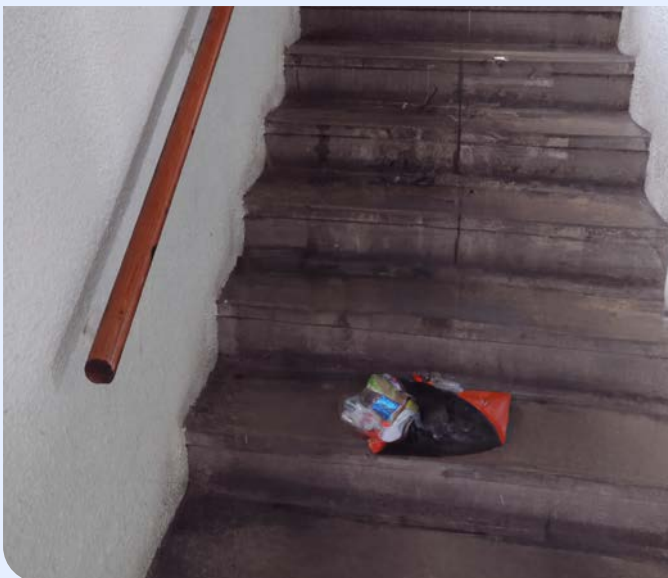
Grade D

The staircases and landings are generally very dirty in the corners and on steps. There will be evidence of alcohol bottles, excessive litter, advertising flyers and there may be evidence of drug use or other ASB activities.

Scoring note: It is when judging the cleanliness of the staircases, entrance halls and lobbies that we should be most aware of the age of the building and its internal furnishings etc.

A staircase that has been in constant use for 60/70 years may look old and worn out but is actually perfectly clean. There may be evidence of "staining" or water "shadows" but which no amount of scrubbing or mopping will remove and for which a lower score should not be awarded.

Again the "finger test" is perhaps the best way of deciding if a staircase, step facing or tread, banister or floor is dirty and in need of attention.



7. Washing down of tiles and painted walls

Grade A



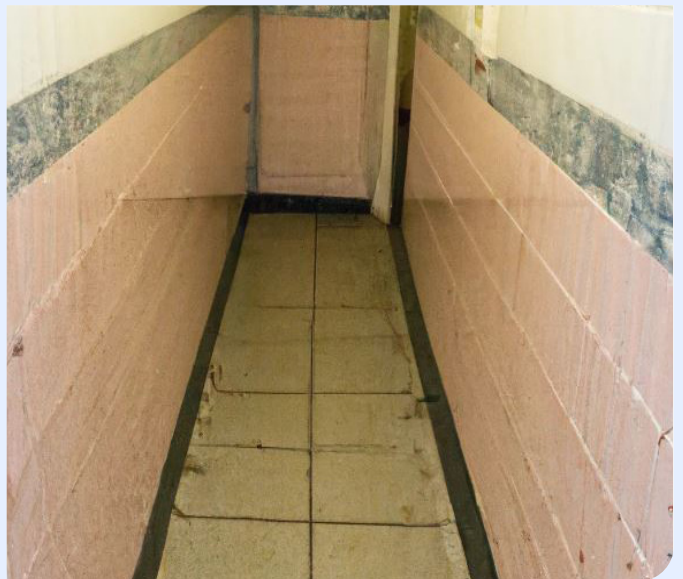
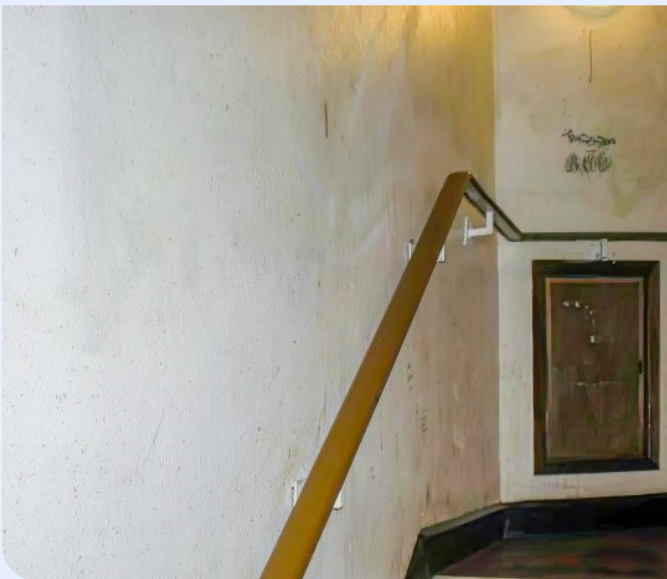
Grade B



Grade C



Grade D



8. Clean handrails, skirting boards, ledges and banister rails

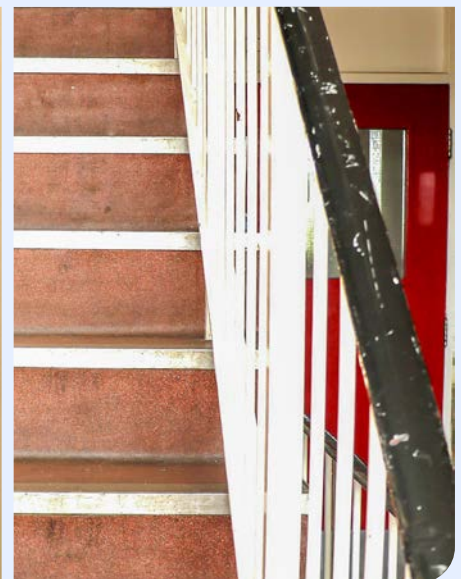
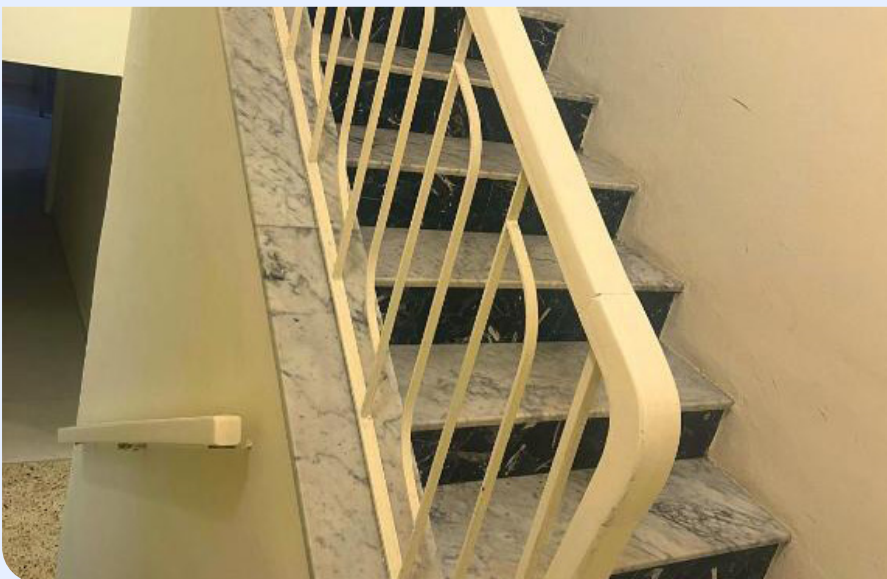
Grade A

All surface areas of handrails, bannisters, skirting boards and ledges should be very clean and dust free. There should be evidence that they have been recently wiped and dusted and that this is done regularly.



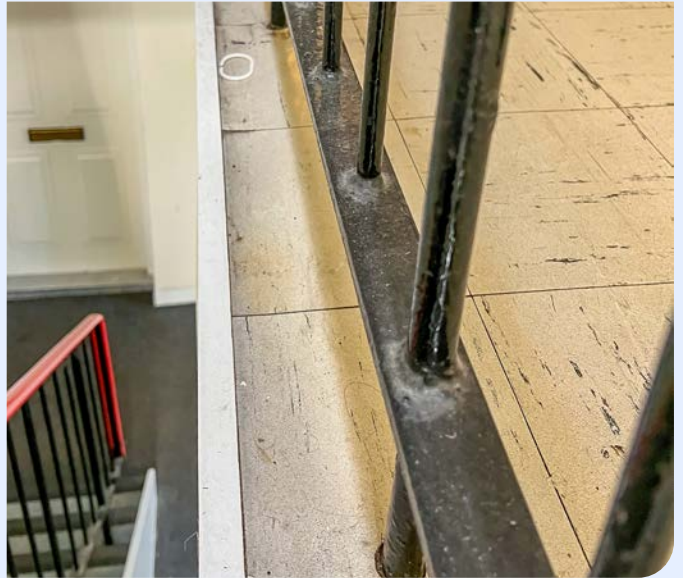
Grade B

The handrails, bannisters, skirting boards and ledges are a little dusty maybe with small bits of dirt present. They are as clean as the cleaning cycle will permit.



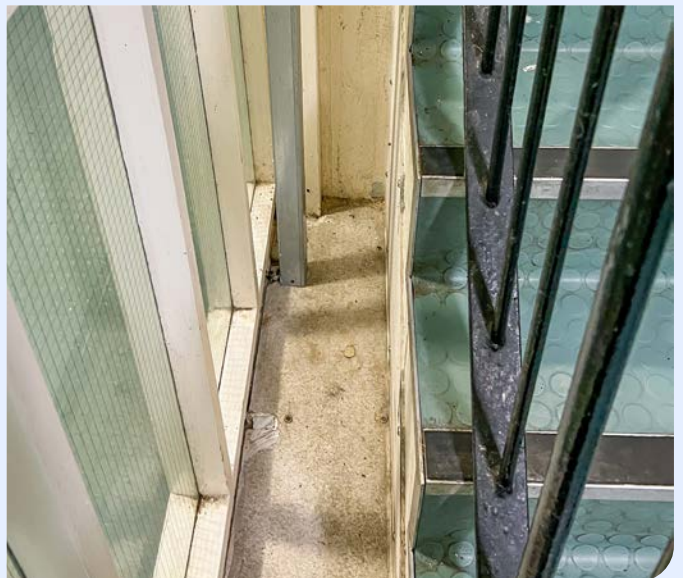
Grade C

The handrails, bannisters, skirting boards and ledges have dirty lower sections and there will be too much evidence of old cobwebs, dust and litter.



Grade D

The hand rail and bannisters are too dirty to be used. There is no evidence that any surfaces of the handrails, bannisters, skirting boards and ledges have been wiped, dusted or cleaned. Generally the condition of the handrails, bannisters, skirting boards and ledges are such that would be deemed a service failure and would attract a "D2" score.



9. Condition of lift floors

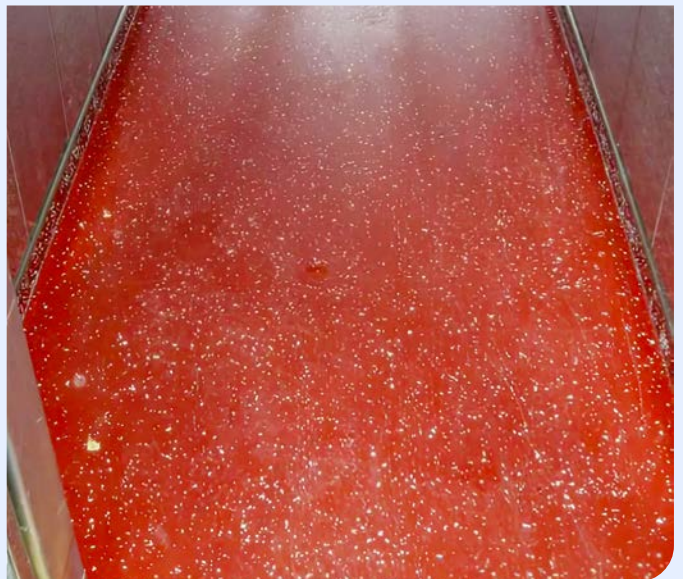
Grade A

The floors of the lifts/s have no dirt in the corners and there is no dirt stuck on the floor. The floor appears to have been cleaned, swept and mopped on a daily basis. There should be a 'fresh' smell to the lift which may evidence that some disinfectant has been used.



Grade B

There may be some small bits of dirt present. The corners are however generally clear and the floor appears to have been cleaned as least every other day.



Grade C

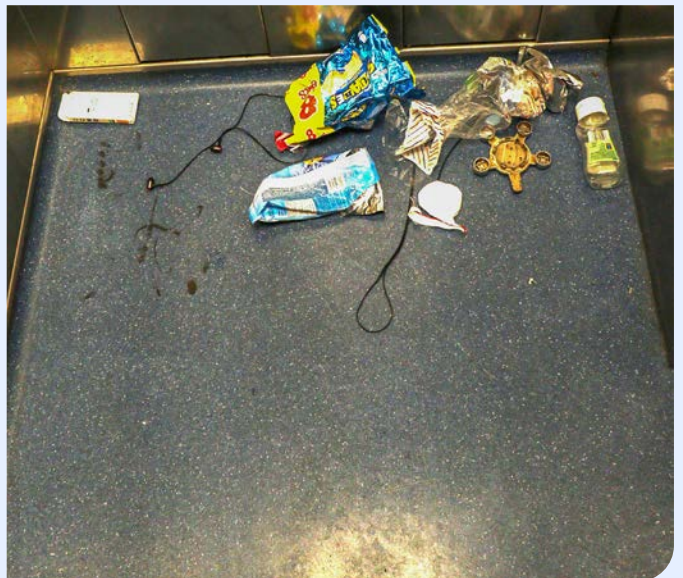
The lower walls, floors and corners are generally dirtier than you would expect.



Grade D

There is little evidence that the lift floors and sides are cleaned on a regular basis, if at all. There is evidence of dirt, dust and pieces of broken glass which appear to have been mopped or swept into the corner.

There may also be unpleasant smells and generally the lifts floors are in a condition that would be deemed a service failure and attract a "D" score.



10. Cleanliness of internal lift doors, external lift door panels and frames

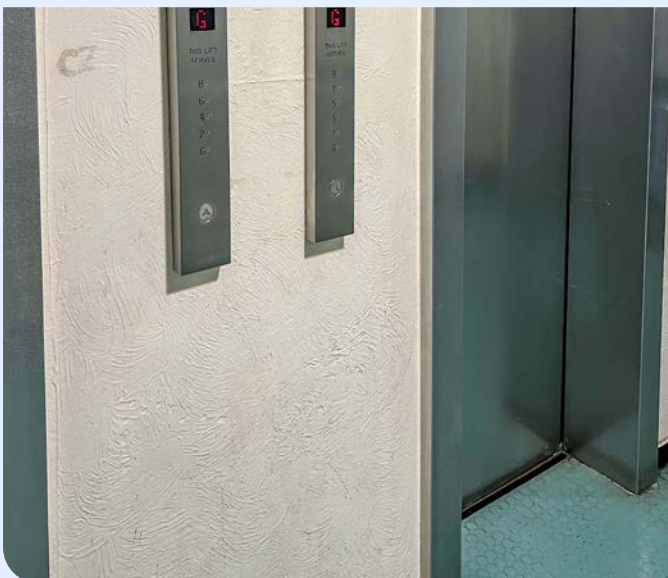
Grade A

The lift has a clean door, with no mud or dust marks in evidence. The lower area has no foot prints and the door is clean to the touch. There should be no evidence of dirt and detritus in the lift door gullies and the frame of the lift should be clean and dust free.



Grade B

The lift door, panels and sides are generally clean but have some marks that it is apparent have been there some time. Overall the door, panels and frame, while not at the highest standard, are acceptably clean.



Grade C

The door, panels and frame are not clean and have dirt which comes off on your hands. This may only be on one lift door, while the other doors are comparatively clean to the touch but overall they do not warrant an "A" or "B" score.



Grade D

This Grade will be scored when a condition outlined in "C" above occurs when doors, panels and frame on several floors are as in the example above.



11. Lifts control panels all working and lit (where applicable)

Grade A



Grade B



Grade C



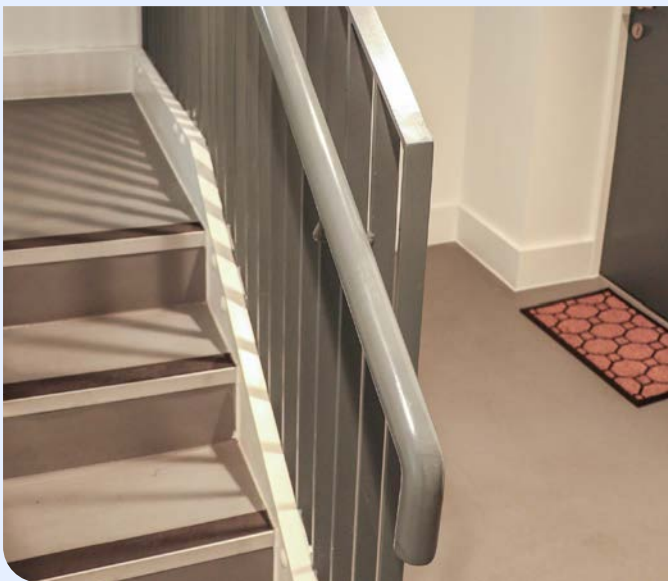
Grade D



12. Cleanliness of walls in communal areas (staircases, lobbies and entrance halls)

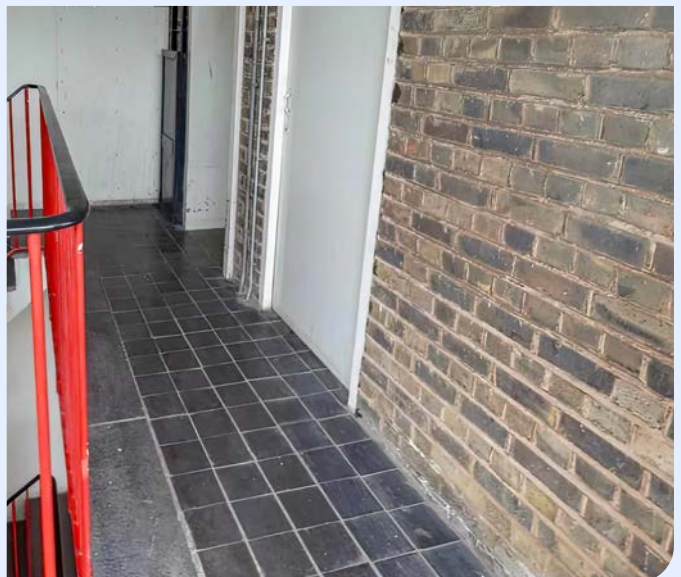
Grade A

The walls in all communal areas are very clean and have no scuffmarks or other dirt on them.



Grade B

The walls in the block's communal areas are generally clean but have a few isolated dirty marks or scuff marks on them.



Grade C

The walls in communal areas have more than the acceptable level of dirt and scuffmarks on them. Examples of such marks could be pram tyre marks, dirty stains or evidence of food etc.



Grade D

The communal walls are generally very dirty throughout the whole building and there is no evidence that any marks or dirt have been attended to recently. The cleanliness of the walls is generally of a standard that would constitute a service failure and would warrant a "D" score.



13. Cleanliness and tidiness of bin chambers

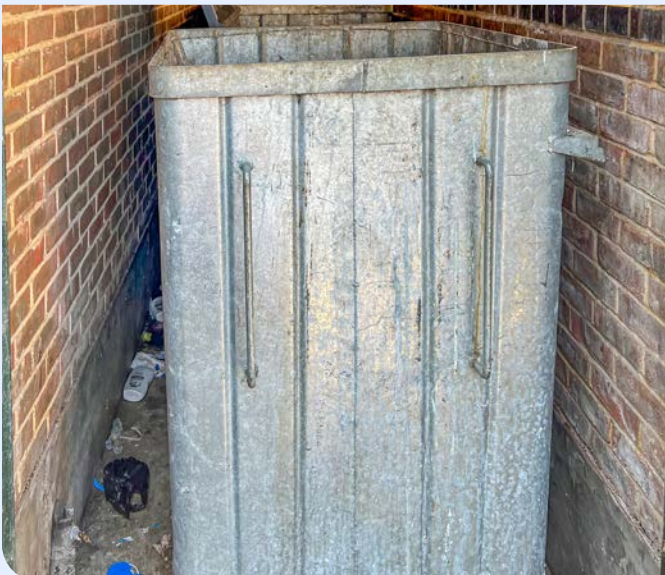
Grade A

This standard would require a very good clean bin chamber. There should be no rubbish, litter, leaves and it should have been swept out that day. There should be an evident smell which indicates the use of disinfectant and vermin prevention.



Grade B

There may be a few leaves and small amounts of litter (maybe caused by overspill from the paladin bins). There should be no unpleasant odours which would indicate that the bin store have not been swept or washed out for a period of time. Again there should be an indication that it is swept out daily.



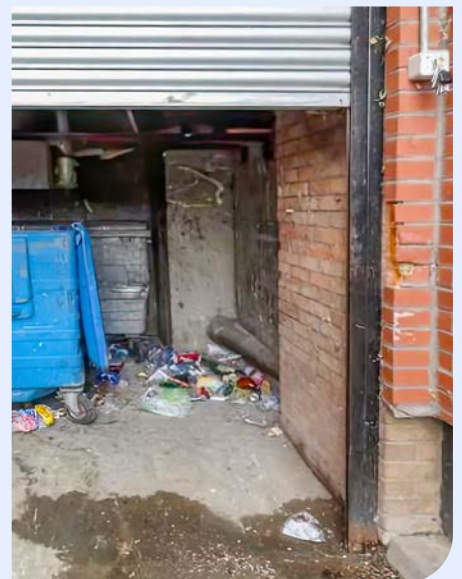
Grade C

There is some evidence of general litter, leaves, food waste or other rubbish on the bin chamber floor, under the bin and around the chamber. There should be no evidence that the bin store/chamber has been swept on a daily basis and there may be unpleasant odors apparent.



Grade D

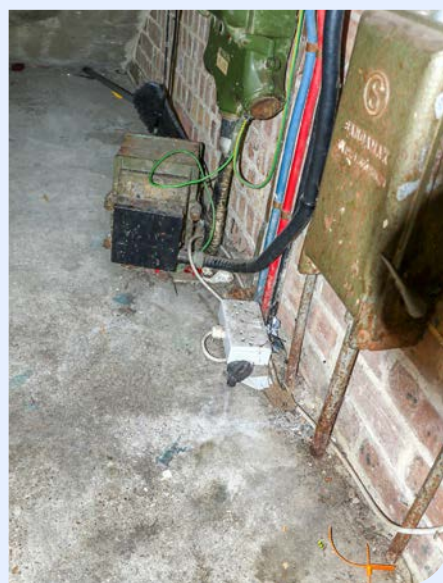
There is a more than acceptable amount of general litter, leaves, food waste or other rubbish on the bin chamber floor, under the bin and around the chamber. There may also be burst black plastic rubbish sack on bin chamber floor and fly pupae on the chamber floor, dirty walls and other evidence of vermin. There will also be unpleasant odors that can also be detected when opening chute hopper heads on floors within the block.



14. Tidiness of intake cupboards and rooms

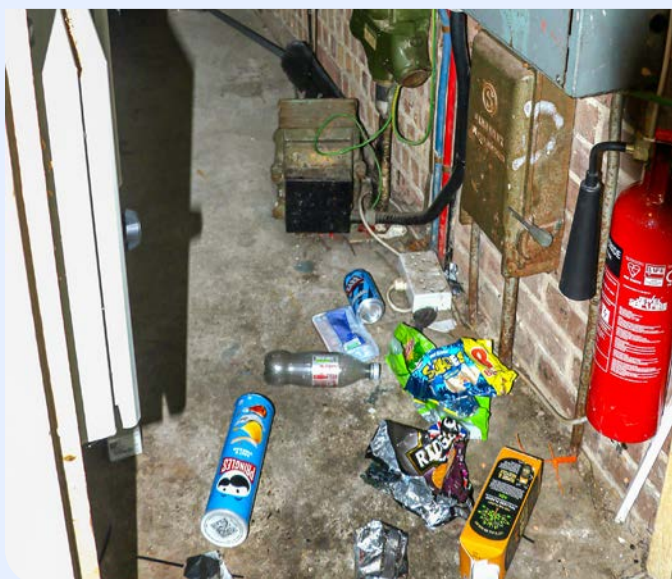
Grade A

All intake cupboards are clean and tidy, allowing easy access to switch cabinets and panels. There is no evidence of blockages or obstructions to the doors.



Grade B

The intakes rooms are clean but with some objects on the floor, which are not obstructing access to meters etc.



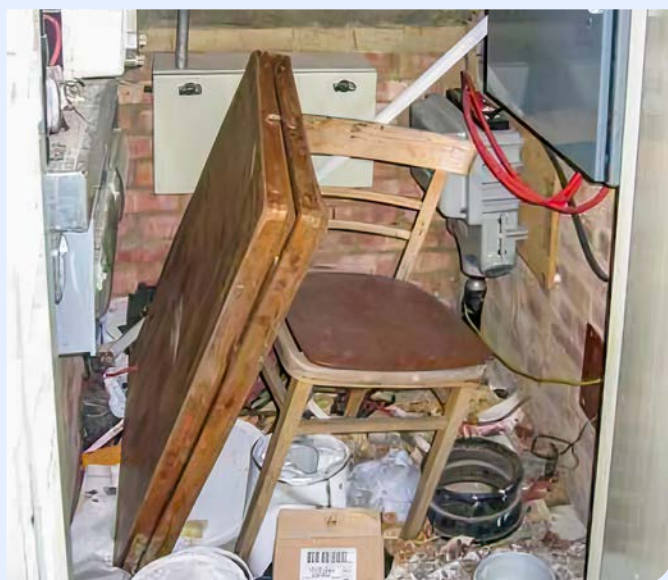
Grade C

The intake cupboards are dusty and there is evidence of litter on the floor, providing good bedding material for rats. There may also be items stored in the room which prevent access to meters and other equipment.



Grade D

The intake cupboards are full of toys and building materials or full of rubbish and litter obstructing switches or meters etc. The condition would constitute a fire hazard and encourage vermin.



15. Secure intake and tank rooms

Grade A



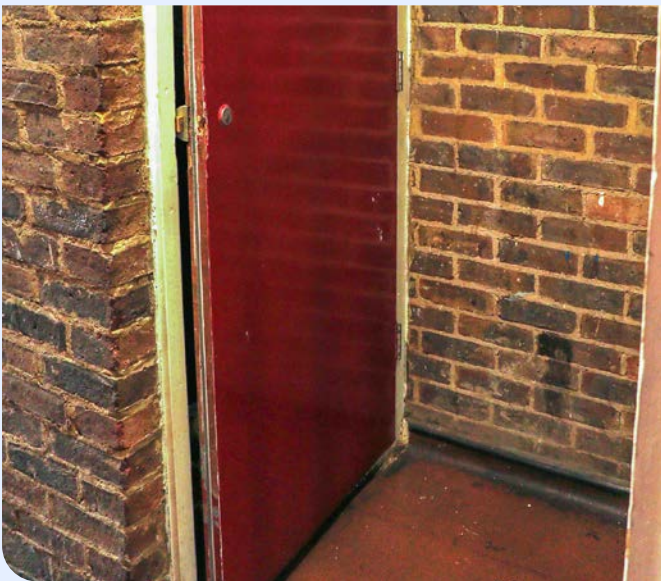
Grade B



Grade C



Grade D



16. Estate Signage – Block Notice Boards

Grade A

The notice board will be found normally, but not exclusively, inside block entrances. It should be in good condition and contain relevant and up to date information.



In order to attract an A Grade it should include at least 4 of the following items:

- Details of housing office staff with photos and contact details (phones & e-mail).
- Estate Services schedules, giving dates when cleaning and/or grounds maintenance will be undertaken.
- Tenant or resident association details (officers and events etc).
- Repairs reporting details (phone numbers & e-mail address if appropriate).
- Out of hours contacts details (repairs, ASB, fly tipping etc).
- Action to be taken in the event of fire.

Grade B

The notice board will be found normally, but not exclusively, inside block entrance. It should be in good condition and contain relevant and up to date information.



In order to attract an B Grade it should include at least 3 of the following items:

- Details of housing office staff with photos and contact details (phones & e-mail)
- Estate services schedules giving dates when cleaning and/or grounds maintenance will be undertaken
- Tenant or resident association details (officers and events etc)
- Repairs reporting details (phone numbers & e-mail address if appropriate)
- Out of hours contacts details (repairs, ASB, fly tipping etc)
- Action to be taken in the event of fire

Grade C

The notice board will be found normally, but not exclusively, inside block entrance. It should be in good condition and contain relevant and up to date information.



In order to attract an C Grade it should include at least 2 of the following items:

- a. Details of housing office staff with photos and contact details (phones & e-mail)
- b. Estate services schedules giving dates when cleaning and/or grounds maintenance will be undertaken
- c. Tenant or resident association details (officers and events etc)
- a. Repairs reporting details (phone numbers & e-mail address if appropriate)
- b. Out of hours contacts details (repairs, ASB, fly tipping etc)
- c. Action to be taken in the event of fire

Grade D

If there is no evidence of block signage or if it is of a lower standard than Quality C then the organisation will be deemed to score a "D" standard in this category.





External Elements

1. Car Parks

Grade A

These car park areas have no litter or tree leaves, are well marked out and provide an acceptable and safe area for residents to park their cars.



Grade B

During certain times in the year an amount of leaves within these car park areas could be seen as acceptable if they appear not to have been there very long (i.e. a small build up in October could be acceptable but in May it wouldn't). There may be a small amount of litter but investigation into when the most recent clean took place, would determine if it is acceptable. The white parking lines should be evident even if they are in need of a little attention.



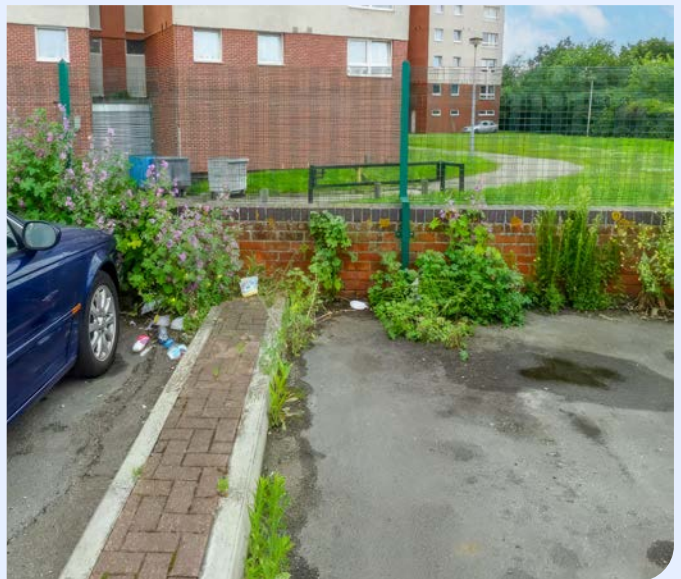
Grade C

These car park areas typically have a higher build-up of litter e.g. litter/tin cans, newspaper, old leaves etc than could be deemed acceptable whatever the cleaning cycle may be.



Grade D

The cleanliness of the car park area is totally unacceptable and would be deemed a failure of service delivery. There will be excessive amounts of weeds, litter, leaves or hazardous materials (e.g. broken glasses sharp objects).



2. Garages and Garage areas

Grade A

Garage areas should typically be clear of litter, weeds, debris as in Element 1. Garages should be useable, have good access, be free of graffiti, fly-tipping and vandalism and have lockable doors.



Grade B

Garage area is reasonably clean and well maintained but may be requiring a little work to bring back to top standard. It may contain small amounts of weed growth or inoffensive graffiti, but generally the garage structure and doors should still be in a good state of repair.



Grade C

Garage areas should be in an acceptable condition but could contain some small amounts of debris and refuse. There may be small amounts of reported but not removed fly-tipping, weed/moss growth, insignificant evidence of inoffensive graffiti and minor vandalism and some evidence of disrepair.



Grade D

The garage areas would have an excessive build-up of litter and debris; evidence of bulk refuse present that has not been removed, or made safe and/or reported. (Investigation should determine if bulk refuse has been reported). There will also be evidence of hazardous materials and the garages would perhaps require significant repairs in order to bring them back to an A or B standard. The garage area would also only score 1 if there is any evidence of offensive graffiti present, which had not been dealt with or at least reported within the organisation's target time, regardless of the general condition of the area and the garage doors.

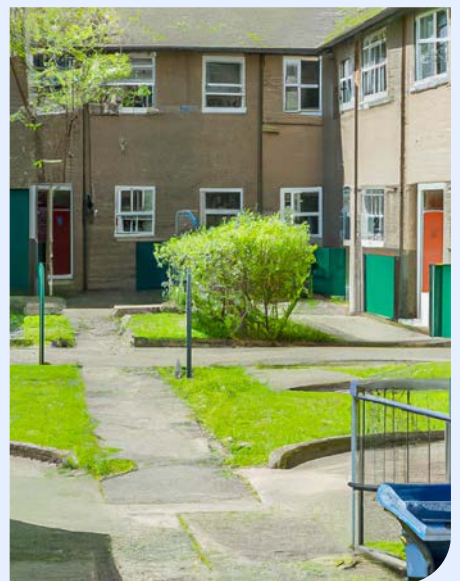


3. Courtyards

Grade A



Grade B



Grade C



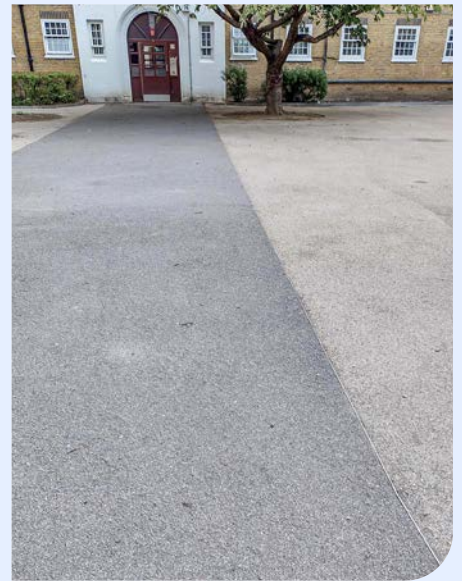
Grade D



4. Paths and roadways

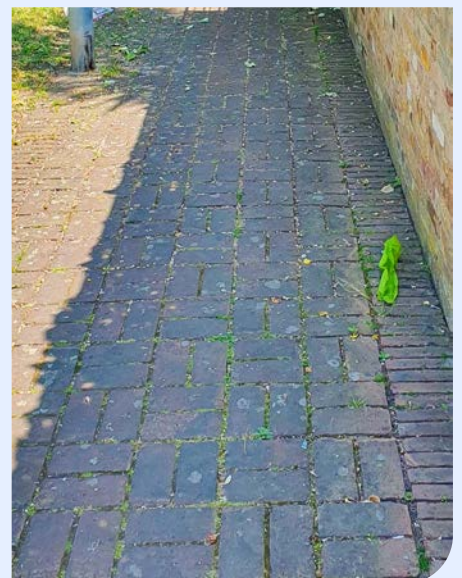
Grade A

The paths and roadways and communal areas, throughout the estate or around the blocks are very well kept and there is no evidence of leaves, litter, and sharp objects.



Grade B

These paths, grassed areas and roadways areas typically have no more litter and detritus than you would expect as the cleaning cycle wears on. Investigation as to the cleaning frequency and cycle will determine if the level of litter or detritus is acceptable



Grade C

These paths and roadways around the blocks/estates/areas typically have high build-up of litter and detritus (e.g. litter/tin cans, newspaper, old leaves etc.)



Grade D

The lowest score of a 'D' is given when the cleanliness of the paths, roadways, courtyards and communal areas around the block/estate/area is totally unacceptable and would constitute a service failure. On inspection you may find excessive amount of litter, old leaves or hazardous conditions are found (e.g. broken glasses or sharp objects).



5. Play and seating areas

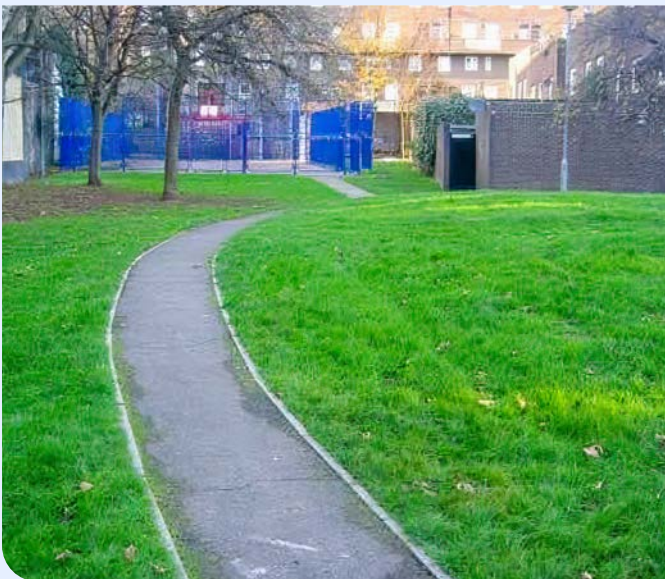
Grade A

These play and seating areas are typically very good, no leaves, no litter and no sharp objects. All play equipment shall be in working order with no broken seats, safety rails etc. There should also be some seating areas, with the seats in a good condition, within the play area



Grade B

These play and seating areas typically have no more litter than one would expect as the days wears on. Investigation as to the cleaning frequency and cycle will determine if the level of litter or detritus is acceptable



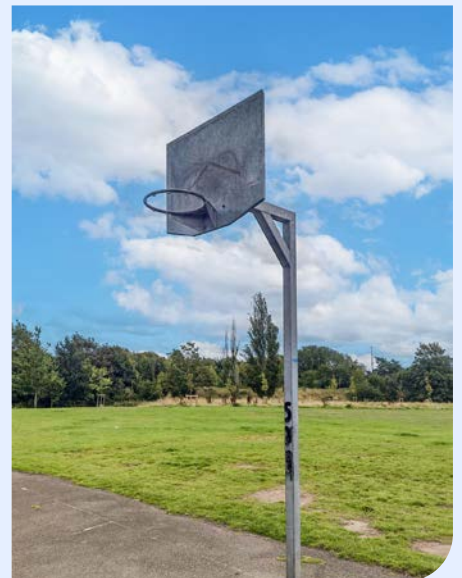
Grade C

These play and seating areas are typically with high and with an unacceptable build-up of litter e.g. litter/tin cans, newspaper, old leaves etc. There may also be slight damage to the play equipment and/or the seating within the play area.



Grade D

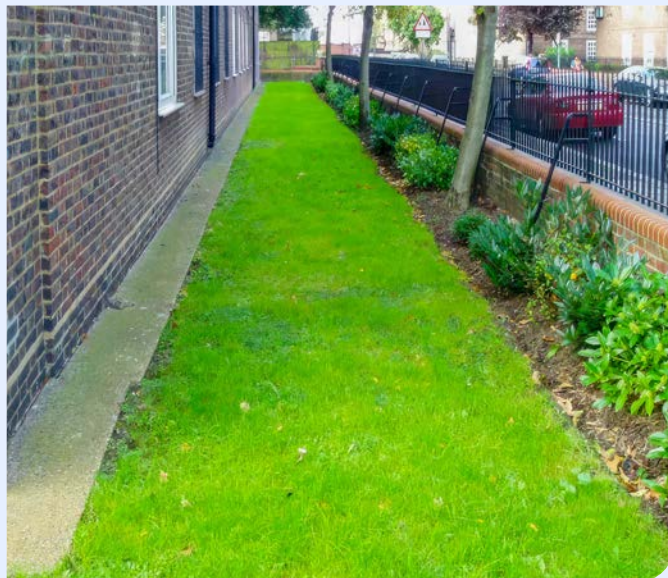
These play and seating areas are totally unacceptable, with excessive amount of litter or hazardous conditions are found (e.g. broken glasses or sharp objects). Any serious damage to play equipment should also result in an immediate service failure and the award of a 'D' score. The host organisation shall immediately be informed of any such damaged play equipment.



6. Litter Removal from Grassed Areas & Shrubs

Grade A

The grass area and shrub beds are typically in very good condition, there is no evidence of litter, no build-up of old leaves or grass cuttings and no sharp objects such as needles or broken glass.



Grade B

These grassed areas and shrub beds typically have no more evidence of litter, old leaves or grass cuttings than one would expect depending on the frequency of the litter clearance cycle. There should be no evidence of sharp objects such as needles or broken glass or no large build-up of leaves



Grade C

These grass areas and shrub beds will typically have a higher build-up of litter, leaves, grass cuttings e.g. litter, tin cans, newspaper, old leaves, etc than would be deemed acceptable. There should still be no evidence of sharp objects such as needles or broken glass.



Grade D

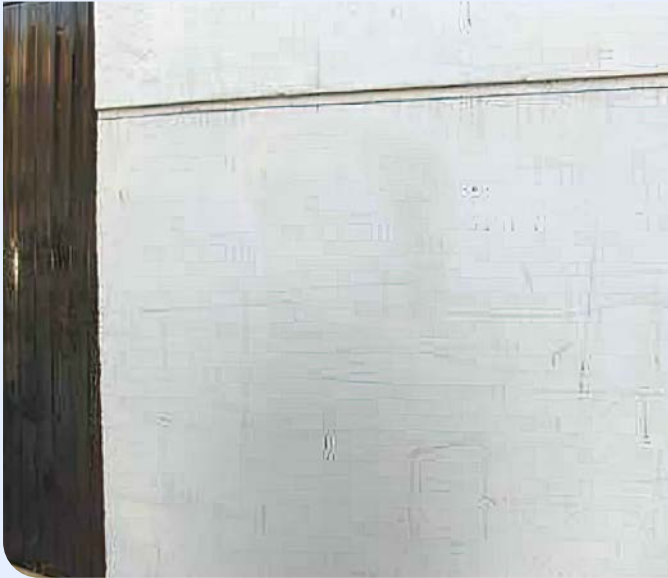
These grass areas and shrub bed areas are totally unacceptable and would constitute a service delivery failure. There would be evidence of excessive amount of litter, leaves, grass cuttings or hazardous conditions. Any evidence of broken glass, needles or sharp objects will constitute a service failure and will attract an immediate 'D' score.



7. Graffiti removal

Grade A

These areas typically does not have any graffiti and no graffiti can be found anywhere within the building/block, on the outside walls or anywhere in the surrounding/communal areas.



Grade B

There may be an area with a very small and isolated area of graffiti within in the building/block, on the outside walls or anywhere in the surrounding/communal areas.



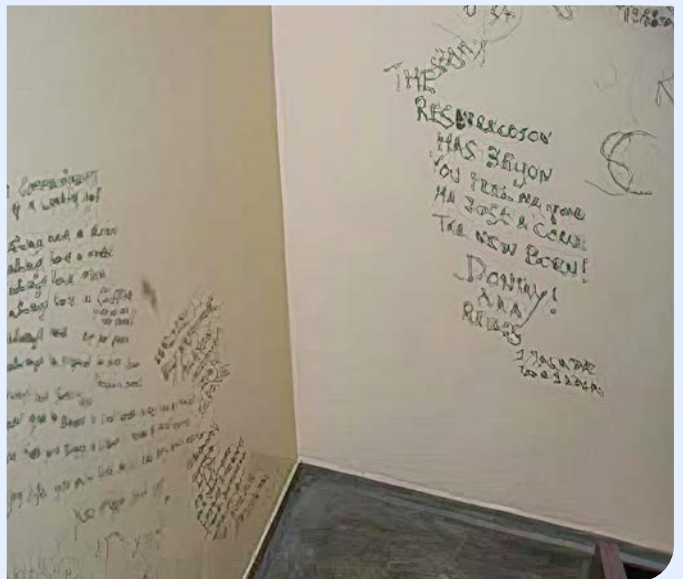
Grade C

There are at least two areas with graffiti found in different places within the building/block, on the outside walls or anywhere in the surrounding/communal areas



Grade D

This is when the levels of graffiti within the area are totally unacceptable and would constitute an immediate service failure. This would automatically be the case where excessive and offensive levels of graffiti are found either within the building/block, on the outside walls or anywhere in the surrounding/communal areas.



8. Communal bin storage areas and drying areas (external)

Grade A

Communal bin areas and drying areas are well maintained, litter free and clear of weeds and moss. The drying equipment should be well maintained and in use.



Grade B

Communal bin areas and drying areas are well maintained, but there is minor evidence of litter, leaves and some areas have some moss growth.



Grade C

The communal bin storage area or drying area is in need of attention and appear not to have been swept and cleaned out for some time. There is evidence of litter, leaves and general rubbish some of which could constitute a health hazard (eg, food waste). The condition of the area may indicate that the area requires more frequent attention from caretaking staff.



Grade D

The condition of the communal bin storage area and drying area is not acceptable. There is evidence of excessive amounts of litter, leaves and general rubbish, some of which could constitute a health hazard (eg food waste). There are large areas of moss growth which do not appear to have been attended to for some time and are a slipping hazard. Some of the drying equipment may have been vandalised or just not in working order.



9. Removal of bulk refuse and fly tipping from all internal and external areas

Grade A

The areas inside blocks and around the estate are completely clear of lumber and there is no evidence at all of fly tipping or bulk refuse.



Grade B

A single item on a single landing or communal area has been noted which is not obstructing the way or causing a hazard. Generally the internal and external areas are free of fly tipping and bulk refuse items.



Grade C

The internal areas within blocks and external areas around the estate have more than a solitary item of fly tipping or bulk refuse. There may be black bags or packaging in communal areas, items of furniture in the landing corner, shopping trolley in the corridor or rubbish deposited in chute area. Generally there are more items than would be acceptable.



Grade D

There are multiple items of fly tipping or bulk refuse in internal areas of blocks or the surrounding areas around estates. There may also be unsecured white goods on a communal landing or items of furniture just left in a communal area. Lumber may have been moved to a single location but is left unsecured and could cause injury or potential fire hazard.



10. Estate Signage

Grade A

Block name signs should be clear, easily visible, graffiti and vandalism free and if appropriate should have the organisation's name/logo visible from the pavement.



Grade B

Block name signs should be clear, easily visible, graffiti and vandalism free, and if appropriate should have the organisation's name/logo visible. Signs in this grade, however, would not be in such good condition so as to warrant an "A" score.



Grade C

Block name signs should be clear, they may have a little visible graffiti but should be mainly vandalism free. In those category they may also have the organisation's name/logo visible.



Grade D



11. Estate Lighting in working order (External)

Grade A



Grade B



Grade C



Grade D



12. Weed clearance

Grade A

The area is completely free of weeds. Evidence suggests that any weeds that have existed have been killed and all dead weeds removed.



Grade B

The area is generally free of weeds. Any weeds that are evident will be dealt with by seasonal maintenance or a little attention from contractor, GM staff or caretakers.



Grade C

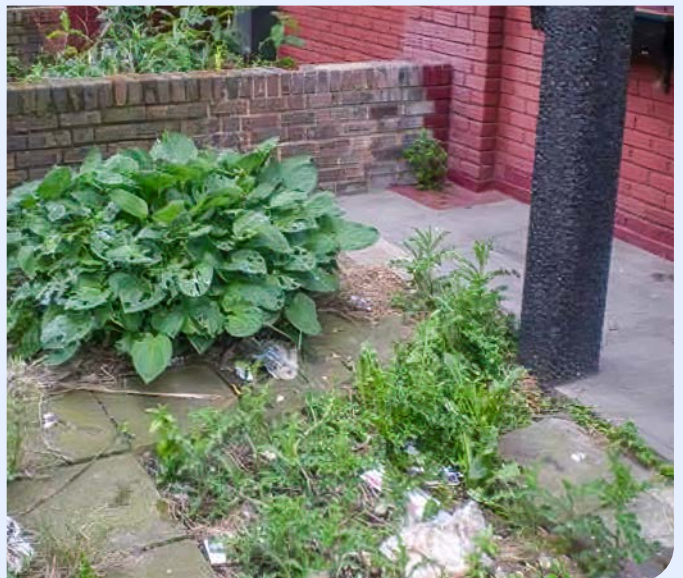
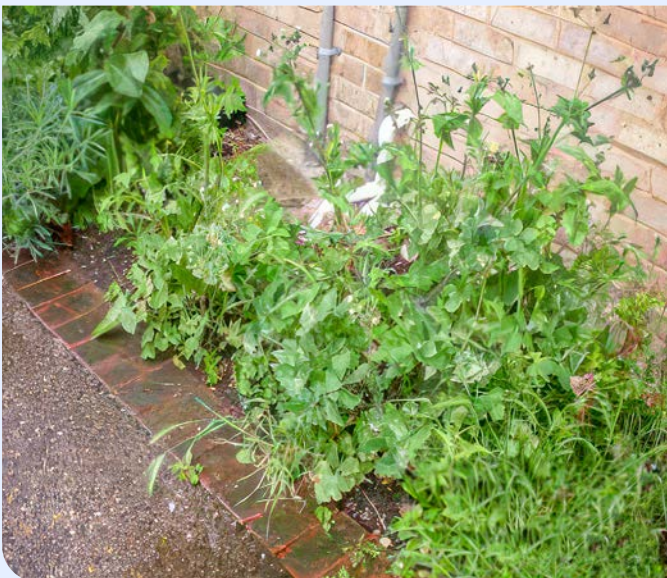
As well as weeds that are still alive there is evidence of weeds that appear to have been sprayed but have not been removed or not sprayed for a long period. Weeds in this category will appear to have been there for some time and there is little evidence that annual or routine maintenance has taken place.

There may also be evidence of moss that appears to have been there for some while and has not been attended to.



Grade D

There is evidence of large amounts of well established, as well as new weeds that appear to have never been attended to. There will be no evidence that any annual or routine maintenance has taken place or that any other weed control has been carried out. There may also be evidence of weeds that have been sprayed a long time ago and have not been removed.





About Housemark

HouseMark is the leading provider of performance improvement and value for money solutions to the social housing sector and is jointly owned by the Chartered Institute of Housing and the National Housing Federation; two not-for-profit organisations which reinvest their surpluses in the social housing sector.

Further Information

For further information visit our website or call:



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