

Operational Procedure 44

Estate Inspections

Responsible Officer	Senior Housing Officer - Technical						
Issue No.	1	Revision No.	4	Revision Date:	12/7/11	Doc Ref:	<u>OP44</u> <u>v1.4</u>

Amendment and Authorisation Record

OP44 – Estate Inspections

Date	Author	Paragraph ref:	Nature of change	Authorised by
27/6/2007	VS		First Edition	
27/01/09	MH		Update responsible officer job title	AJ
5/8/10	CA		Resp. Officer and minor amendments	
12/07/2011	VS		Minor amendments	

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Estate inspections are to be carried out on a regular basis across all of the Council's stock. These inspections are an opportunity for tenants and residents to improve the appearance of an estate.
- 1.2 Two formal inspections are to be carried out on each scheme each year.
- 1.3 The involvement of tenants and residents should be encouraged by providing as much notice as possible of the due inspection.
- 1.4 The attendance of housing staff for these inspections is also a further opportunity for tenants and residents to raise estate management issues on a formal or informal basis.
- 1.5 Regular inspection should ensure that all schemes are brought up to and maintained to a high standard allowing problems to be dealt with promptly before it becomes a more serious issue.
- 1.6 The inspections should also ensure that estate management staff can take prompt action against individuals who do not take care of their garden to the annoyance of others. This prompt action and proactive approach should reduce the number of complaints overall.

2.0 External Inspection Procedures

- 2.1 All Council housing schemes should be externally inspected, at least twice each year with no more than 6 months between each inspection. An example of an Estate Inspection Schedule is found at *Appendix A*.
- 2.2 Each Technical Officer should determine a yearly cyclical programme for their areas using the Area Officers List which can be found here - www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/areaofficers/default.asp.
- 2.3 The forthcoming estate inspections for each month should be notified in writing to the Shetland Tenants Forum (STF). The STF is to invited to send a representative if they so wish.
- 2.4 The same information is to be presented as a notice in the Shetland Times each month with an invitation for all tenants and residents to attend the inspection.
- 2.5 The advertisement should seek to advise tenants and residents of the date, time and starting point for the inspection.
- 2.6 The Service Manager, Environmental health is to be sent a copy of the advert, along with an invitation for an Environmental health officer to attend.
- 2.7 The Housing Officer for the area is to be sent a copy of the advert, along with an invitation to attend and address any tenancy issues in the area.
- 2.8 The inspection form attached *Appendix B*, should be used by the Technical Officer to record the inspection. The report forms should be completed on site. Detailed comments regarding the condition of the houses, and any other general issues from the estate should be noted. Comments should be linked to actions or a note about future works, and the responsible officer should also be noted.
- 2.9 Follow up action by the responsible officer as required should then be taken i.e. issue letter requesting a tenant cut their grass, notify planned maintenance that there are problems with the paint work, contact Environmental Services re removal of old car.
- 2.10 The completed report forms should then be copied by the Technical Officer to the area Councillor, STF and area tenant group (if there is one) for their information.
- 2.11 The report form should be updated by the Technical Officer once the ordered work has been completed, and the Councillor / Tenant Group advised in writing.

- 2.12 Wherever, practicable to do so these estate inspections should be planned to coincide with other business in the area e.g. pre or post inspection of repairs.
- 2.13 In remote island locations it may not be best value to send an officer from the mainland for a relatively short inspection period. Wherever practicable to do so the inspection in these remote island areas should be carried out when a visit is made for some other reason. However, if there is not a proper reason to attend, the Technical Officer can make arrangements for a resident on the island to act as an agent on behalf of the SIC housing service but the procedure as outlined above should still be followed.
- 2.14 Where an external agent is used in remote locations, the Technical Officer remains responsible for ensuring that any reports are returned within one week and repairs ordering in accordance with 2.6 to 2.9 (inc).

3.0 Guidelines for external inspections

External inspections should assess the general condition of the following:

- Roofs, chimneys, chimney heads, pots, cans and cowls
- Guttering / down pipes
- External walls and finishes
- External windows and doors
- Paths and steps should be in a safe condition
- External handrails should be secure
- Boundary walls and fences are secure (councils responsibility)
- Divisional fencing is secure (tenants responsibility)
- Garden areas are being maintained in a clean and tidy condition
- Sheds or other garden structures are maintained in a good state of repair
- General assessment of estate e.g. old cars / scrap / graffiti / vandalism / noise / pets / parking areas / rubbish / dog fouling
- Possible abandoned tenancies / non-occupation
- Communal facilities e.g. rubbish stores / drying greens / stair wells / lobbies / walls and fences bounding communal areas
- Void properties are secure and well maintained
- Any other issues relevant to the community

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Appendix A:

Count of Reference		Month						Grand Total
Insp code	Estate	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Technical Officer 1	Area1	14						14
	Area2			89	82	30	97	298
	Area3					51		51
	Area4	31						31
	Area5	16						16
	Area6	19						19
	Area7		18					18
	Area8		18					18
	Area9		29					29
	Area10	2	2	46	49	33		132
Technical Officer 1 Total		82	67	135	131	114	97	626

APPENDIX B

Shetland Islands Council: Estate Inspection Form

Estate:

Date:

Area Councillor:

Tenant / Resident Group:

General condition

External walls / finishes / windows / doors

Good Fair Poor

Gardens / walls / fences / gates

Good Fair Poor

Footpaths / car parks / open spaces

Good Fair Poor

Address	Repairs ordered or other action	Action needed by tenant	Date letter sent (if applicable)	Follow up inspection (if applicable)	Comments (provide detail)

Address	Repairs ordered	Action needed by tenant	Date letter sent (if applicable)	Follow up inspection (if applicable)	Comments

Technical Officer:

Other Officer: