

NEIGHBOURHOOD INSPECTIONS

A pictorial guide for
neighbourhood inspections

ASTER
GROUP

A PICTORIAL GUIDE FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD INSPECTIONS

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INTRODUCTION

This guide has been created to help residents, colleagues and partnering agencies identify the condition of an estate or communal area.

This guide will be used during neighbourhood inspections to provide feedback to Aster. It will identify specific areas where standards are not being met and what we need to respond to as a priority, based on the views of the people who live in the area.

Anti-social behaviour, litter, vandalism, graffiti, abandoned cars, untidy gardens, and other problems can make an area appear run-down and neglected. This can lead to further vandalism, alienation of the local community and increased levels of crime. Aster aims to improve the appearance of all its housing estates but we can't do this without your help.

Our aim is to have estates which meet the gold standard pictures in this guide.

During a neighbourhood inspection the neighbourhood officer will complete a form and describe the standard, as agreed by all customers participating in the event.

During the inspection you will be asked to rate the condition of the estate based on the following criteria:



VERY GOOD
OR GOOD



SATISFACTORY



POOR OR
VERY POOR



URGENT ACTION
REQUIRED
Health & Safety Risk

This pictorial guide is designed to help you determine the appropriate category of condition.

Please note this document is a guide to neighbourhood inspections on Aster Group land or properties only.

CAR PARKS AND PARKING AREAS

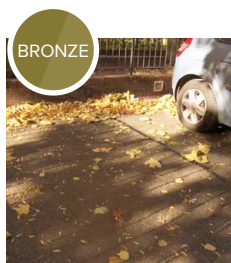


The car park area has no litter or leaves and the parking bays are clearly marked.

Please note: Not all car parks will have white lines or numbered spaces.



This car park area has no more litter than you would expect at the end of a typical day. At certain times of the year an amount of leaves is acceptable if they appear not to have been there very long. (i.e. a small build-up in October would be acceptable, but in May, it would not).



This car park area is unacceptable. There is a high build-up of litter, leaves and/or rubbish.

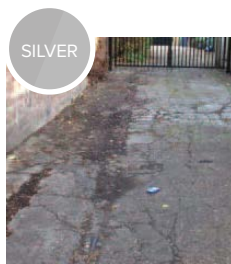


This car park area is dangerous and represents a health and safety risk. There is broken glass or another hazard, such as a car battery, in the area. This needs urgent action.

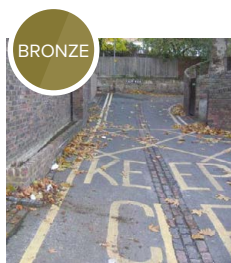
PATHS, ROADWAYS AND COURTYARDS



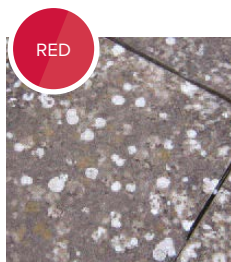
The paths and roadways have no litter, leaves or sharp objects.



The paths and roadway areas have no more litter than you would expect at the end of a typical week.



The cleanliness of the paths and roadways are totally unacceptable. There is an excessive amount of litter, leaves and/or rubbish.



This path and roadway area is dangerous and presents a health and safety risk. In addition to a build-up of litter and leaves, there is broken glass and raised paving slabs, which present a serious risk. These issues need to be resolved immediately.

PLAY AREAS AND SEATING AREAS



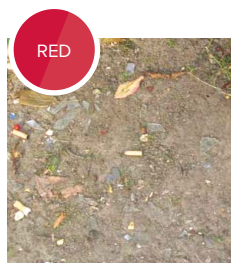
This play and seating area contains no leaves, litter or sharp objects.



This play and seating area has no more litter than one would expect at the end of a typical day.



This play and seating area is unacceptable with a high build-up of litter, leaves and cigarette butts.



This play and seating area is dangerous and presents a health and safety risk. As well as a build-up of litter and leaves, there is broken glass and broken or faulty play equipment which is a serious risk to children. These issues need to be resolved immediately.

GRASSED AREAS AND SHRUB BEDS



The grassed area and shrub beds contain no litter, rubbish or sharp objects and are neat and tidy.



The grass and shrub bed has no more litter than one would expect at the end of a typical week. There is evidence of young weed growth.



These grass and shrub beds have a high build-up of litter and leaves. There is also evidence of old weed growth.



This grassed area and shrub bed is dangerous and represents a health and safety risk. In addition to a build-up of litter and leaves, there is broken glass and hypodermic needles which present a serious risk. These issues need to be resolved immediately.

COMMUNAL BIN AND DRYING AREAS



Communal bin and drying areas are well maintained, litter-free and clear of weeds and moss.



Communal bin and drying areas are well maintained. There is only a small amount of litter and moss.



This communal bin area is in need of attention. There is a build-up of litter, which suggests it will require more frequent attention from caretaking staff.



This communal bin and drying area is dangerous and represents a health and safety risk. In addition to excessive rubbish, there is broken glass and hypodermic needles which present a serious risk. These issues need to be resolved immediately.

GARAGES



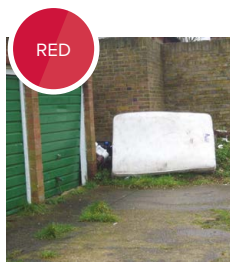
This garage area should be clear of litter, weeds and rubbish. Garages should be useable with good access. They should be free of graffiti, fly-tipping and vandalism.



This area is generally free of weeds. Any remaining weeds can be successfully dealt with by routine seasonal maintenance.



There is evidence of weeds that have been sprayed but not removed. It's possible the weeds have not been sprayed for a long time and the area looks very untidy.



This area is overgrown and there are weeds everywhere. There could be broken glass and/or animal waste hidden in the undergrowth which could present a serious health and safety risk. These issues need to be resolved immediately.

GROUNDS MAINTENANCE (grass cutting and maintenance)



Grass has been recently cut and the shrubs are well maintained.



Grass and shrubs are in need of some minor attention but are likely to be restored to health with routine maintenance.



The grass area is in poor condition. The grass is too long and the shrubs need to be cut back or trimmed.

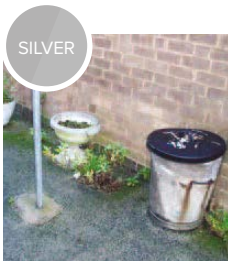


This grass is very overgrown. There could be broken glass and/or dangerous objects hidden in the undergrowth which could present a serious risk. There is also evidence of bonfires. These issues need to be resolved immediately.

WEEDS CLEARANCE



This area is completely free of weeds. Weed killer has been applied and dead weeds have been removed.



This area is generally free of weeds. Any remaining weeds can be successfully dealt with by routine seasonal maintenance.



There is evidence of weeds that have been sprayed but not removed. It's possible the weeds have not been sprayed for a long time and the area looks very untidy.



This area is overgrown and there are weeds everywhere. There could be broken glass and/or animal waste hidden in the undergrowth which could present a serious health and safety risk. These issues need to be resolved immediately.

HEDGES AND SHRUB BORDERS



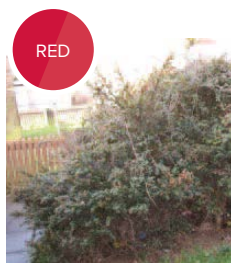
Grass has been recently cut and the shrubs are well maintained.



Grass and shrubs are in need of some minor attention but are likely to be restored to health with routine maintenance.



The grass area is in poor condition. The grass is too long and the shrubs need to be cut back or trimmed.



This grass is very overgrown. There could be broken glass and/or dangerous objects hidden in the undergrowth which could present a serious risk. There is also evidence of bonfires. These issues need to be resolved immediately.

FLY-TIPPING

GOLD



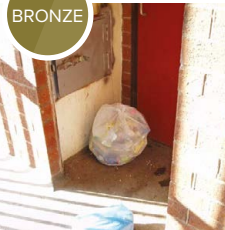
This area is completely clear of wood and rubble. The passageway is clear and safe.

SILVER



There is a single item on the landing, although this isn't obstructing the passageway.

BRONZE



There is some furniture in the corner of the landing and there is rubbish in the corners. The passageway is not clear, making it difficult for people to get past.

RED



There is a large amount of rubbish abandoned in a single location. Not only is it causing an obstruction, it could also cause an injury and is a potential fire hazard. This is a health and safety risk and needs to be resolved immediately.

EXTERNAL FACE OF BUILDINGS



This building is newly decorated. The windows, gutters and fascias are clean and in good condition.



The face of this building is fairly clean and tidy but will require painting in the next couple of years.



Paint peeling on the window sills of this property indicates external decoration will be required in the very near future.



The façade of this building is in a very poor state. Peeling paint, cracks in the masonry and broken soffits all contribute to health and safety risks which need to be addressed immediately.

CLEANLINESS OF INTERNAL COMMUNAL WINDOWS



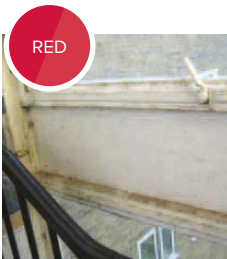
This window has no dirt, dust or cobwebs. The general level of cleanliness is excellent.



The inside of the window and frame has a minor build-up of dust or dirt. It is in need of routine cleaning.

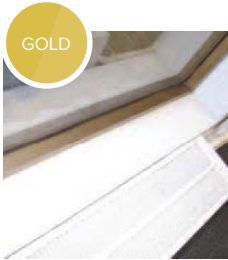


This window is in poor condition. Water streaks on the inside suggests the window frame is in need of attention. It requires routine maintenance.



This window is in very poor condition. The internal frame and glass are covered in excessive cobwebs, dirt and dust. There is also cracking to the glass which could present a serious risk. These issues need to be resolved immediately.

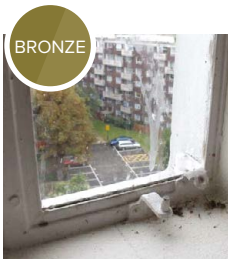
CLEANLINESS OF LEDGES (including internal window sills)



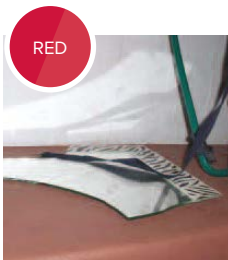
This window ledge is in excellent condition and is totally dust and litter free. The routine maintenance programme is working to good effect.



This window ledge is in good condition. There is no more dust than you would expect to find at the end of a typical week.



The ledges and window sills are in poor condition, with a high build-up of litter and dirt. There are cobwebs, dead insects and unsightly litter. It would appear there is no cleaning programme in place.



The condition of this window ledge is unacceptable and there is an excessive amount of litter and dirt. There are traces of broken glass and other sharp objects which could present a serious risk. These issues need to be resolved immediately.

CLEANLINESS OF LIGHT FITTINGS AND OPERATION*

GOLD



This light fitting is in very good condition. The light bulb and cover are clean and free from dust and cobwebs.

SILVER



The overall cleanliness of the area is good. There are some cobwebs present but very few.

BRONZE



This light is in poor condition and looks like it may not have been cleaned or maintained for some time. There are lots of old cobwebs and the light fitting is very dirty.

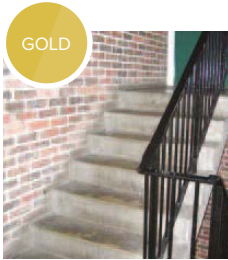
RED



Communal light(s) not working and/or exposed wiring. Urgent action required.

* Not all street lighting is Asters' responsibility.
Please contact your local authority for clarification.

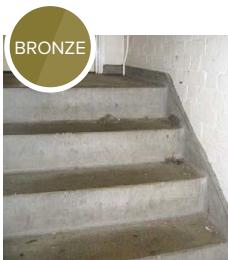
SWEEPING AND WASHING OF STAIRS AND LANDINGS



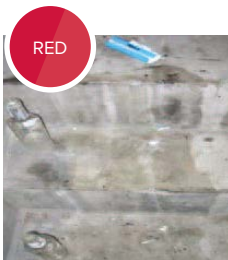
There is no dirt or litter on the stairs or landing and they are in a good, clean condition. They have obviously been swept and mopped in accordance with a regular maintenance programme.



The condition of the stairs is fairly poor but there is no dust, dirt or litter.



There is dust along the edges of the stair and in the corners. There is little evidence of recent sweeping or mopping.



This stairway is very dirty in the corners, the edges and on the landing. There is evidence of drug use and empty alcohol bottles on the stairs, which could present a serious risk. These issues need to be resolved immediately.

ENTRANCE HALLS, LOBBIES AND CORRIDORS

GOLD



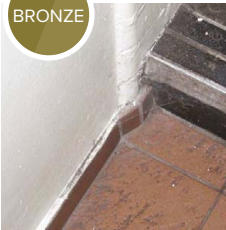
There is no dirt in the corners or stuck to the floor. The floors have clearly been cleaned in accordance with a regular maintenance programme.

SILVER



This entrance hall is in good order but it could be better. There is a small amount of dirt present, even though the floor has just been cleaned.

BRONZE



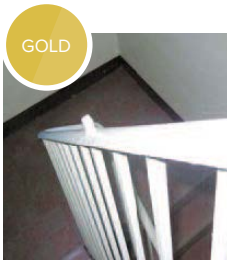
There are cobwebs in the corners and dust along the top of the skirting board. The floor has not been cleaned regularly.

RED



Dirt and small pieces of glass have not been removed. This is a serious health and safety risk and needs to be resolved immediately.

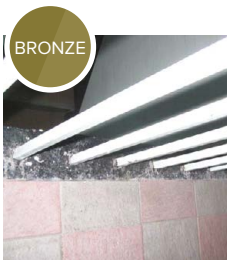
HANDRAILS, LEDGES AND BANISTERS



This area is very clean and dust free. The handrails and banisters are being wiped and dusted regularly.



This area is a little dusty and there is a small amount of dirt present.



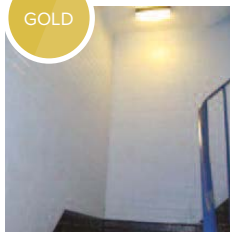
The lower section of this handrail is dirty. There are too many old cobwebs and there is also litter present. This area needs a regular cleaning routine.



This handrail is too dirty to be used. There is no evidence of any wiping, dusting or cleaning and there could be fragments of glass on the handrail. This is a health and safety risk and needs to be resolved immediately.

GRAFFITI

GOLD



These walls don't have any graffiti and no graffiti can be found elsewhere in the building.

SILVER



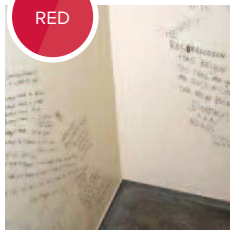
There is a small amount of graffiti and very little evidence of graffiti elsewhere in the building.

BRONZE



There is quite a lot of graffiti and this type of defacing can be found in many places throughout the building.

RED

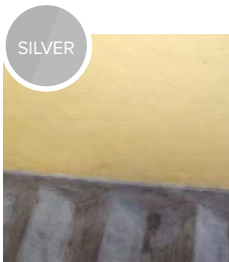


This area of the building is totally unacceptable. There are excessive and offensive levels of graffiti. If there is any evidence of offensive graffiti (i.e. racist, homophobic, sexist, religious), it needs to be resolved immediately.

CLEANLINESS OF WALLS IN COMMUNAL AREAS



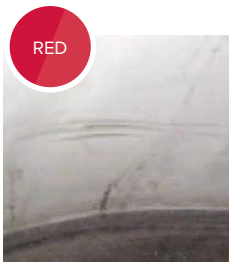
This communal area is very clean and there are no scuffmarks.



This staircase is generally clean and well looked after. There are only a few scuffmarks on the wall.



This is a very dirty and stained wall. There needs to be a much better cleaning programme in place.



This wall indicates the building is very dirty throughout. This is a health and safety risk and needs to be resolved immediately.

ASTER STANDARDS - ESTATE MANAGEMENT

We want to make sure that our neighbourhoods are good places to live. The following standards tell you how we'll deal with the issues that you've told us really matter to you.

NEIGHBOURHOOD INSPECTIONS

- We'll carry out regular inspections of our estates. These inspections will be advertised quarterly in websites and magazines. At these inspections, we'll agree with customers what needs to be done and feed back to them within 14 days.
- Frequency of the inspections will be based on risk, having regard to type of stock, level of voids, customer profile and health and safety issues and the programme for each estate will be agreed with customers.
- We'll work with customers, statutory authorities, other landlords and organisations to resolve all issues as appropriate.
- Where there's a need for major improvements or a need for environmental improvements we'll consider them in the context of the requirements of the local community and consult with customers, leaseholders and other residents.
- We'll publish the names and contact details of our neighbourhood officers with their contact details on our website and offices.

ABANDONED VEHICLES

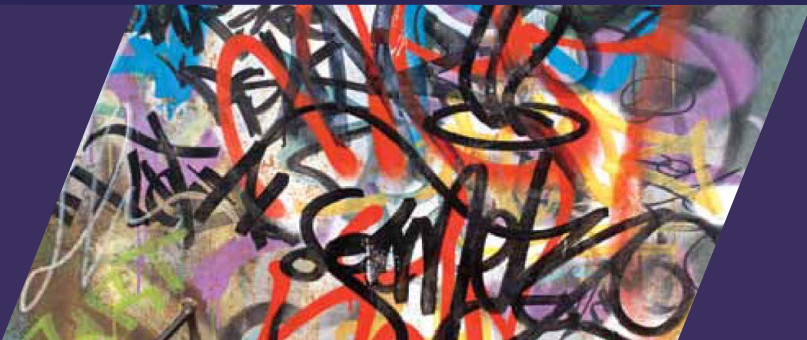
- We'll sticker untaxed and/or abandoned vehicles on our land within 48 hours of being told about it.
- We'll remove dangerous vehicles from our land within 24 hours of being told about it

RUBBISH/FLY-TIPPING

- We'll work with local authorities to make sure that any fly-tipping causing a health or safety issue is removed within 24 hours. All other illegally dumped bulk rubbish will be cleared as soon as possible.
- We'll recharge anyone who is identified as being responsible for causing damage to our property or dumping rubbish.
- We'll ask the owner to remove any large items of rubbish we find in shared areas of flats, by putting notices on them asking them to be taken away. We will do this within 48 hours of finding out about it. If the owner doesn't take it away, we'll remove it within 10 days.
- We'll remove all large items of rubbish found in outdoor-shared areas within five working days of finding out about them.

GRAFFITI

- All offensive graffiti (racist, homophobic, etc) will be removed within 24 hours of being told about it.
- All other graffiti will be removed within five working days of it being reported or 28 days if a specialist contractor's required to remove it.



CLEANING

- Where there's a communal cleaning contract in place we'll make sure that floors and stairs are swept, mopped or vacuumed (depending on the floor covering) on every visit.
- We'll make sure windowsills, shelves, skirting boards and banisters are damp-wiped, dusted or polished on every visit.
- We'll check for cobwebs and remove them from all areas on every visit.
- Where there's no cleaning contract we'll write to residents to remind them of their obligation to keep communal areas clean and tidy for the benefit and enjoyment of the neighbourhood.
- We'll publicise cleaning schedules and tasks in all communal areas.

GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

- We'll cut the grass in our amenity and communal areas 17 times from March to November. We try to do this every 14 to 21 days, but sometimes it can be longer depending on the weather and how much work we have to do. Unfortunately, we can't take the grass clippings away.
- Before the grass is cut we'll remove all litter, refuse etc, which may cause damage, injury, or nuisance to others. We'll ensure all grass cuttings are swept or blown from footpaths and walk ways immediately after cutting.
- We'll spray for weeds at least three times a year.
- We'll cut hedges twice a year.
- We'll carry out rose border and shrub border maintenance on a monthly basis.
- We'll carry out moss spraying three times a year.
- We'll carry out tree maintenance in accordance with our tree strategy.
- We'll write to or visit residents with an untidy garden and agree with them what they need to do to make it neater. We'll then visit them within 28 days to make sure it's tidier.

PARTNERSHIPS

- We'll ensure we have formal service level agreements in place with our partners in relation to estate management where necessary.

STREET REP SCHEMES

- We'll encourage and support street rep schemes across all regions.

**If you would like to join one of our neighbourhood inspections
then please speak to your local neighbourhood officer or
contact us on the details below:**

Aster Group
Telephone: 0333 400 8222

HELP WITH THIS GUIDE

If you need this guide in another language, Braille or large print, on audio tape or CD, please let us know by calling the number below.

For more information regarding neighbourhood inspections, please contact Aster Group on **0333 400 8222** or contact your neighbourhood officer.

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