

Estate Inspections and Neighbourhood Officers Report

Area in city/ citywide:	All Areas
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Appendix:	

Purpose:

An update on Estate Inspections and the work of the Neighbourhood Officers who joined the council in July 2025.

Main body of the report:

Background

This report is an update on the report brought to Area Panels in July 2025 that discussed the reintroduction of Neighbourhood Officer led Estate Inspections.

Current Progress and Operational Arrangements

Brighton & Hove City Council has now reintroduced a programme of estate inspections across the city. This follows several years without a structured inspection process, and represents a major step forward in improving the condition, safety, and appearance of our housing estates.

The estate inspection programme covers all council properties and ensures that all areas are inspected formally on an annual basis.

The programme commenced in November 2025 and is already delivering visible improvements and stronger relationships between residents, councillors, and council staff.

Seven Neighbourhood Officers are in post and leading this work and the eighth is soon to start. Two Officers are assigned to each area office; Central, East, North and West.

The Neighbourhood Officers are accompanied on their inspections and invites are sent to Councillors, a Environmental Surveyor, a Repairs Team representative and a Community Engagement team member. We welcome attendance from residents, and are collating names of interested groups and individuals.

Inspections occur on Tuesday and Thursday mornings and move around the city each week / month.

The schedule is:

- Week 1 Two inspections in the Central Housing Team Area
- Week 2 Two inspections in the East Housing Team Area
- Week 3 Two inspections in the North Housing Team Area
- Week 4 Two inspections in the West Housing Team Area

And Repeat.

Having an Area Office focus each week allows the Surveyor or Estates representative to attend the inspections without diary clashes. The programme also allows for follow up work and re-visits and checks by the Neighbourhood Officer on weeks that their inspections aren't taking place.

Since launching the new inspection model, Neighbourhood Officers have been out across the city identifying repairs, resolving problems, and speaking directly with residents to understand local concerns. Inspections will focus on repairs, estate improvement works, health and safety and hazards. Many issues such as repairs, anti-social behaviour concerns, faulty lights, damaged fencing, and blocked gutters have been identified and reported quickly thanks to these on site inspections.

The new inspection programme is strengthening relationships between the council and residents. Officers are uniformed and more visible on estates and with the addition of the Community Engagement Officer, we are able to listen to residents' concerns and ideas directly. By inviting Councillors and tenant representatives to take part in inspections, this ensures transparency and shared ownership of local issues.

Regulatory Framework and 'one council' working.

This work supports the council's responsibilities under the Social Housing Regulation Act by helping identify health and safety concerns early, monitoring communal areas, and ensuring that properties meet appropriate standards. It is important that we are compliant with the legal requirement and we share that we want council properties to be safe and attractive places to live. Officers have received training on the Housing Health and Safety Regulatory Standards of hazard identification as listed in the Housing Act 2004.

The inspections also promote more joined-up working across the council. Neighbourhood Officers now work closely with Environmental Services, Estates, Community Engagement, Repairs, City Environment and planned maintenance. The issues resulting from the inspection are passed to the right place promptly and resolved as part of a coordinated "One Council" approach.

Vision and Resident Engagement

Residents who cannot attend inspections in person are still able to contribute through the Community Engagement team, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to have their voice heard. Currently, residents can ask for something to be looked at via contacting Housing.CustomerServices@brighton-hove.gov.uk or 01273293030 and the Community Engagement Team are currently working on developing an online platform called "YourVoice" where the inspections will be listed and residents can add suggestions.

Additional success examples of Neighbourhood Officers

The new Neighbourhood Officer team are on estates on a daily basis and they hold a casework portfolio and carry out tenancy visits in people homes. Some examples of their casework that has been noticed on Estate Inspections are

- Removing rough sleepers from a communal laundry site and ensuring the area is secure.
- Discovering a property that was squatted and used as a drugs den and working with the police to secure the flat and return it back to the council
- Finding a storage solution for a tenant with a mobility scooter and assisting with connecting the tenant to the Adult Social Care team for home improvements.
- Monitoring a block of flats where the main entry door was repeatedly damaged, checking CCTV and warning the person causing damage to resolve the problem.
- Finding the source of a historic noise complaint to equipment on the roof of a block of flats.
- Supporting victims of anti-social behavior by witnessing noise, collecting diary sheet evidence and reassuring residents of the sanctions the Housing Officer is taking.
- Visiting neighbours following a fire in a flat and discussing causes and consequences.
- Negotiating and supporting tenant with unkempt gardens and offering green waste collection support to tenants who are trying to get on top of a garden that needs work

Next Steps/how to get involved:

Conclusion

The Estate Inspection process is now embedded and working well. There is additional work to develop the Community engagement model and ensure we publicise the inspections to all interested groups.

The Estate Inspection summary documents that we complete after the inspection alongside Key Performance Indicators that we feed back in the Area panel Report are also being developed further. We welcome contributions from panels on what they would like to see.

If you would like to attend an Estate Inspection or want a copy of the annual programme please contact Housing Customer Services on 01273 293030 or Housing.CustomerServices@Brighton-Hove.gov.uk

