

**Annual report on the communal cleaning inspections
carried out across the borough of Tamworth and the
role of the Tenant Inspectors**



2015 - 2016

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Introduction to the report

Over a two year period every tenant and leaseholder of Tamworth Borough Council is sent a customer satisfaction survey to ask for their views on the communal cleaning services they receive. This is then summarised and reported back to the Estates Manager including tenant recommendations to consider ways in which the service could be improved.

Tenant Inspectors have been inspecting communal cleaning areas for five years now alongside the Tenant Regulation and Involvement Team.

There are currently **82** areas to keep clean

- 16 areas in Town Centre
- 20 areas in Leyfields
- 22 areas in Stonydelph
- 9 areas in Wilnecote
- 3 areas in Glascote
- 6 areas in Amington
- 4 areas in Belgrave and Dosthill
- 1 area in Bolehall
- 1 area in Dosthill

These include;

- 10 Sheltered Housing Schemes
- 1013 properties from low rise to high rise buildings and a number of basic access areas

Role of the Tenant Inspector

Tamworth Borough Council is committed to involving customers and believes that they should be at the heart of decision making and service delivery. To make this a reality we work in partnership with tenants and residents by asking them to become Tenant Inspectors.

The aim of this partnership is to;

- Check on how Tamworth Borough Council is delivering its services
- Improve the quality of services provided
- Build the skills and confidence of those customers who come forward to become inspectors

Tenant Inspectors will be asked to audit Tamworth Borough Council's Caretaking Cleaning Services performance in relation to a particular standard or 'Local offer', as agreed by Housing Management and agreed with tenants.

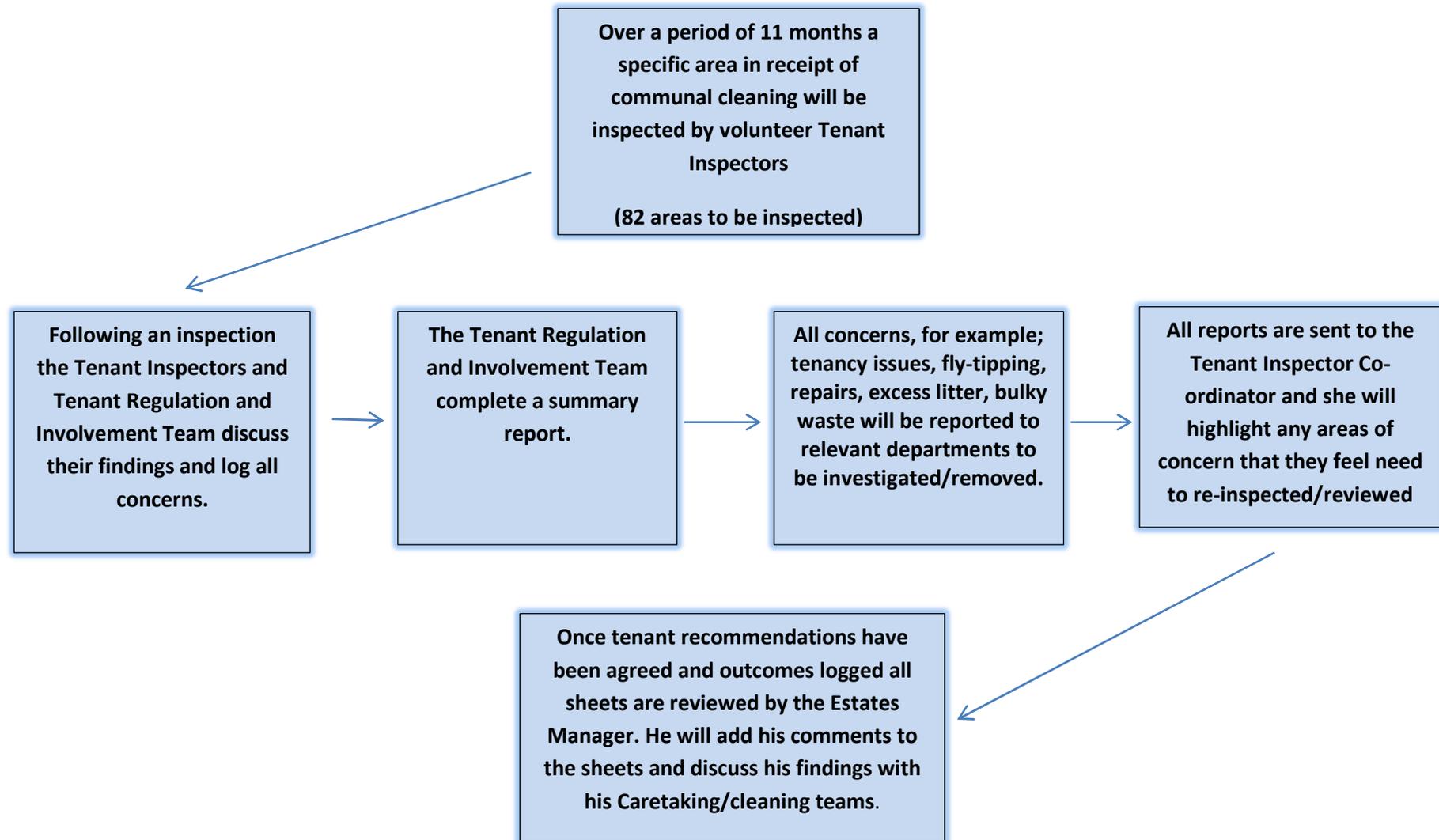
Tenant Inspectors will have a number of techniques available to them in order to investigate the standards required;

- Interview staff
- Interview tenants
- Shadow staff
- Carry out surveys
- Do site visits

Full training will be given to enable the Tenant Inspectors to fulfil their role. They will be asked to sign a 'confidentiality agreement' and a 'risk assessment' document. It is important to remember that we are inspecting the communal cleaning areas and not the tenants/residents living there. No prior knowledge or qualifications are required and you will never be expected to visit a site alone without a member of staff. Tenant Inspectors are requested to wear sensible shoes and clothing during site visits and never put themselves at risk from harm.

It is important to listen and to be open-minded. Don't be judgemental before you have collected all the information, facts and evidence. Try to appreciate the concerns and circumstances of the people with whom you come into contact with.

Tenant Inspector Process



Once the inspection score sheets have been summarised and checked they are returned to the Estates Manager to consider changes and improvements in service following tenant recommendations. If Tenant Inspectors wish to discuss their concerns or findings following an inspection with the Estates Manager then this will be arranged. Annually, a meeting is arranged to discuss the communal cleaning inspections and if they have been successful and what has been learnt.

The Tenant Inspectors views are well respected by Landlord Services who are continually striving to implement excellent customer care and services across the borough of Tamworth.

How can I become a Tenant Inspector?

- You can get involved in a way that suits you.
- If mobility is an issue you will be asked to inspect buildings on one level, for example, sheltered housing schemes
- You must be a tenant of Tamworth Borough Council
- Be over 18 years of age
- Be prepared to undertake basic training on how to complete the score sheets and expectations
- You will be required to read and sign both a 'confidentiality agreement' and 'risk assessment' before starting in the role of a Tenant Inspector
- You will attend tenant inspections of communal cleaning areas with a member of the Tenant Regulation and Involvement Team
- Transport is arranged at no cost to the inspector
- The time and commitment that you offer is totally optional. You can register your interest to become a Tenant Inspector by telephoning 01827 709709 ext. 374 or 260 or email; tenantparticipation@tamworth.gov.uk

Tenant recommendations / suggestions

Tenants have recommended that the high standards of cleaning are maintained.

Sheltered Housing Scheme - dining chairs to be either cleaned or replaced to improve the appearance of the scheme. The issue has been discussed with Lee Birch, Housing Manager, who has confirmed that Thomas Hardy Court will be considered for improvements in the future. These have now been changed.

Several mobility scooters, trolleys and walkers are outside of properties causing an obstruction - The issue has been discussed with the Scheme Manager who is monitoring the situation and has spoken to the residents concerned.

Repairs and fly-tipping at craven - The concerns have been addressed by the Tenancy Sustainment Officer. Repairs have been reported to Mears, the Council's repairs contractor.

Bulk left in bin stores - tenants to be reminded on how to dispose of all rubbish correctly and to report repairs inside and outside of their property in accordance with their tenancy agreements

Carlcroft was noted as having several tenancy issues making the cleaner's job very difficult. There is a dog in the block which the owner needs to take responsibility for by sweeping the corridors where it has been. The drying area has been fly-tipped with wood and an old television. The caretaking team have removed all fly-tipping. Tenancy issues have been addressed by the Tenancy Sustainment Officer.

The standards throughout the block in Smithy Lane are very good. Everywhere was found to be very clean and tidy at the time of the inspection. The recent environmental works have had a major impact on the appearance of the area. Tenants complimented the cleaner on their high standard of work - Tenants have recommended that the high standards of cleanliness continue throughout the block in the future.

“Cleaning standards are very high and the Caretaking cleaning staff should be praised for their hard work, often in difficult circumstances” – Geoff M, Tenant Inspector

Successful outcomes

Customer satisfaction surveys monitoring communal cleaning has proved very successful when reviewing where service improvements can be made. For this reason, another customer satisfaction survey will be completed during 2017/2018 by posting surveys out, door knocking and chatting to tenants.

As several Tenant Inspectors have now grown in confidence they have become involved in other areas of involvement across Tamworth;

- Undertaken mystery shopping training to monitor how anti-social behaviour is addressed
- Tenant inspectors assist on Estate Inspections
- Joined various working/focus groups, Tenant Consultative Group, Complaints Review Panel

Tenant inspections have built up trust between tenants and Council staff as the service is more transparent.

Are the communal cleaning inspections worthwhile?

Of the 88 sites last year (before the regeneration of Wilnecote) 55 sites were successfully inspected by Tenant Inspectors and the Tenant Involvement Team. Since starting the communal cleaning inspections five years ago there has been a steady growth in service improvements across the borough. A mutual respect has been built upon between the Caretaking Cleaning Staff and the Tenant Inspectors. They discuss openly any recommendations in relation to service improvements. Any complaints and compliments are forward to the Estates Manager.

Tenant Inspectors kindly offer their time to provide an unbiased opinion upon inspecting the communal cleaning areas that we as a service keep clean. They will maintain a link between tenant expectations and Landlord Services as their findings are reported directly back to the Estates Manager. Findings will be published as part of our on-going commitment to performance.

By reporting back concerns relating to fly-tipping and tenancy issues to the Estates Manager and the Tenancy Sustainment officers there has been a significant improvement in breaches of tenancy.

We currently have 21 active Tenant Inspectors registered with us. The commitment they offer is optional, taking into account their personal abilities and time restraints. Last year, 55 (63%) of communal cleaning areas were inspected. This year our commitment is to inspect all areas.

You Said, We did

Tenant Inspectors were pro-active in assisting with the setting of the new cleaning service standards.

Inspection score sheets have been updated with the assistance of the Tenant Inspectors. Instead of several sheets being completed at the same time with the same/similar information it was decided that only one score sheet would be completed to discuss findings, concerns, complaints and compliments. Any recommendations are forward to the Estate Manager.

Tenant inspections have proved very successful and have seen a great improvement in services with more tenants coming forward to get involved.

What service changes are being made going forward?

The introduction of revised cleaning standards has seen an improvement in the delivery of service in relation to the introduction of service charges which was introduced in April 2016

Score sheets have been amended and improved to capture relevant information

The Estate Manager will continue to consider all tenant recommendations at regular intervals.

Every area across Tamworth Borough Council in receipt of communal cleaning services will be inspected over an 11 month period. Historically not all communal areas have been inspected. Tenant Inspectors prefer this co-ordinated approach as it will give a clear understanding of cleaning standards experienced by tenants. The tenant co-ordinator reviews all completed sheets and will highlight any areas that will require a re-visit.

Tenant Inspectors are now involved in Estate Inspections and mystery shopping exercises when requested. They have gone from strength to strength with more tenants coming forward to get involved.

Introduction of Service Charges

A service charge is a payment made by a resident towards the cost of providing and maintaining communal areas and facilities.

From 4 April 2016, tenants and licensees living in a property with shared services (such as communal utilities i.e. electricity or water) will pay a service charge.

There will be 4 service charges:

- Housing Management Plus (sheltered scheme tenants only)
- Communal cleaning
- Communal electricity
- Communal water

Tenant Regulation and Involvement

If you do not wish to become a Tenant Inspector but still wish to have a say in Housing services and the communities that you live in then you can do this in a variety of ways that suit you;

- Completing customer satisfaction surveys by telephone, post or face to face
- Attending tenant meetings /groups
- Carrying out mystery shopping to check services
- Attending Estate Inspections
- Attending estate based events
- Attending focus groups/surveys/consultation/conferences
- Free training

You will be sent a Tenant Involvement booklet which highlights opportunities to influence Housing services. You will then be asked to complete a short questionnaire so you can be added to a database of tenant involvement. The time and way that you decide to get involved is totally optional to you as an individual.

Appendix 1: Cleanliness Score Sheet used for inspections

Communal Cleaning Score Sheet - Tenant Inspectors

Name of site/area inspected				Date inspection carried out	
Name of inspector/s:		Name:		Time of inspection	
Tenant Involvement:		Name:		Weather conditions	
		Name:		Name of Cleaner	
Tick if applicable Yes / No	Areas of inspection	Clean Yes / No	Score 1-5 1=poor & 5 excellent	Tenant Inspector Comments	
	Walls & skirting boards				
	Corridors - Mopped/vac				
	Stairwells – Mopped/vac				
	Stairwells – landing windows/cills				
	Entrance areas/ outside litter				
	Dust high level areas				
	Internal glazed / solid doors				
	Lift & interior lift sides				
	Chute or refuse room				
	Landings & gutters				
	Toilets & shower rooms				
	Walls				
	Floors				
	Basins & WC				
	Shower unit				
	Kitchens				
	Floor				
	Worktops & sink area				
	Sheltered communal areas				
	Floors				
	Tables, chairs & internal glass				
	Internal windows & door glass				

		Laundry				
		Hairdressers facility				
Additional Tenant Inspector comments/recommendations						
Signed by Tenant Inspectors:						
Tenant Inspector Signature:					Date	
Tenant Inspector Signature:					Date	
Tenant Involvement Signature:					Date	
Other observations;			H&S SIGNAGE			Yes/No
			NO SMOKING SIGNS			Yes/No
			FIRE EXIT SIGNS			Yes/No
Please detail any H&S issues / repairs to be reported / tenancy issues such as rubbish being left out, damage, signs of arson, anti-social behaviour etc.						
Do you see the cleaner at the time of the inspection? Yes/No						
If 'Yes' please circle as appropriate	Wearing uniform Yes/No	Wearing high vis vest Yes/No	Protective footwear Yes/No	Correct warning floor signs in place	Yes/No	

Appendix 2: Example of a completed summary sheet used for discussions with Estates Manager

Communal Cleaning Score Sheet - Tenant Inspectors

Name of site/area inspected		Strode House			Date inspection carried out	31.05.2016	
Name of inspector/s:		Name: Dawn K			Time of inspection	11:45am	
		Name: N/a			Weather conditions	Dry	
Tenant Involvement:		Name: Diane Hughes			Name of Cleaner	Tracey (Wendy covering)	
Tick if applicable Yes / No	Areas of inspection			Clean Yes / No	Score 1-5 1=poor & 5 excellent	Tenant Inspector Comments	
√		Walls & skirting boards			√	5	Front entrance is clean and free of litter Ground floor – very clean and tidy inside the entrance. Also smells clean and fresh. Paint spill in foyer. Caretakers on site clearing mess. Floors 10 and 13 – stairwells, windows and corridors all clean and well swept. Bright and clean. Fire exit signs and no smoking signs are well displayed throughout the block.
√		Corridors - Mopped/vac			√	5	
√		Stairwells – Mopped/vac			√	5	
√		Stairwells – landing windows/cills			√	5	
√		Entrance areas/ outside litter			√	4	
√		Dust high level areas			√	4	
√		Internal glazed / solid doors			√	5	
√		Lift & interior lift sides			√	5	
√		Chute or refuse room			√	5	
	√	Landings & gutters					
		Toilets & shower rooms					
	√	Walls					
	√	Floors					
	√	Basins & WC					
	√	Shower unit					
		Kitchens					
	√	Floor					
	√	Worktops & sink area					
		Sheltered communal areas					
	√	Floors					

	√	Tables, chairs & internal glass				
	√	Internal windows & door glass				
	√	Laundry				
	√	Hairdressers facility				
Additional Tenant Inspector comments/recommendations						
Dawn – “Cleaned to a consistently high standard throughout the block”.						
Signed by Tenant Inspectors:						
Tenant Inspector Signature:		<i>signed on original copy</i>	Date		31.05.2016	
Tenant Inspector Signature:		N/a	Date		-	
Tenant Involvement Signature:		<i>signed on original copy</i>	Date		31.05.2016	
Other observations;			H&S SIGNAGE		Yes	
Paint spilt in foyer			NO SMOKING SIGNS		Yes	
			FIRE EXIT SIGNS		Yes	
Please detail any H&S issues / repairs to be reported / tenancy issues such as rubbish being left out, damage, signs of arson, anti-social behaviour etc.						
Paint has been spilt in the middle foyer. The Caretaking Team are already on site cleaning up the mess.						
Did you see the cleaner at the time of the inspection? Yes						
If 'Yes' please circle as appropriate	Wearing uniform Yes	Wearing high vis vest Yes	Protective footwear Yes	Correct warning floor signs in place Yes		

For office use only		
Actions required	<p>No further action required. Cleaning standards are high throughout the block.</p> <p>Paint has been spilt in the middle foyer. The Caretaking Team are already on site cleaning up the mess.</p>	
Feedback from Estate Manager		
Signed/Dated by Estates Manager	Signature:	Date:

Appendix 3: Tackling graffiti

Graffiti

We have a duty to remove graffiti from our spaces and assets and you can contact us to report graffiti. Street Scene operatives and Community Wardens who are regularly on patrol across the borough also report graffiti. Anyone who is caught graffitiing can be arrested and prosecuted under the Criminal Damage act 1971 and could be fined up to £5000.

Report it:

Council tenants can report it on line by completing an online form; <http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/graffiti-removal-request-tenants>

Tel: **01827 709709**

Email: enquiries@tamworth.gov.uk

We aim to remove:

Offensive graffiti: within 24 hours of report

Excessive graffiti with considerable detriment to the area:
within three working days of it being reporting

Other: Ten working days from date of report

Please tell us:

- The exact location
- Identifying factors: Racist or offensive

A Street Scene member of staff will check the graffiti to check what type of paint has been used, the surface it has been sprayed or painted on and whether it is offensive. Delays sometimes occur where graffiti is difficult to remove or needs specialist attention. By working in partnership with the Council's Caretaking Team and Estates Manager our staff are hoping to clean up graffiti as quickly as possible, to help Tamworth's estates a better place for people to live.

We will not remove graffiti from private property or business premises as this is the responsibility of the owner/occupier. We only remove graffiti from public areas and Council property (including Council housing).

We do not own the following;

All concerns should be reported to the appropriate organisation -

- Canal side areas and structures
- British Waterways
- Railway property (stations and bridges)
- Cable Boxes – company named on the cable box (you will need to note the identification reference on the box)
- Rail track: 0845 711 4141
- Electricity substations – as identified on the box
- Telephone Boxes – as identified on the box

Appendix 4: How to use bin stores correctly

All household waste (black bags etc.) must be placed in the bins provided; failure to do so is an offence under Section 46 of the environmental Protection act 1990. Should any of your waste be found in areas other than the bin provided you will be notified and this may result in either a £100 Fixed penalty notice or a fine of up to £2500 upon conviction.

Collection for larger items e.g. settees, chairs and furniture can be arranged through the Council's Bulky Waste Collection service by calling 0845 002 0022 and paying the appropriate fee. You will be given a reference number and told which day to put out your items for collection. Waste must not be placed out for collection prior to the nominated collection day.

Any other items found to be out for collection and the appropriate charge not paid will be deemed as fly-tipping. This is an offence under Section 33 of the above legislation.

Appendix 5: What is fly-tipping and how to report it?

Fly-tipping includes; general Household waste, fridges, sofas, mattresses, garden waste, commercial and industrial waste. It costs the taxpayer approximately £150,000 a year to clean up fly-tipping. Basically, it is waste tipped on land which does not have a waste management licence.

The Law - Environmental Protection Act 1990

It is a serious criminal offence. Anyone – including householders – can be prosecuted under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The maximum penalty is £50,000 fine and/or twelve months imprisonment. However, Crown Prosecutions can lead to unlimited fines and/or imprisonment of up to five years. Dumped hazardous waste such as asbestos can lead to a prison sentence of up to five years. Fly-tipping from vehicles can see the owner of the vehicle prosecuted. The police also have the powers to seize vehicles.

Appendix 6: Useful contacts

Staffordshire County Council Looks after roads, pavements and street lighting in Tamworth Report Faults and Defects to; The Highways Hotline between 8am and 6pm Tel: 0300 111 8020 Email: highways@staffordshire.gov.uk Or you can report faults online	Estate Caretaking Team & Cleaning Services Monday – Thursday 8:45 am – 5:10pm and Friday 8:45am – 5:05pm Telephone number: 01827 254867 Offensive graffiti, where possible, will be removed within 24 hours of being reported.
Tamworth Police Tel: 101 or 999 in emergencies Email: Tamworth.npu@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk	Community Wardens Tel: 01827 709709 Email: enquiries@tamworth.gov.uk
Tamworth Anti-Social Behaviour team Tel: 101 or 999 in emergencies Email: Tamworth.asb@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk	Street Scene Tel: 01827 709709 Email: enquiries@tamworth.gov.uk
Environmental issues Email: environmentalmanagement@tamworth.gov.uk	Tenant regulation and Involvement Team Tel: 01827 709709 ext. 374 or 260 Email: tenantparticipation@tamworth.gov.uk

Contact details

If you wish to become a Tenant Inspector or to join us on an estate inspection, please contact the tenant Regulation and Involvement Team;

Tel: **01827 709709 ext. 374 or 260**

Email: tenantparticipation@tamworth.gov.uk

Tenant regulation and Involvement Team

Tamworth Borough Council

Marmion House

Lichfield Street

Tamworth

Staffordshire

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If you require this document in an alternative format or language, please contact us

