

Blenheim Gardens RMO

Estate Management Services Policy



Version No.	Date.	Version	Author	Board
1	3.01.08	1	DH	26.11.08
2				
3				

Introduction

The role of the Estate Service team is to provide a wide range of services such as cleaning, rubbish removal, graffiti removal, minor repairs, environmental works such as pruning, strimming and grass cutting, and garden maintenance (communal and residential).

BGRMO is committed to providing and reviewing its' estate service to ensure that Blenheim Gardens Estate residents are provided with an efficient and value for money service. BGRMO understands the effectiveness of the estate service team have on not only the appearance of the estate, but also the quality of life on residents to enjoy their home and environment.

Resident involvement is a central part of delivering estate services and we will ensure that we continue to work in partnership with our residents (and contractors) to ensure this service area exceeds expectations and demonstrates value for money. To achieve this BGRMO will set targets and ensure that these are closely monitored through various means.

BGRMO listens to its' residents and we ensure that they are the driving force for improvement. We take a learning approach to all comments received to ensure constant improvements are made in this area and that the area is constantly reviewed.

It is the aim of BGRMO to prove our commitment to our residents and provide a high quality estate services service that will foster a feeling of pride and ownership of the estate.

National Context:

The Housing Act 2004 and the introduction of 'sustainable communities' as increased the priorities placed on estate management services. Good estate management services are perceived to be a vehicle of change to improve the lives of residents on estates and reduce areas that impede on quality of life, anti social behaviour, 'enviro-crime' and so on.

Strategic Context:

Blenheim Gardens RMO manages 440 units on Blenheim Gardens Estate on behalf of the local authority, Lambeth council. The estate consists of a number of small blocks (Glanville Road, Prague Place, Ramillies Close and Blenheim Gardens) and a compensation of houses and flats en block. The estate also services sum 204 under croft garages, 200 (non-allocated) parking spaces and a number of service roads.

Blenheim Gardens RMO aims to manage the estate services strategically and in doing so contributes towards the local authorities 'Community Plan and the Housing Improvement Plan'. The RMO's overarching mission strategy is to build a cleaner, safer and more prosperous future with the residents we serve.

Policy

It is BGRMO mission to provide a greener, safer and prosperous estate for all residents. It is also our vision to provide the best possible housing management services possible that are customer focused and demonstrate good value for money.

In developing this policy our strategic priorities are:

- To achieve an excellent standard of cleanliness within the resources available.
- To minimise waste and encourage recycling
- To achieve quality, greener open spaces
- To work with our partner organisations to deliver 'decent housing' and 'decent estates'
- To provide excellent housing services that are accessible to all
- To promote resident involvement in all aspects of service delivery

Delivering a good quality estate service will encourage a sense of ownership and responsibility in the estate appearance amongst all who live, work and visit the estate. The estate services team will help achieve this by improving the appearance of the estate by:

- Cleaning
- Carrying out environmental works
- Gardening
- Ground maintenance
- Weeding
- Refuse collection
- Collecting bulky items
- Recycling
- Removing graffiti
- Completing repairs
- Reporting abandoned vehicles
- Identifying issues concerning the estate
- Deterring and dealing with anti social behaviour, including nuisance and harassment.

Policy objectives:

Blenheim Gardens RMO will aim too:

- Work effectively with the residents and partners to constantly improve the estate cleaning service
- Work with residents and partners to protect and enhance the estate
- Work with residents and partners to maintain and improve the environment
- Make tenants aware of their responsibilities and the responsibility of the RMO by promoting and advertising service standards

- Link the local strategic context with the national context strategic aims of reducing anti social behaviour and promoting sustaining communities and so on
- Strengthen partnership working with other agencies

The estate area covered by the policy is:



Blenheim Gardens, Glanville Road, Prague Place and Ramillies Close

Caretaking:

Blenheim Gardens RMO employs two dedicated caretakers. The caretakers work from 8 am to 4 pm Monday to Friday. A caretaker also attends at the weekend (either a Saturday or Sunday) to rotate the refuse bins and note any health and safety issues. A caretaker will:

- Adhere to the estate cleaning charter
- Check equipment on the estate like stopcocks, play areas, lifts and fire doors where applicable.
- Check and replacing light bulbs in shared areas
- Clear gullies and drain lids of leaves.
- Keep bin areas clean.
- Report repairs in communal areas.
- Report graffiti and removing where possible, particularly obscene and racist graffiti.
- Help in and attend to emergencies, like burst pipes and floods, which affect tenants' home.
- Deal with blocked drains.

- Deal with communal lighting breakdowns in blocks.
- Report any faults or repairs in public areas that tenants have told them about or that they have noted.
- Investigate reports of illegal/abandoned vehicles, and arrange removal of dangerous abandoned vehicles as soon as possible
- Keep staircase and the shared areas of your estate clean and litter free.
- Sweep, mop and spot clean walls, staircases and landings every week.
- Empty, dust and position refuse containers every week, remove litter and bulk items from the bin chambers
- Cut grass
- Spray pathways and dry areas with weed killer to keep them clear of weeds and moss
- Clear dumped and fly-tipped rubbish.
- Prune shrubs, flower beds and bushes
- Clear out empty properties and clean them ready for occupation.
- Jet wash communal areas
- Clear out garages
- Ensure the equipment uses is inspected and maintained in accordance with the manufactures specifications
- Unspecified cleaning and grounds maintenance

Ground maintenance:

The council retains the ground maintenance responsibilities of maintaining communal trees on the estate.

Residents and homeowners under the terms of their tenancy/lease/transfer document, have a responsibility to keep grass cut short, ensure hedges and shrubs do not cause a nuisance to others and their gardens neat and tidy.

The RMO will provide extra services to vulnerable tenants such as the elderly and/or disabled.

Owner and Communal gardens:

The RMO will make clear areas of the communal ground that it is responsible for. Communal gardening will be completed in relation to the time scales stipulated in the estate cleaning charter.

Responsibilities for the up keep of private gardens are detailed in the tenancy handbook and lease relating to the property.

If you have a home with a garden you are responsible for keeping fences and gardens in good condition and tidy. This includes:

- Ensuring the grass is cut regularly
- Preventing weeds and bushes from overgrowing.
- Ensure trees do not grow too large or too near the building where it might cause structural problems.
- Keeping your garden clear of rubbish – this includes both garden and household waste.
- Ensuring items such as broken down vehicles, old fridges and other similar bulky items are not kept in gardens.

Communal paths and other areas:

The caretakers will look after shared lawns and weeding of planted areas.

Litter waste collection:

All residents are expected to dispose of all household rubbish in the estate bins provided. Large item removal (bulky) are arranged to be removed via the estate office. Residents may leave items for collection in designated areas throughout the estate. The RMO operates an estate bulk refuse collection on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday of each week. These collection times may change with season and in regard to bank holidays.

Estate service gullies and drains:

Estate drains and gullies will be inspected and cleaned regularly. Where a blockage is found this will be reported to the estate office for action.

Recycling:

Estate recycling is managed by the Local Authority. There are a number of recycling banks situated throughout the estate.

The following items may be recycled from home and placed in recycling banks cardboard, paper, food and drink cartons, plastic bottles, glass bottles and jars, cans, tins and aerosols.

The RMO however, encourages residents and staff members to recycle as much as possible. The RMO operates an estate recycling box system for residents who are unable to utilise the recycling banks. The recycling boxes are available from the estate office.

Bulky items and rubbish:

Residents are required to make arrangements to remove their own bulky items and waste. The RMO however, does operate a bulky item collection on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday from designated areas throughout the estate. The nearest waste site is:

Smugglers Way, Wandsworth, London SW18 1JS (behind B&Q)

Telephone: 020 8871 2788

Opening times for cars only: Monday – Friday 9am – 4pm.
Saturday 8am – 6pm.
Sunday 8am – 5pm.

If you use a van for household waste you must obtain a 'free tip' letter

Opening times for vans only: Monday - Friday 7.30am – 4pm
Saturday - 7.30am – 12pm.
Sunday – 8am – 5pm.

The following items can be disposed of at Smugglers Way:

Batteries (cars and household), books, brown, green, white and mixed glass, CDs, clean timber, fridges, furniture, garden waste, gas bottles, inert waste, mixed cans, mixed paper and card, plastic bottles, scrap metal, textiles, tyres, videos, waste engine oil.

Parking Enforcement:

The RMO operates its own parking enforcement contract and this is covered under a separate policy.

Parking Permits:

The RMO operates its own parking enforcement contract and this is covered under a separate policy.

Abandoned vehicles:

The RMO operates its own parking enforcement contract and this is covered under a separate policy.

Nuisance and antisocial behaviour (ASB):

Anti social behaviour on the estate such as noise, vandalism, graffiti and harassment will not be tolerated in any form and the RMO is committed in taking firm action against perpetrations of such actions. The RMO will hold accountable residents who are responsible for causing anti social behaviour. This includes members of household, visitors to the address and pets.

In line with central governments RESPECT agenda, the RMO is dedicated in taking a holistic approach to ASB and its causes. The RMO has developed a multi agency approach to combating ASB, while working with the perpetrator, their family and the victim.

In 2006, the RMO introduced a dog ownership charter to address the concerns of residents. The terms of the charter needs to be adhered to by all estate residents. Please contact the estate office for further details on the dog ownership charter.

In 2008, the RMO developed its own 'Good-neighbourhood agreement' which all residents are encouraged to sign up too. Please contact the estate office for further details or to sign up to the campaign.

Details of the RMO's anti social behaviour policy is covered under a separate policy.

Estate security:

The RMO, in partnership with the council and United Residents Housing, will provide and maintain estate lighting, estate fencing and open spaces to improve estate security.

The RMO has introduced a number of scooter barriers throughout the estate as a traffic calming measure and to reduce the risk of injury to residents and visitors to the estate.

Caretakers and Direct Labour Operatives are visual on the estate during working hours.

The RMO will inspect and improve estate signage as and when required.

The RMO also operate two mobile petard cameras which are situated around the estate.

The RMO is committed to work with police is designing out crime of the estate and reducing crime hotspots.

Repair responsibilities:

The council is responsible for repairing and maintaining the structure of the estate. This includes:

- Roof
- Drains
- Gutters
- Pipes (including waste) outside your home
- Foundations
- Outside walls
- Outside doors
- Window sills, window catches and cords
- External painting
- Floors and ceilings
- Pathways and steps
- Boundary walls
- Rendering
- External slates
- Handrails

Some of the above tasks have been delegated to the RMO/ United Residents Housing to undertake on behalf of the Council.

If damage is caused by a resident of the estate, then the resident will resume responsibility for the repair.

TV Aerials / Satellite dishes:

Residents are required to obtain the RMO permission to install an external aerial and/or satellite dish. Residents are advised to insure these against damage or theft. Residents are further advised not to install these directly on to the roof since it may cause the roof to leak and invalidate the guarantee. Please contact the estate office for further advice on this.

Estate Cleaning Standards

In consultation with residents in 2006, Blenheim Gardens RMO developed the following estate cleaning charter to assist residents in monitoring the estate cleaning service. The charter will be monitored and evaluated periodically.

Estate Cleaning Charter:

- **Litter and dog waste bins** - *Emptied at least once a week*
- **Bulk waste collection service** - *A full collection of bulky items dumped on the estate will be carried out three times per week, on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday.*
- **Human excrement** - *Will be cleared on the same day it is reported*
- **Dead animals** - *Will be collected and disposed of on the same day it is reported.*
- **Dog Fouling** - *Will be removed on the same day the request is received*
- **Refuse Bins** - *Rotated daily, emptied twice a week. Bin chambers deep cleaned every three months*
- **Communal balconies** - *Swept at least twice a week and washed at least once every six weeks*
- **Windows Frames and LEB cupboards on balconies** - *Will be cleaned at least annually*
- **Communal stairs** - *Swept at least twice a week, washed at least once every six weeks*
- **Communal Alleyways** - *Swept at least twice a week.*
- **Garage Doors** - *Will be cleaned at least annually*
- **Graffiti** - *Will be removed within 24 hours of being reported; offensive or racist graffiti removed the same day*
- **Abandoned Vehicles** - *Vehicles that do not pose any risk to the public will be removed within 7 days of being reported.*
- **Hazardous vehicles** (for instance, those that are burnt out or in a dangerous position) *will be removed within 24 hours of being reported.*
- **Fly Tipping** - *Removed within 48 hours of being reported.*
- **Trip Hazards** - *Hazards highlighted for repair and made safe the same day the request is received.*
- **Spillage's in Communal Areas** - *Removed the same day as reported*
- **Inspections** - *Will take place on a fortnightly basis; estate walkabouts held quarterly. All residents will be invited to attend quarterly estate inspections.*
- **Grassed areas** - *Will be cut at least three times between April and November*

Staff Conduct:

All members of the estate service team will:

- Be dressed in uniform
- Wear identification at all times

- Be polite, courteous and helpful to all residents, members of public and colleagues at all times

When working in residents homes, we will ensure that dust sheets are laid where appropriate and that all working areas are left in a clean and tidy condition following completion. This will include the removal of any rubbish as the result of work removed from the property.

All requests for the estate service team will be booked and appointed on request by the estate office. All priority requested will be responded to within one working day.

Residents requesting gardening work (i.e. disabled and/or Elders) will be responded to within 28 days of being requested (weather permitting).

Materials:

Commonly, the materials and equipment used for maintaining the estate services include, but is not exclusive to:

- Mops
- Brooms
- Brushes
- Busters
- Cloths
- Litter pickers
- Bins
- Refuse sacks
- Floor cleaner and polish
- Disinfectant / specialist cleaning materials
- Jet washer
- Air freshener
- Solvent cleaner
- Graffiti remover
- Lawn mower
- Law vac
- Leaf blowers
- Signage
- PPE

First Aid

The RMO has two dedicated First Aiders. In the office this is Sarah Uwajeh, and on site this is Fred Mears.

The First Aiders will check and replenish the first aid boxes periodically. Any missing items will be ordered. All accidents are reported in the RMO accident book including, time of accident, location, name, date, nature of injury and what first aid was administered. All accidents, need to be reported.

The First Aider will take charge of situations if a serious illness/injury occurs. In the absence of the First Aider this will be an 'appointed person' The first aider will be responsible for reporting all incident and accidents, including RIDDOR to the Estate Director.

Working at heights:

Where this is required and special risk assessment has been completed for members of the RMO to undertake this work.

Portable tools:

All electrical appliances will be either 110 volts cross centred earthed with a RCD or will be battery operated. Service records and PAT test certificates will be maintained by the RMO.

Control of work with hazardous substances and processes:

Each task that is used which requires the use of a hazardous substance will be used in accordance with a specific COSHH and Risk Assessment for the completion of that task. The RMO DLO workforce will be trained in understanding the risk assessment and for the task they are required to undertake. All spillages will need to be reported to the estate office.

Storage and Handling of Hazardous Substance Materials:

Only approved materials will be used on the estate. The materials used will be covered in a COSHH assessment. All materials will be stored in various locations around the estate. Each chemical will be housed in specific locations to prevent the mixing of chemicals. The appropriate PPE is available in all storage locations.

Storage areas are regularly inspected by Management.

Sharps:

Where drug paraphernalia is found i.e. needles, bottles, syringes, pipes and so on, RMO employees are required not to touch the paraphernalia without employing the correct procedure and equipment to prevent bodily fluid spills. The employee will use gloves, shovel, bucket, hazardous waste bag, a litter picker, tweezers, trowel, sharpes box and where necessary, signage to warn others in dealing and disposing of the equipment. All such findings will be reported to both the RMO and the Police.

House keeping:

All staff members are trained in Good housekeeping management practices on employment. Staff members are also reviewed in this area during their annual appraisals

Signs and notices:

Where the work tasks dictate Hazard warning such as hard hat area, slippery floors, these will be emplaced during the work progress.

Protection of water quality:

Waste water will be disposed of through suitable drainage except where directed as hazardous in the COSHH. Chemicals will be removed and disposed off in line with the manufactures recommendations and where necessary through a licensed waste carrier.

Estate Inspections:

Estate inspections will be completed by a member of the RMO staff on a fortnightly basis. The inspection findings are typed and are available for residents to view at anytime.

Residents will be invited to a quarterly estate inspection. Estate inspections will be advertised in the RMO quarterly bulleting. A copy of the bulletin is distributed to all addresses on the estate as well as to partner organisations.

Estate lighting:

An inspection of the estate lighting will be completed and documented each week. Lighting bulbs will be changed during the inspection as required. Any light that requires specialist attention will be outsourced by the repairs manager to the RMO's approved contractor.

Salt and Grit supplies:

The caretakers will ensure an adequate supply (of not less than 10 bags) is available at all times. The caretakers will be responsible for its distribution having regard for weather conditions.

Pest Control:

The service area is provided by the L.B.Lambeth and is covered under separate policy and procedure.

Tree Maintenance:

The service area is provided by the L.B.Lambeth and is covered under separate policy and procedure.

Out of Hours service – First Call

This service operates seven days a week, 24 hours a day and 365 days a year and provides an 'out-of-hours' service to arrange emergency caretaking

services. Outside the normal opening hours of the local area housing office you can report emergency repairs to First Call on: 020 7926 6666.

Lone working:

Lone workers are not to enter any property that show signs of a forced entry or where they believe that drunks, drug addicts, derelicts or similar anti social elements are inside. Similarly, employees are not to attempt to enter a property if the same type of people is preventing access. In such event the employee is required to contact the estate office or in the event of an emergency dial 999. All such incidents should be recorded.

Local Emergencies:

The RMO, in liaison with the L.B.Lambeth, will respond to all emergencies affected the estate by ensuring all managers are available to be consulted and to take action outside office hours. Instances of such emergencies include, but are not exclusive too:

- Fire
- Spillages of toxic substances on the estate
- Snow and Ice causing a hazard
- Severe frost causing burst water pipes

Manual handling:

All RMO employees will receive manual handling training as part of their introductions.

Multi agency working:

Safer neighbourhood team:

The RMO works with local police to identify and combat criminal and anti social behaviour on the estate. Residents may become a member of the SNT by contacting the estate office.

Neighbourhood watch scheme:

The estate currently operates with a NW scheme. To join the RMO's neighbourhood watch scheme, please contact the estate office.

Monitoring the estate management service:

Residents are encouraged to help us improve our service by -:

- Reporting incidents to the estate office
- Telling us your concerns regarding the estate services

- Showing consideration for your neighbours in disposing of your household rubbish
- Treating employees of the RMO the same way you wish to be treated.
- Participating in service reviews.

All residents can play a role in monitoring the estate services. This can be by:

- Participating in estate inspections
- Completing and returning surveys and questionnaires
- Participating in focus groups
- Contacting the estate office
- For more information on resident involvement, please contact the estate office and request a copy of the RMO's resident estate compact

Communication:

The RMO will produce a quarterly newsletter and will distribute resident notices as and when required. Notices regarding estate services will be placed in the resident notice boards.

Statutory requirements:

Right to Manage 1994 (as amended)

Public health Act 1936

Control of pollution act 1974

Health and safety at work Act 1974 (as amended)

Litter Act 1983

COSHH Regulations 1988

Environment protection Act 1990

Control of disposal and waste regulations 1988

Clean neighbourhood and environment Act 1991

Risk management:

It is essential that the cost of providing the estate services by the RMO is sufficiently funded from the local authority from the allowances received. The RMO will need to consider managing the risk of providing this service if the council reduced the RMO's allowance in this area.

The RMO will need to prove to its residents and the Council that the services being provided demonstrate value for money

Blenheim Gardens RMO regularly under take and complete staff risk assessments for carrying out the tasks highlighted in this policy.

Equalities impact Assesement:

Blenheim Gardens Estate consists of 440 mixed tenure properties, social tenancies (council), leaseholders and freeholders (with and without service charges) and operates within an equal opportunity policy to ensure it no resident is restricted from access any RMO services. Where barriers to service provisions are noted, these will be removed.

The RMO EOP is reviewed periodically

Financial impact Assesement:

The following financial information was considered during the development of this policy:

It is essential that the cost of providing the estate services by the RMO is sufficiently funded from the local authority from the allowances received. The RMO will need to consider managing the risk of providing this service if the council reduced the RMO's allowance in this area.

If you would like this information in large print, in Braille, or in another format or language, please contact us on 020 7926 0158.

Español: Si desea esta información en otro idioma, rogamos nos llame al 020 7926 0158.

Français: Si vous souhaitez ces informations dans une autre langue veuillez nous contacter au 020 7926 0158.

Português: Se desejar esta informação noutro idioma é favor telefonar para 020 7926 0158

Twi: Se wope saa nkaeboy yi wo kasa foforo mu a fre 020 7926 0158.

Yoruba: Tí ẹ ba fẹ ìmoràn yíí, ní èdè Òmíràn, ẹjọ, ẹ kàn wà l'ágogo 020 7926 0158.