

Resident Questions for Housing Area Panel

Department	Housing
Date question raised	30/06/2022
Date of Area Panel	17/08/2022
Area in city	West
Star rating applied by residents	3 star- city wide issue
Deadline for officer response	25/07/2022
Name of officer responding	Justine Harris
Officer job title	Head of Tenancy Services • Housing
Title of Question:	Estate Inspections/Estate walkabouts
Issue:	West residents welcome the return of Estate Inspections but were concerned about the change of emphasis with the re-naming of these as 'walk-about' rather than 'inspections'.
Background:	Estate Inspections were a formal process, which involved a report and follow-up on issues raised. The inspections included issues around the general condition of the houses as well as the overall environment. Changing the name to 'estate walkabouts' implies a less focused approach, without the accountability. West residents would prefer that the original name is retained.
Action requested by residents:	It was agreed to ask for clarification of the content of an Estate walkabout: what can be raised; will residents get a report; what measures are there to ensure that follow-up action is taken?
Officer Response:	Helen Burrow
Officer contact details:	Helen.burrow@brighton-hove.gov.uk
Response:	<p>The objectives of Estate Walkabouts differ to the former Estate Inspections, which ceased in 2018.</p> <p>Tenant and resident group representatives, councillors, Housing Managers, and other housing staff are being invited to join the walkabouts. The walkabouts will run for a trial for 3 months with a review to be completed in August, with more walkabouts to follow in the autumn.</p> <p>By introducing a citywide pilot schedule, it is hoped that the walkabouts will:</p>

- Result in visible environmental improvements
- Improve collaborative working with each team taking responsibility for their actions
- Ensure that all areas of the city have access to available budgets such as the Environmental Improvement Budget
- Enable Housing staff to reconnect and build upon relationships with residents and Councillors

This is a formal process. Once the review of the pilot is complete, the schedule for the year will be promoted to residents. Housing will also publish improvements made as a result of the Walkabout.

Specific Action:

Action:

Clarification of the content of an Estate walkabout

Estate Walkabouts are focused on working with residents to improve the local environment. Walkabouts are scheduled to last for 1 – 2 hours and attendees will visit areas of concern within the walkabout area.

What can be raised?

It is hoped that the walkabouts will produce visible improvements to the environment and the opportunity to make a difference on the day, for example cleaning a path of rubbish or a fly tipped area or a deep clean of an entrance hall.

Examples of issues raised during the pilot estate walkabouts to date include; removal of bike chained to lamppost, repainting of external step nosing's across estate, application to Estate Improvement Budget for improved bin storage, application to Estate Improvement Budget for raised vegetable beds, removal of offensive graffiti, abandoned cars on housing land reported, request to CitiPark's to cut back overhanging vegetation on path, Community Engagement Team to discuss setting up new tenants & residents association.

Will residents get a report?

Residents attending the pilot estate walkabouts will be provided with a list of the actions taken by the officers. Future Estate Walkabouts. Outcomes will be published on the council website. if the Environmental Improvement Budget is used to fund any improvements this will be included in the quarterly Area Panel Environmental Improvement Budget update.

What measures are there to ensure that follow-up action is taken?

As this is a pilot project, the project team are currently reviewing the actions from each walkabout to decide which team is best placed to undertake follow up work.

Residents can contact the Performance & Improvement Team by emailing Housing.Performance@brighton-hove.gov.uk to provide further feedback.

Timeline:	
Start date:	May 2022
End date:	Ongoing

