



Excellent Neighbourhoods Strategy

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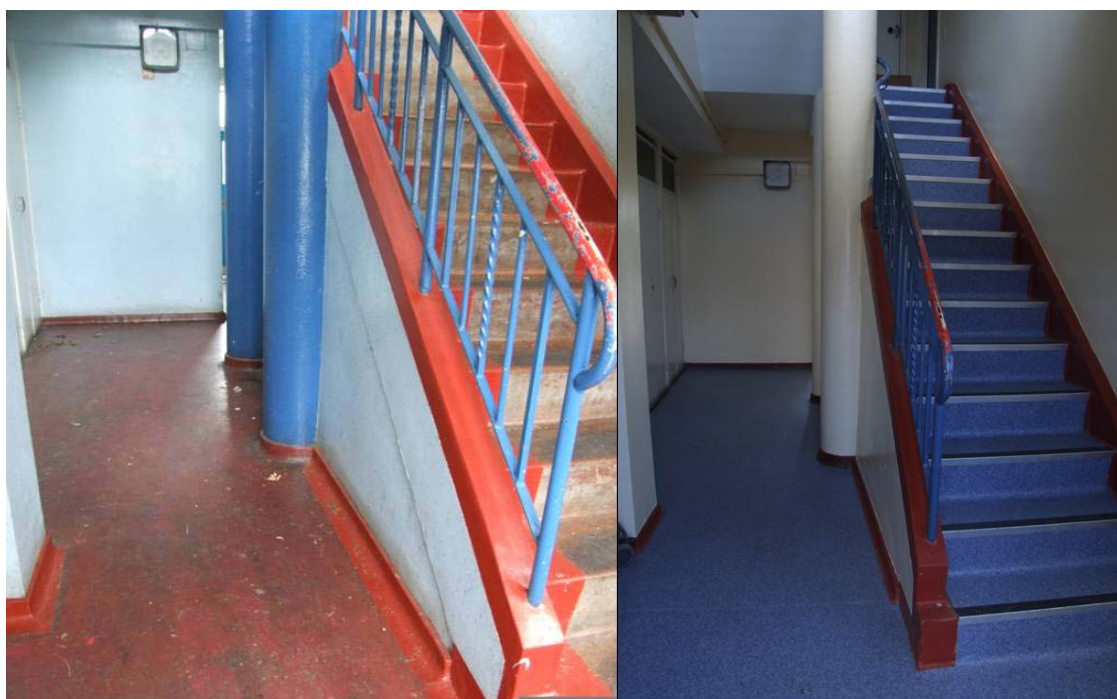
Version Control

Item	Reason for Change	Ver	Author	Date
1	Creation of Estate Works Strategy	1.0	Mandy Dunstan	July 07
2	Revise existing strategy	1.1	Derek Rust	July 09

Last Review Date:	July2009	Next Review Date:	July 2011
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Cover picture shows the transformation of Martynside and Moineau communal areas.

Below are improvements to the entrances at Underhill Court - both part of the 2008/09 Estate Works Strategy programme.



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Before and after - the refreshed entrance of 62-67 Brent Place - part of the 2008/09 Estate Works Strategy programme.

What are we trying to achieve?

Barnet Homes' vision is about improving lives not just housing. We want to provide quality homes that inspire pride of place and create vibrant and lasting communities.¹

To deliver we have developed this strategy aiming to create **excellent neighbourhoods** that blend with the wider environment and where people wish to live by choice.

This supports our shareholder, the council and its objective to make the borough clean, green and safe. We are in the unique position of being able to influence many neighbourhoods and communities across Barnet for the better by the provision of services and the investment decisions we make with residents. This will ensure our estates blend more seamlessly with the surrounding areas.

We published our first Estate Works Strategy in July 2007 to develop the physical environment and fabric of estates to increase their desirability as places to live. Maintaining the quality of estates in Barnet [as] places where people and communities want to live is a goal that corporately we want to achieve.²

We have achieved a great deal since including the following.

- Identifying budgets for estate improvement works
- Establishing a transparent process to identify estate improvement work
- Developing criteria with residents to prioritise proposed schemes
- Developing exemplary consultation with tenants and leaseholders about the scope of work once it has been prioritised
- Delivering pilot schemes designed to create impact and transformation for residents
- Raising awareness of the importance of developing the estate environment through briefings, estate visits and promotional display material.

However, we recognise that while making physical changes are important to transform estate environments, these alone are not enough to make excellent neighbourhoods.

This strategy takes a wider view of what makes good quality neighbourhoods and uses the findings of our tenant and leaseholder postal surveys in 2008/09.

How regeneration estates fit into the strategy

For our four largest council estates, improvements to the estate environment will be met through individual regeneration schemes. These involve large scale demolition and rebuilding by the council's Registered Social Landlord (RSL) partners.

¹ Barnet Homes 5 year Business Plan 2009 – 2014 Planning for Success

² Barnet Homes Page 4 Introduction Estate Works Strategy 2007

In the current economic climate this is proving difficult and delays are being experienced. As a result we have developed a separate strategy³ to ensure these estates are maintained to the highest standard in the intervening period, bearing in mind the long term plans.

For more details see the “Managing Regeneration Estates Successfully” strategy.



Transformed entrances to Franklin House, West Hendon - part of the Regeneration Estate Works programme for 2008/09.

³ Barnet Homes “Managing Regeneration Estates Successfully Sept 2007

What our residents think of their existing neighbourhoods

	Tenants ⁴	Leaseholders ⁵
Overall satisfaction with the neighbourhood as a place to live	70%	61%
Main problems identified with the neighbourhood with ranking	1) Parking 44% 2) Rubbish or litter 33% 3) Disruptive children/teenagers 27% 4) Noisy neighbours 27% 5) Vandalism and graffiti 24%	1) Parking 44% 2) Rubbish or litter 41% 3) Disruptive children/teenagers 25% 4) Vandalism and graffiti 25% 5) Noisy neighbours 24%
Priorities for improvement relevant to this strategy with ranking	1) Tackle security issues and ASB 16% 2) Improve day to day repair work 15% 5) Improve estate cleanliness and caretaking 9% 11) Improve grounds maintenance 3%	2) Repairs and maintenance 4) Dealing with ASB 6) Neighbourhood as a place to live 38% are satisfied that grounds maintenance represents value for money – 40% dissatisfied
Distribution of satisfaction with neighbourhood by area (excluding regeneration)	Barnet 83% Finchley 77% Hendon 69% Edgware 66%	Barnet 70% Finchley 69% Hendon 59% Edgware 50%

Both tenants and leaseholders are largely unanimous in giving the top five neighbourhood issues as:

- parking problems
- rubbish and litter
- disruptive children and teenagers
- noisy neighbours
- vandalism and graffiti

There is also a common view about how to improve the neighbourhood:

- tackle security and ASB
- improve repairs and maintenance
- improve cleanliness and the neighbourhood environment

⁴ STATUS survey 2008

⁵ Leasehold satisfaction survey 2008

Main issues identified by area

Neighbourhood issue	Tenants	Leaseholders
Parking	Hendon 54% Edgware 52% Barnet 42% Finchley 37%	Hendon 55% Edgware 42% Barnet 41% Finchley 35%
Rubbish or litter	Hendon 41% Edgware 39% Finchley 23% Barnet 22%	Edgware 42% Hendon 40% Finchley 32% Barnet 32%
Disruptive children/teenagers	Hendon 32% Edgware 28% Finchley 18% Barnet 18%	Hendon 32% Edgware 23% Finchley 19% Barnet 16%
Noisy neighbours	Hendon 30% Finchley 25% Edgware 23% Barnet 19%	Edgware 22% Finchley 22% Hendon 19% Barnet 19%
Vandalism and graffiti	Hendon 32% Edgware 28% Finchley 14% Barnet 9%	Hendon 46% Edgware 20% Barnet 16% Finchley 15%
Drug use and dealing	Hendon 27% Edgware 25% Finchley 17% Barnet 12%	Hendon 33% Edgware 16% Barnet 12% Finchley 8%

Tenants and leaseholders in Barnet and Finchley have the highest levels of satisfaction with their neighbourhood while levels for Hendon and Edgware are significantly lower.

When the most commonly sited problems are broken down, tenants and leaseholders generally agree that Hendon and Edgware have the most significant problems for each issue.

The main objectives and ambitions

In response to these findings we have developed four themes to the strategy. They are as follows.

1 Estate works and environmental improvements

Our aim is to increase resident satisfaction with the neighbourhood by at least 5% in the next four years.

The estate works improvement programme started in 2008 to preserve and improve our estates in partnership with residents and staff. The initiative is an essential tool for reinvestment in our neighbourhoods.

Using our annual capital and revenue estate works budget ensures we are investing and:

- i) encouraging residents to work in partnership with us to enhance the the community's quality of life and resolving problems or concerns and
- ii) providing neighbourhoods with the opportunity to make improvements to ensure their long term viability.

Using our residents agreed priorities as the criteria, joint inspections are arranged annually with residents and staff on named estates, creating a holistic and consensual approach to identifying the improvements needed. These will significantly enhance the estate environment and leave a meaningful legacy for years to come.

Our first six pilot projects have been a significant success during 2008. We now aim to build on this and effectively mainstream the service for future years.

2 Caretaking, cleaning and grounds maintenance

Our aim is to raise satisfaction with caretaking by 5% in the next four years.

Our caretaking service is highly regarded by residents and has Charter Mark accreditation. Despite this, cleanliness is identified by both tenants and leaseholders as an issue in how our neighbourhoods are perceived, particularly in the west of the borough.

We will be targeting our services more precisely and seeking ways of improving our caretaking standards with the budget we have. In the west, we will look at ways of providing a caretaking service for small blocks that previously had no service.

Few tenants identified grounds maintenance for improvement, but we are conscious of concerns from leaseholders about value for money for the service. Generally standards are good, but higher standards are achieved where residents have taken on responsibility for maintaining areas themselves. We will review our approach to grounds maintenance, including older persons gardening, and encourage resident led gardening clubs to raise standards.

3 Developing new approaches to parking and garages

Our aim is to reduce resident concerns about parking, particularly in the west of the borough, over the next four years.

Both tenants and leaseholders have identified the importance of parking in relation to their satisfaction with their neighbourhood. As part of this strategy we will review the introduction of controlled parking across estates. We will pilot this in Hendon where highest dissatisfaction has been expressed by both tenants and leaseholders.

In addition we will look at how our large garage portfolio can improve parking and the impact it may have on the appearance of neighbourhoods.

4 Community safety and security

Our aim is to increase resident satisfaction with the neighbourhood by at least 5% in the next four years

Tackling antisocial behaviour and improving security are high priorities for all our residents and we are continually looking for ways to respond more effectively. As part of this strategy we are seeking opportunities to design out crime and antisocial behaviour more effectively.

Our Youth Engagement Strategy will also provide positive and diversionary activities for the young people who live on our estates.

Over the next year we will be improving customer access to our antisocial behaviour service and work in partnership with agencies such as the Police and Neighbourhood Watch to make residents as safe as possible.

Programmed physical improvements such as improved lighting and entry phones will be installed to improve security and our security plus scheme will continue for individual vulnerable residents.

Resources

ASB Team	£ 401,267
Neighbourhoods Team	£1,011,827
Caretaking	£2,112,687
Asset Management	£ 180,000
Estate Works programme	£1,120,000
Total	£4,825,781

Partnership arrangements

We work with a wide range of partners to provide joined up services and to maintain and enhance our neighbourhoods.

In order to tackle ASB and security issues, we work with the council's community safety team, legal services, the Police, partners in the voluntary sector such as Neighbourhood Watch and groups who work with young people.

Our caretaking and neighbourhood teams work with the council's street services such as refuse, recycling and the grounds maintenance team to maintain a good quality environment.

Most importantly we work with our residents using a variety of consultation mechanisms and community development projects, such as the Residents' Gardening Scheme and projects funded by the Youth Engagement Panel, to improve the neighbourhood environment.

Our responsive repairs contractor, Connaught, maintains the estate environment and has an impact on customer satisfaction. For the Decent Homes programme we have three construction partners in Balfour Beatty, United house and Apollo.

Consultation

Resident consultation and involvement is essential to successfully deliver ing excellent neighbourhoods. Our strategy is driven by the priorities of residents and they are involved in the decisions about their local neighbourhoods. When an area is identified for environmental improvements, we ask residents for their views and priorities and use these to plan work.

Likewise when new services, such as caretaking, are proposed, our residents' views and priorities are used to build the service.

We do more than legally required to consult our leaseholders about enhancements to the neighbourhood.

Equalities

This strategy is based on satisfaction surveys that give us information by age, sex, ethnicity and disability. For example we know that 32% of BME tenants consider parking to be a problem compared with 49% of white tenants. This information will be used as part of an Equalities Impact Assessment of this strategy to ensure that our responses are appropriately targeted.



Before and after - resurfaced roads and paths at The Homesteads- part of the 2008/09 Estate Works Strategy programme

The service improvement plan

The service improvement plan for this strategy is in Appendix 1.

Making it happen

This strategy and its service improvement plan will be monitored as part of the Housing Services Operational Plan 2009/10 and the Responsive Repairs and Maintenance Customer Satisfaction Strategic Improvement Plan 2009/12 with the action plans receiving monthly updates against the agreed milestones.

Excellent Neighbourhoods Service Improvement Plan

Appendix 1

Key strategy themes and overall aims	Actions to address	Milestone	Lead resource	Status	Latest update / Evidence of completion	Measure of success
Estate works and environmental programmes Overall aim: increase resident satisfaction with the neighbourhood by 5% in four years	To develop an annual programme of investment for the next two years	Nov 09	ES	IP		Two year programme published and new procedure embedded to support our rolling programmes and forward planning
	To ensure that we deliver a communication plan that celebrates the annual improvements delivered	July 09	MD	IP		Communication plan delivered using articles in At Home and our website
	To deliver lessons learnt with staff and partners on the 08/09 programme	Sept 09	ES	IP		Briefing delivered and improvements implemented as lessons learnt
	To deliver large scale environmental improvements at Granville Road estates	March 12	RHd	IP		Works completed, on time and to budget Resident satisfaction levels increased
	To develop a prioritised and funded borough wide external decorations programme for delivery	March 11	RHd	NS		Programme published and funded

Caretaking, cleaning and grounds maintenance Overall aim: raise satisfaction with caretaking by 5% in four years	Roll out caretaking service to non caretakered blocks	Dec 09	DM/HF/MD	NS		Caretaking services introduced to 5 new locations with resident support
	Develop a new caretaking supervisory structure to develop services and raise standards	Oct 09	SRO	IP		New structure in place 5% increase in 3 star ratings on 2008/09 levels
	Work with Housemark and other London boroughs on Peer Review process	Sept09	SRO	IP		Peer Reviews Completed with positive results for Barnet
	Roll out arrangements for monitoring service standard for graffiti	Dec 09	SRO	NS		Charter mark standard retained
	To retain the Charter mark standard for caretaking with an improved compliance rating	Nov 09	SRO	IP		VfM review completed Efficiency saving made or enhanced quality achieved
	Commence VfM review of Grounds Maintenance	April 11	External procurement resource	NS		As above
	Undertake VfM review of older persons gardening service	April 10	SRO	NS		To have developed 3 more resident led gardening clubs in Barnet
	To increase the number of gardening clubs in Barnet	April 11	SRO	IP		

Developing new approaches to parking and garages Overall aim: Reduce resident concerns with parking particularly in the west of the borough in four years	To develop and evaluate a pilot parking initiative in the Hendon area with a view to wider targeted implementation	Mar 10	SRO	IP		To have implemented a pilot controlled parking exercise in the Hendon area and reviewed the outcomes
	To ratify and update the garage data records held on Saffron against the actual physical stock	Sept 10	IN	NS		To have verified and updated all garage information held on Saffron by Housing Officer patches
	To review the management and take up of garages across the retained housing stock	Sept 10	MD/HF/ JO'C	NS		To have a clear plan for disposal, retention and charging of all garages in the retained housing stock

Improve security on estates Overall aim: increase resident satisfaction with the neighbourhood by 5% in four years	To undertake a review of the customer access arrangements to the ASB service	Oct 09	SRO	IP		Increased customer satisfaction with our response to ASB
	To further review the effectiveness and impact of deploying wardens	Dec 09	EW	NS		Improved satisfaction levels of residents with the neighbourhood and reduced perceptions of crime as a problem
	To deliver an improved entryphone and security at Longford Court	Start July 09	SRO/PB	IP		
	To review our use of CCTV	March 2010	tbc	NS		SLA review completed
	To deliver the multi agency projects in Youth Engagement Plan	April 2010	IP			Project plan milestones met

**Before and after
Underhill Court new paths**



**Before and after
Spur Road new entrance doors**

