

# Your guide to being a Block Champion

Working together for a cleaner, safer and greener neighbourhood



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Brent Housing Partnership (BHP) wants to create neighbourhoods that look better, feel better and are cleaner, greener and safer for residents to live in. Our residents can play a part in our efforts to achieve excellent service standards in the areas of grounds maintenance, cleaning and communal repairs. BHP's Neighbourhood Services Team (NST) oversee the cleaning and grounds maintenance contracts. Residents who work with the team to actively monitor and tell us about the cleaning, grounds maintenance and communal repairs are called 'block champions'.

This booklet will act as your guide in your role as a block champion. It has been designed to let you know what service standards you should expect in your communal areas and how you can monitor and report on these standards to us. This booklet also aims to tell you more about the NST and our role in the community.

We would like you to have a say in how we look after your neighbourhood. By becoming a block champion you will inspire a change in the appearance of your neighbourhood.

Our aim is to make BHP a national leader in estate management. To do this we need residents who care about the environment they live in to work closely with us and keep us informed of any problems in their neighbourhoods.



*Welcome and thank you for  
becoming a Block Champion  
The Neighbourhood Services Team*

# Neighbourhood Services Team

The NST is responsible for delivering the following services to all communal areas managed by BHP.

- Cleaning
- Grounds maintenance
- Communal repairs
- Lighting
- Removal of abandoned vehicles
- Removal of bulk refuse
- Liaising with the Council on issues relating to refuse collection
- Tackling the problems of fly-tipping, graffiti and other enviro-crime
- Providing signage on estates
- Tree maintenance
- Maintenance of estate roads and parking areas
- Implementing parking controls
- Safety and maintenance of playgrounds
- Management of resident meeting halls
- Environmental improvements
- Resident involvement

NST officers routinely inspect BHP properties to identify issues such as poor cleaning, grounds maintenance or disrepair. These routine visits are called Local Environment Quality inspections (LEQs). We also look for any problems with general building maintenance in the areas listed above and we work closely with our contractors to improve cleaning and grounds maintenance standards.

The NST also support all resident involvement activities across the borough and register up to 45 resident associations annually.

The NST work across Brent but for monitoring purposes we have divided the borough into six areas. These areas are known as:

- East Brent
- Harlesden and Brentfield
- North Wembley
- South Wembley
- St Raphael's
- South Kilburn

Each area has a Neighbourhood Services Officer (NSO), who you will work alongside. They are responsible for all communal issues within their area.

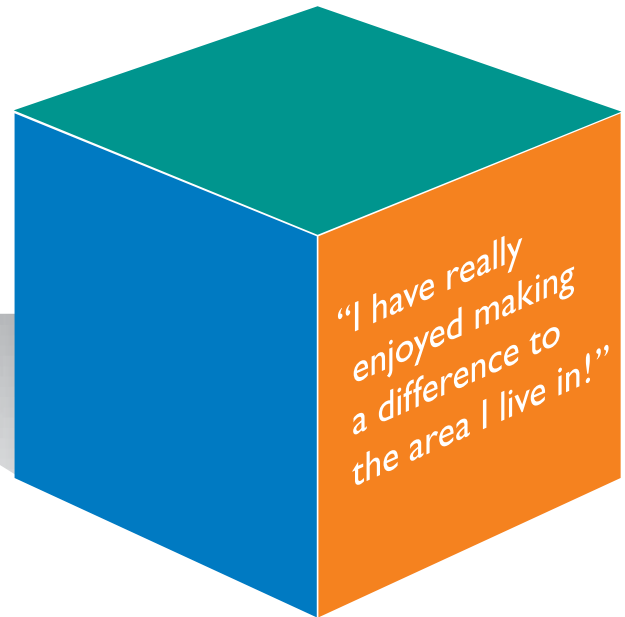
# Brent Housing Partnership – Block Champion

## The role of block champion

The role of the block champion is to tell us about any issues with cleaning, grounds maintenance and to report other estate issues like graffiti, abandoned vehicles, bulk refuse and communal repairs. You decide how much time you would like to dedicate to measuring and monitoring the standard of service you receive from our grounds maintenance and cleaning contractors. Block champions should limit the reporting to their immediate neighbourhood. This role is not about you reporting individual issues, such as a repair in your own home. You should continue to contact your local repairs team on the telephone number shown at the rear of this document for repairs inside your own home.

## Code of conduct

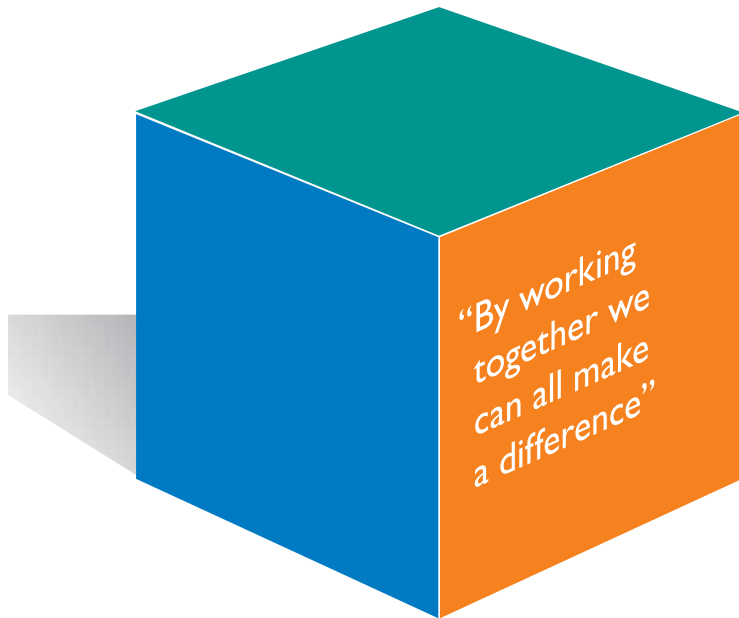
We value your health, safety and wellbeing. As a block champion you will be expected to follow the code of conduct which we operate for resident representatives and BHP officers. It is essential that any problems requiring intervention are dealt with by an officer at BHP.



## Reporting to the Neighbourhood Services Team

The next section details the different areas of monitoring and reporting you may get involved in and gives you advice on how to deal with each situation.

Phoning and emailing are the fastest way of reporting an issue. You may not always be able to speak to the officer for your area but you can leave your report with any member of the team and your report will get logged. On some occasions you may speak directly to a BHP contractor, for example a supervisor from the cleaning and grounds maintenance contractor:



### By phone 020 8937 2400

When reporting by phone, please tell us that you are a block champion and that you are phoning to make a report. Let us also know the nature of the report, the exact location and any other relevant details. The more information you provide to us, the better.

We will provide you with phone cards to reduce the costs of reporting. If you require a new phone card please contact your NSO.

### By email [neighbourhood.services@bhphousing.co.uk](mailto:neighbourhood.services@bhphousing.co.uk)

When reporting by email please indicate that you are a block champion. You could head the email 'block champion report' followed by the address of the block. Let us also know the nature of the report, the exact location and any other relevant details. Please ensure you include your name and block number to which the report relates to on the email.

As BHP saves all reports under each block, please send one email per block or estate. By doing this, other officers can easily find the information.

# General information

## Cleaning

Cleaning services are provided internally and externally. There is a contract which specifies the cleaning requirements across BHP managed properties. These requirements are:

- keeping all internal and external communal areas in a clean and tidy condition
- keeping all estate roads in a clean and tidy condition
- cleanliness and maintenance of all floor surfaces
- removal of graffiti
- keeping gully-grids unblocked
- rotation of bins and cleanliness of bin rooms
- removal of bulk rubbish

We have set standards of cleanliness for communal areas and cleaning tasks are carried out either daily, weekly, quarterly or annually. Each block will have a cleaning schedule displayed which tells you the frequency of individual tasks.

Your monitoring role will be to assess the standard of cleaning and to determine whether the contractor is keeping to the correct frequency. A block champion report may include comments such as 'the cleaner did not attend' or 'the cleaner attended but the standard of cleaning was poor'.

**We have produced a photographic guide (pictorial guide of cleaning and grounds maintenance) which shows our cleaning standards graded as gold, silver and bronze. A copy of this guide is available from our Neighbourhood Services Team on 0208 937 2400.**



## Grounds maintenance

Like cleaning, grounds maintenance is provided by an external contractor. The grounds maintenance contract specifies the standard that should be achieved across the borough. It defines an acceptable length of grass rather than how and when the grass should be cut. The contractor provides us with weekly reports on the areas that have been completed.

Within each site, grounds maintenance services are carried out to:

- grassed areas
- shrubs/rose beds/flower beds
- trees (subject to work at height regulations)
- hedges
- weed killing on hard surfaces
- play areas

Pages 42 to 46 of the pictorial guide refer specifically to grounds maintenance. We rate the standards of grounds as gold, silver and bronze.

The contractor is also responsible for carrying out yearly grounds maintenance improvements which include replacement of damaged grass areas and damaged shrubs as well as additional planting in allocated areas.

Your role will be to report poor standards of grounds maintenance to us.

## Communal repairs

Your role as a block champion will be to report any communal repairs you may come across. The following information is required by us when you report a repair:

- Nature of the repair
- Exact location
- Your views on any health and safety implications

**Urgent health and safety repairs should be reported by telephone on 020 8937 2400 Monday to Friday from 9am to 6pm (before 5pm on Friday). The emergency out of hours telephone number after 6pm and weekends is 020 8937 1234 (after 5pm on Friday).**



## Lighting

BHP and the Council's Streetcare department are responsible for maintaining different types of lighting on your estates.

BHP is responsible for:

- bulk head or spotlights fixed to the structure of your buildings
- internal lighting in communal areas of buildings

Streetcare is responsible for:

- lamp columns on estates

You can report a faulty lamp column directly to Streetcare on 020 8937 5050 or [streetcare@brent.gov.uk](mailto:streetcare@brent.gov.uk). Please give an address which should include a postcode, location or landmark, the lamp number and describe what is wrong with the lamp column.

**Alternatively you can report a faulty lamp column or any other lighting issues to the Neighbourhood Services Team:**

**By phone**  
**020 8937 2400**

**By email**  
**[neighbourhood.services@bhphousing.co.uk](mailto:neighbourhood.services@bhphousing.co.uk)**

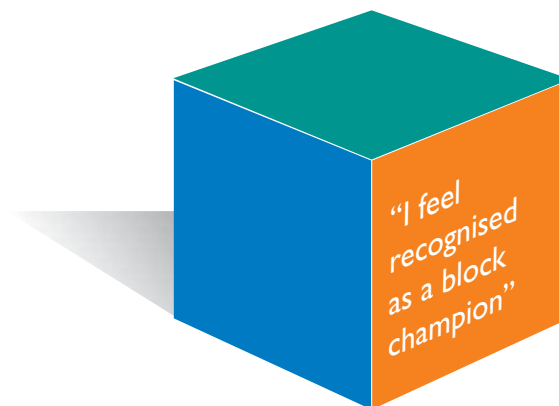
## Abandoned vehicles

BHP removes nuisance and abandoned vehicles from our estates. You can report an abandoned or nuisance vehicle to us. Please give us the registration, make, model, colour, location and tax disc information where possible of the vehicle. A nuisance vehicle is any vehicle which is significantly damaged and may pose a health and safety risk to others. We are able to move nuisance vehicles when they are reported to us. Abandoned vehicles are only removed after two warning labels are affixed to the car and the car is not claimed by the owner.

**To report a nuisance or abandoned vehicle:**

**By phone**  
**020 8937 2400**

**By email**  
**[neighbourhood.services@bhphousing.co.uk](mailto:neighbourhood.services@bhphousing.co.uk)**



## Bulk refuse/fly-tipping

Bulk refuse are items like furniture, fridges, washing machines, car tyres and batteries. The removal of bulk refuse items from housing estates is carried out by the cleaning contractor. Any items must be removed within 24 hours. The cleaning contractor also removes fly-tipped rubbish and builders rubble. The majority of these items must be removed within 24 hours. Large fly-tips can sometimes take longer to move. You can report bulk refuse or fly-tips to us on 020 8937 2400 or by email – neighbourhood.services@bhphousing.co.uk. Please note down the following information:

- the location
- description of the rubbish or fly tipping
- how much has been left

You should not in any event approach or confront anyone you find fly-tipping as some may become aggressive or violent when approached. **Please do not touch or attempt to remove the waste.**

## Refuse disposal

We are responsible for maintaining and cleaning the communal refuse bins. The cleaning contractor is responsible for the following:

Clean communal storage areas for small bins, bin sheds, refuse chambers, chute rooms and disinfect bins	Weekly
Oil/grease bin wheels	3 monthly
Jet clean bins	6 monthly
Deep clean bin sheds	6 monthly

**We can place orders for replacement bins. You can report broken or damaged bins to us:**

**By phone  
020 8937 2400**

**By email  
neighbourhood.services@bhphousing.co.uk**



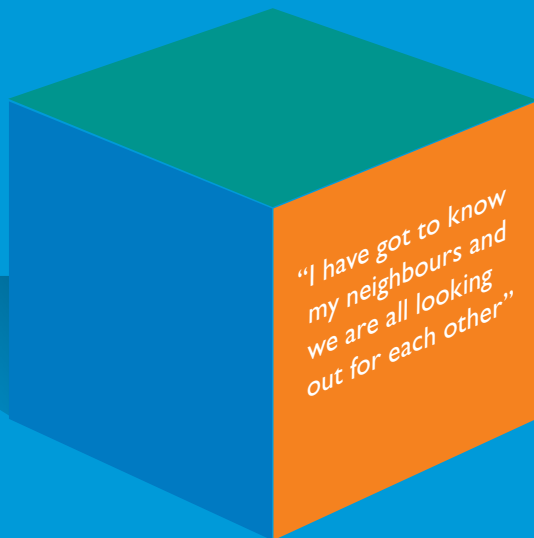
## Refuse collection

Brent Council's, Streetcare department has responsibility for domestic waste collection. Collections are carried out on set days.

To find out when the waste is collected or to report a missed collection in your area you will need to contact Brent Council's Streetcare department:

By phone  
020 8937 5050

The refuse collector must return the emptied bins to the collection point. Bin collections are done on the same day every week except after bank holidays.



## Graffiti

The cleaning contractor has strict graffiti removal targets. These are:

- 4 hours for offensive graffiti
- 24 hours for all other graffiti

Graffiti is any form of drawings, patterns, scribbles, messages or tags that are painted, carved or written on walls and other surfaces.

When reporting graffiti to us, please describe the graffiti and the location in detail. You can report graffiti to us:

By phone  
020 8937 2400

By email  
[neighbourhood.services@bhphousing.co.uk](mailto:neighbourhood.services@bhphousing.co.uk)

## Signage/furniture

BHP provides signage, names plates, noticeboards and some furniture on our estates. Examples of our signage include; No Ball Games, No Parking and Fire Exit signs. At each local environmental quality inspection we inspect the condition of all signage and furniture.

**You can also keep us informed about the condition and cleanliness of these items:**

By phone  
020 8937 2400

By email  
[neighbourhood.services@bhphousing.co.uk](mailto:neighbourhood.services@bhphousing.co.uk)

## Tree maintenance

Brent Housing Partnership's tree maintenance programme has been designed to ensure that at all times all trees shall be maintained in a safe and healthy condition and in such a way as to maximise their visual and landscape amenity value. The tree maintenance programme runs over a three year period. We are committed not to remove any tree unless it is necessary and we will always try to replace any tree removed from a communal area.

**You can report overgrown trees, broken branches or fallen trees to us:**

By phone  
020 8937 2400

By email  
[neighbourhood.services@bhphousing.co.uk](mailto:neighbourhood.services@bhphousing.co.uk)



*“Being a Block  
Champion gives  
me a chance to  
get my voice heard”*

## Maintenance of estate roads and parking areas

BHP is responsible for maintaining estate roads, parking areas and footpaths on housing estates. We repair broken paving, fill potholes and carry out any other health and safety repairs where necessary.

**To report any defects in the road surface, footpaths or any broken paving slabs:**

By phone  
020 8937 2400

By email  
[neighbourhood.services@bhphousing.co.uk](mailto:neighbourhood.services@bhphousing.co.uk)

When reporting these items please give the address, location and/or landmark, being as specific as possible and describe the condition of the defect.

## Playgrounds

We manage all of the playgrounds on housing estates. This includes weekly visual inspections, monitoring the cleaning and ordering any repairs when necessary. We also arrange for quarterly and annually inspections of all playgrounds to be carried out by an independent assessor.

**You can report any faulty equipment and tell us about the cleanliness of a playground:**

By phone  
020 8937 2400

By email  
[neighbourhood.services@bhphousing.co.uk](mailto:neighbourhood.services@bhphousing.co.uk)



“Now that I have had the training, I feel empowered and want to spread the word”

## Environmental improvements

The look and feel of where you live is both very important to you and to us. With this in mind, we are always constantly looking to improve the environmental surroundings of your area. Each year, subject to available funding, BHP sets aside a small amount of money to carry out environmental improvement projects. We welcome projects which contribute to improving security on estates, increasing opportunities for play and improving the appearance of communal grounds

All projects must establish something new and be carried out within a communal area on council owned land.

As a block champion you can make suggestions for environmental improvements in your area. Once we receive your application request, an investigation will be carried out on the suitability of each project in your area. If a project appears to be suitable for inclusion in the scheme we carry out a survey of every resident in the block. Projects can only proceed when the majority of residents living in your block/estate are in favour.

## Rate your estate

As a block champion, another form of reporting is to make a report on line. Rate your estate is an on-line reporting form which can be found on the BHP website [www.bhphousing.co.uk](http://www.bhphousing.co.uk) and click '**On Your Estate**'. Forms take no more than five minutes to complete. For clarification regarding standards to be used in rating your estate, please refer to the pictorial guide of cleaning and grounds maintenance.



## Useful contacts

### **BHP Services**

Repairs contact centre (for residents who live in the Harlesden and Brentfield, Wembley and St Raphael's area)	020 8937 2750
Kilburn repairs (for residents who live in the Kilburn area)	020 8937 2666
Neighbourhood Services Team	020 8937 2400
Leasehold Management	020 8937 2601
Right-to-Buy	020 8937 2600
Anti-Social Behaviour Team	020 8937 2951
Housing Support Team	020 8937 2952
Wardens (3pm – 12am)	020 8451 5050
Tenancy Support Team	020 8937 2424
Rents	020 8937 2730/2740
Voids Team	020 8937 2353

### **Brent Council Services**

Brent Council 24 hour Switchboard	020 8937 1234
Brent Council Community Safety Team	020 8937 1058
Brent Council Streetcare	020 8937 5050
Environmental Health	020 8937 5252

### **Other useful numbers**

Gas Transco	0800 111 999
Water – Thames Water	0845 782 3333
Water – Three Valley	0800 714 614
Electricity – EDF	0800 096 9000

# Building on Excellence

[www.bhphousing.co.uk](http://www.bhphousing.co.uk)

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**F** 020 8937 2021  
**E** [info@bhphousing.co.uk](mailto:info@bhphousing.co.uk)