



Customer Inspectors

Green Space Inspection October 2009



Report by
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Acknowledgements

This research project was conducted by Joanne McMahon, Project Officer, Community Engagement and Hannah Fitzhenry, Customer Insight Officer.

Liz Somner, Green Space Manager and Andrew Houghton, Green Space Project Manager conducted the briefing for the Customer Inspectors.

A special thanks is given to all the Customer Inspectors who took the time to complete the Green Space Inspections.

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Introduction

The purpose of this report is to summarise and evaluate the Customer Inspectors inspection of Helena Homes Green Space Areas. The report analyses the information in the completed checklists along with any additional comments made by the Customer Inspectors.

Background

Helena Partnerships want to ensure that our customers are at the heart of everything we do. We want to demonstrate that we continually improve and deliver customer led services.

The creation of the Customer Excellence Strategy has led to the development of Customer Inspectors.

A Customer Inspector is a volunteer whose role is to test and feedback the level of service being provided from a customer perspective. They carry out mystery shopping or reality checks which provide feedback on actual service delivery.

Customer Inspectors have a key role within the new Customer Excellence Strategy and will help to improve customer satisfaction inline with the overall target of 25%.

Helena Homes has a total of eleven trained Customer Inspectors who are able to conduct a variety of overt and covert exercises.

This is the second inspection of Helena Homes services conducted by the Customer Inspectors, this gives the Customer Inspectors an opportunity to express their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the green space areas using the checklist provided.

The Customer Inspectors will continue to conduct reality checks on Helena Homes services, the areas to follow include:

- One Call
- Local Access Points
- Experience of New Tenants
- Responsive Repairs Service

The results of these studies will provide feedback to service managers, which in turn will help to identify strengths and weaknesses with the services and will enable them to highlight areas for improvement.

To adhere to the overall Customer Excellence goal the information will be scrutinised by the Customer Excellence Panel and the feedback given to board.

Green Space

The Green Spaces team has recently been developed to manage Helena Homes landscapes.

Glendale's, who currently managed the landscapes on behalf of Helena Homes will end their contract in December 2009 and the service will be provided in house by the 'Green Space Service'. St Helens Council will carry out the grass cutting on behalf of Helena, this service will be overseen by the in house Green Space team.

It will be the responsibility of this team to carry out landscape maintenance and improvements on Helena estates from a front of house facility set up for residents.

The service being developed by the Green Space team will adopt a new approach ensuring tenants are involved. The new community engagement approach is a sustainable method of improving the landscape.

Aim and Objectives

The aim of the Green Space Inspections is:

- To develop an understanding of a customer's view of the Green Space areas
- To identify areas of dissatisfaction with the Green Space areas

To achieve the aims the Inspection will focus on:

- Results from the completed checklists
- Additional comments made by the trained Customer Inspectors

Context

The Customer Inspectors inspected eleven Green Space areas. The inspections were all conducted in August 09. The dates of the different inspections is illustrated in the table below.

Date	Frequency
7 August 09	4
8 August 09	1
15 August 09	2
19 August 09	3
26 August	1

The inspections all took place at various times in the mornings. The table below illustrates the times at which the inspections took place.

Time	Frequency
8.45	1
9.25	1
9.30	1
9.50	1
10.00	4
10.40	2
11.45	1

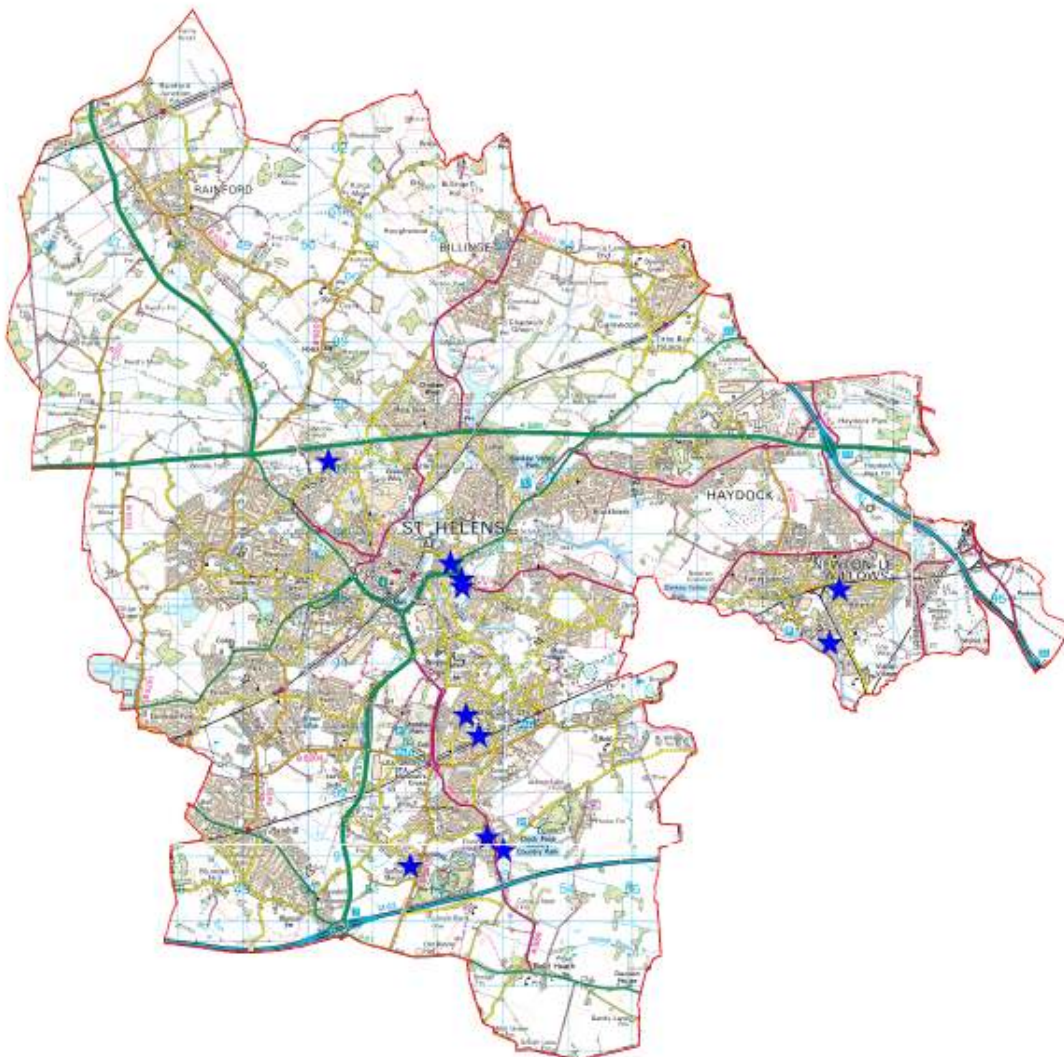
Green Space Inspections were conducted in a range of different locations within the St Helens area. The table below shows number of inspection conducted in each of the different areas.

Area	Inspections
Clock Face	2
Windlehurst	1
Fingerpost	3
Newton-le-Willows	2
Sutton	2
Sutton Manor	1

The map on the following page shows the different Green Spaces that were inspected.

The Customer Inspectors were asked to make a note of the weather conditions when they were inspecting the Green Spaces. The weather can have an impact on the opinion of the Green Space area. The table below illustrates the different weather conditions during the Green Space inspections.

Weather Conditions	Inspections
Sunny	2
Sunny and Dry	5
Cloudy and Dry	4



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GREEN SPACES INSPECTIONS OCTOBER 2009



KEY
 ★ Inspected Green Spaces

Scale: 1:85,000
 Date: 22nd October 2009
 Drawn by: One Message
 Client: Customer Inspectors

Map Centre:
 Easting (X): 353500
 Northing (Y): 393300

Method

Checklist

The Green Space Checklist was developed inline with the Environmental Assessment survey being carried out by the Neighbourhood Officers. The assessment criteria was developed using the previously used criteria by Environmental Campaigns. (Now known as Keep Britain Tidy) A copy of the checklist can be found in Appendix 1.

The checklist is a comprehensive assessment of the quality and condition of the outdoor environment on each of the estates. The results will help to influence future landscape management, design, improvements and maintenance.

The Customer Inspectors checklist follows a similar set of criteria to the assessment carried out by the Neighbourhood Officers.

From the recommendations made in the empty property report it was important to ensure the checklist was to the point, short and fit for purpose. This also helped to reduce the number of gaps in the data.

The checklist was developed in the same format as the Void Inspection Checklist, this ensured consistency for the Customer Inspectors. The checklist also adopted the same scale which is illustrated below:

<p>Key</p> <p>☺ - Satisfied</p> <p>☹ - Neither satisfied or dissatisfied</p> <p>☹ - Dissatisfied</p> <p>N/a - Not applicable</p>
--

Pilot

A pilot study was conducted, this was to ensure the checklist was suitable and covered all the necessary aspects.

The pilot was completed by Joanne McMahon, Project Officer, Community Engagement, and Andrew Houghton Green Space Project Manager. As a result of this pilot an additional question was added to ascertain how the Customer Inspectors would feel living next to the area they have inspected. It was also highlighted that a 'N/a' (Not applicable) box should be included for selection.

The final version of the checklist is included in the Appendix at the back of the report.

The First Inspection

The Customer Inspectors were briefed by Liz Somner, Green Space Project Manager and Andrew Houghton, Green Space Project Manager at Bold Miners Club in St Helens on 22 July 2009. A copy of the briefing can be found in Appendix 2.

The briefing incorporated a presentation with accompanying photographs highlighting what the Customer Inspectors needed to look out for and what was an acceptable standard.

The key areas the inspectors will consider include:

- Grassed Areas
- Shrub beds/Rose beds/Planters/Hedges
- Development Sites/Vacant Land/Garage Sites/Demolition Sites
- Trees on Public Areas owned by Helena
- Cleanliness of the Green Space

Details were given about what the Customer Inspectors should consider whilst completing the Green Space checklist, this includes:

- Has the grass/hedges been cut, strimmed and left tidy?
- Are there any weeds growing?
- Is any replanting/designing needed?
- Do the trees look generally safe/in good condition?

The briefing session also gave the Customer Inspectors an opportunity to go through the checklist and raise any queries they may have before the actual inspection.

The Customer Inspectors conducted this task in pairs, one inspector would complete the checklist whilst the other could take the supporting photographs. Each of the pairs chose some Green Space areas to inspect. The Customer Inspectors were free to choose any of the available Green Space areas. The Customer Inspectors were asked not to complete inspections in the areas that they live, this reduces bias and ensures a true representation of the area.

The Customer Inspectors were encouraged to make as many comments as they could about the environmental areas and to take as many photographs as they thought necessary to use as supporting evidence for their findings.

To help the Customer Inspectors complete the Green Space Inspections they were issued with the following equipment:

- Pens/pencils
- Map
- Camera
- Mobile phone
- Checklist
- Briefing
- Clipboard

Sample

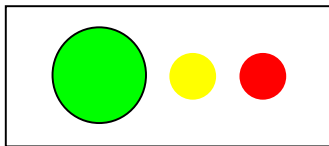
A random sample of the green space areas was conducted. This sample method was chosen as the Customer Inspectors are given the freedom to choose the areas that they wish to inspect.

The Inspectors visited a total of 11 green spaces giving a response rate of 7.9%. There are a total of 139 green spaces that the Customer Inspectors could have inspected over the eight and a half week period.

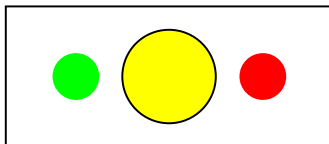
The response rate is lower than anticipated and will need to be improved to increase the reliability of the results of future inspections.

Analysis

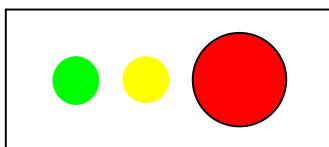
To highlight the satisfaction or dissatisfaction with each of the standards a traffic light symbol has been used to illustrate the overall perception of the Customer Inspectors.



The large green circle highlights were the majority of responses satisfied the standard.



The large yellow circle highlights were the majority of responses neither satisfied or dissatisfied the standard.



The large red circle highlights were the majority of responses dissatisfied the standard.

Summary of Main Findings

This section of the report summarises the results from the Green Space Inspections. A more detailed analysis of the results can be found in the following section.

Checklist Analysis

The checklist analysis illustrates a high level of satisfaction with the inspected green spaces. All of the criteria included in the checklist received a positive response with each

criteria receiving a green traffic light. This means although there were a number of green spaces that did not satisfy all of the criteria these were the minority. The accompanying photographs in the detailed analysis help to identify and support the specific areas of satisfactions and dissatisfaction.

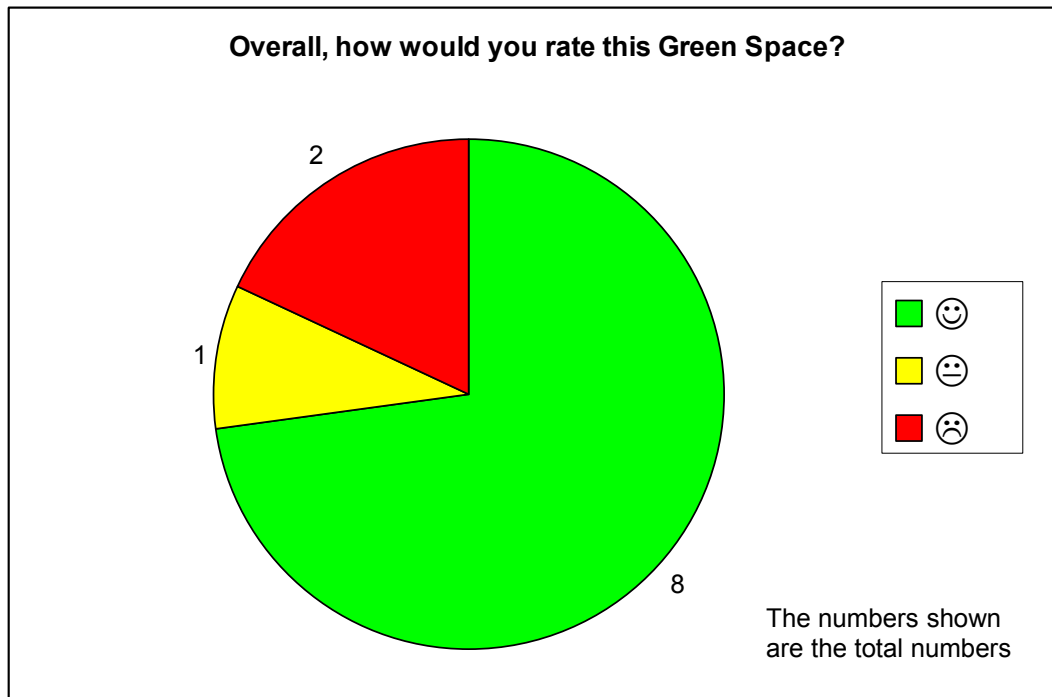
The Customer Inspectors gave each of the inspected green spaces an overall rating. Eight of the green spaces were highly rated and given a 'satisfied' rating, these green spaces included:

- New Street, Sutton
- Ridgewood Drive, Sutton
- Farnworth Street
- Ashcroft Street, Fingerpost
- Sorogold Street, Fingerpost
- Field Close
- Gorsey Lane, Sutton
- Forest Road Flats

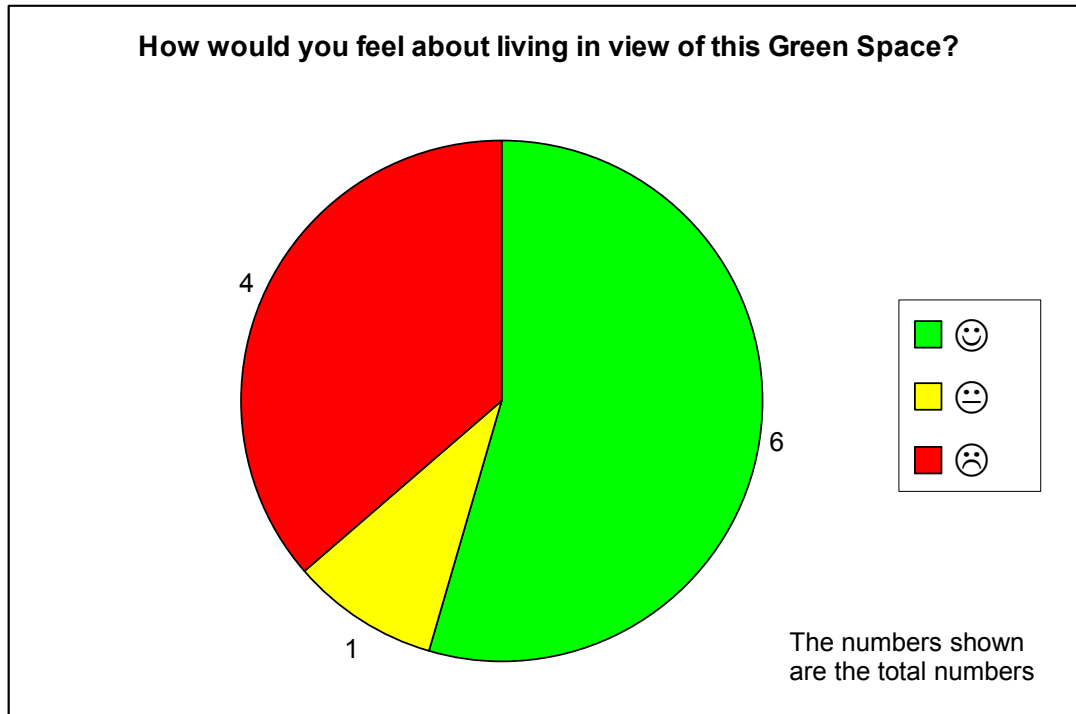
One green space was rated as 'neither satisfied or dissatisfied', this was the Bradleigh Road sites in Wargrave.

Two of the green spaces received a 'dissatisfied' rating in regards to the overall satisfaction with the estate, these sites included Hard Lane, Windlehurst and Acorn Street, Wargrave.

The results from this question are displayed in the pie chart below.



The Customer Inspectors were asked how they would feel if they lived in view of each of the green space sites that were visited. The results are displayed in the pie chart below.



The pie chart above illustrated that just over half of the green spaces were considered as being somewhere the Inspectors would like to live in view of. The Inspectors suggest that they would be dissatisfied if they lived in view of four of the green spaces. These green spaces include:

- New Street, Sutton
- Ridgewood Drive, Sutton
- Hard Lane, Windlehurst
- Acorn Street, Wargrave

In comparison to the overall opinion of the estates the Inspectors were happy with eight of the eleven green spaces however only six of the eleven green spaces were considered as an area they would be happy to live in view of.

Criteria where at least one green space was rated as dissatisfactory include:

- Grass – Litter (1)
- Grass – Appearance (1)
- Shrubs/Rose beds/Hedges – Litter (2)
- Shrubs/Rose beds/Hedges – Appearance (2)
- Development site/Vacant land/Garage site/Demolition site – Maintenance (2)
- Development site/Vacant land/Garage site/Demolition site – Litter (1)
- Development site/Vacant land/Garage site/Demolition site – Appearance (3)
- Trees on Helena public spaces – Appearance (1)
- Cleanliness of the Estate – Litter (1)
- Cleanliness of the Estate – Appearance (2)

The green spaces inspected tended to completely satisfy the criteria in terms of maintenance however the 'litter' and 'appearance' in the different sections of the checklist consistently have at least one green space that is of a dissatisfactory standard.

Two green space areas were consistently rated poorly by the Inspectors this was Hard Lane Estate in Windlehurst which was rated poorly on eight of twelve applicable criteria in the checklist. Acorn Street in Wargrave was rated poorly on four out of six applicable criteria.

The comment below was made after the inspection of the Hard Lane green space.

"...sorry couldn't find anything positive to say."

Suggestions for Improvements

The Customer Inspectors noted improvements they would make to the green spaces that were visited. The main suggestions for improvements relate to the following:

- Planting shrubs
- Planting trees
- Small park
- Landscaping

A number of comments made by the inspectors highlight the need to 'brighten up' the green spaces. Comments include:

"Needs more colour and more shrubs"

"Too green, needs more colour"

Comments

A number of additional comments were made by the inspectors on the green space checklist. These mainly relate to the general tidiness. Comments were also made about the large amounts of grass and the lack of variety in the planting. Reference was made to the lack of colour on six occasions. An example of this is shown below.

"...needs cut and colour..."

Customer Inspectors Overall Feedback

Overall feedback was positive with the majority of inspectors satisfied with the green space standards. However although the standards were met, the Inspectors would not want to live in view of over a third of the areas inspected. The original versions of the feedback can be found in Appendix 4.

"Loved the Green Space Inspection, however I was very disappointed at the standard of maintenance on the estates I inspected. The checklist was easy to follow, but the maps were hard to read. Although I only did one inspection I would like to do more. The maps could have been made easier by breaking down the map into smaller section."

"I found the checklist fine to mark with space to add further comments. The maps tended to be a bit misleading. The weather made this activity pleasant. Most open spaces lacked colour"

"The Green Space Inspection was interesting, as for the maps they were a bit difficult to understand. Some estates were very nice with grass cut perfect but the edges had not been touched some could do with a bit more colour"

"The form was easy to understand and simple to fill in. The estate was larger than expected which often made it awkward to say an overall opinion. Maybe next time do it earlier in the year due to weather conditions"

"Forms were easy to fill in and maps not too difficult. Need to explore better which areas belong to Helena. Also found that some green spaces had been done had not been done properly, parts had been left unfinished. There was not a lot of colour to be seen. All in all it was nice to see the different places and how they have been done."

The comments highlight that the checklist was easy to complete however there were some difficulties in identifying the specific green spaces that belong to Helena.

The Customer Inspectors highlighted a green space area that they liked, this is an example of good practise. The photograph below was taken on Evelyn Avenue in Parr, this green space area is not owned by Helena Homes.



Detailed Analysis

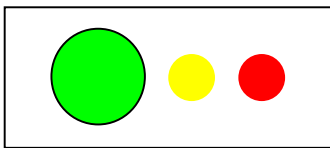
Grassed Areas

The Customer Inspectors assessed the grass in the green spaces in terms of the following:

- Maintenance
- Litter
- Appearance
- Edges of the grass

This part of the checklist did not apply to all the green spaces that were visited.

Maintenance



The Customer Inspectors were satisfied with the maintenance of the grassed areas. Seven out of the eleven green spaces were rated positively, three were neutrally rated whilst none were considered to be poorly maintained giving this criteria a green traffic light.

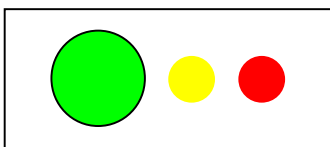


The photograph above shows an example of a grassed area that is well maintained. The photograph was taken on Sorogold Street, Fingerpost



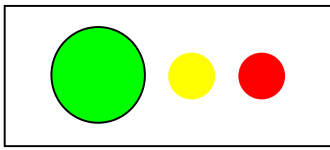
The photograph on the left highlights an area of grass that was rated poorly by the Inspectors. The photograph was taken at Acorn Street, Wargrave.

Litter



The majority of the green spaces did not contain any litter. Eight of the eleven green spaces were rated as 'satisfied'. One green space area was rated as 'dissatisfied' this highlights that litter was a problem in this green space.

Appearance



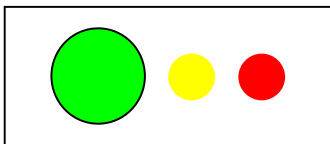
Just under half of the green spaces were rated as 'satisfied' in terms of the appearance of the grassed areas. The grassed areas in two of the green spaces were rated 'neither satisfied or dissatisfied'.



The photograph above shows an example of a green space area that was rated as 'satisfied' on this part of the checklist. The photograph was taken on Bradleigh Road, Wargrave.

The appearance of the grass in the Hard Lane green space area was the only area to be considered to be at a dissatisfactory standard. The photograph to the left shows a picture of Hard Lane, Windlehurst.

Edges of the grass



This criteria received a 'green' traffic light. The Customer Inspectors rated the edges of the grass highly, five of areas were considered to be well maintained.

Two areas were rated as 'neither satisfied or dissatisfied' and no areas were rated poorly by the inspectors.



The photograph above highlights the edge of a grass that was considered to be of a good standard. The photograph is the green space located near Bradleigh Road in Wargrave.



The photograph to the left illustrates the edge of a grass that has the Inspectors were not satisfied with. The photograph was taken on the Hard Lane estate in Windlehurst.

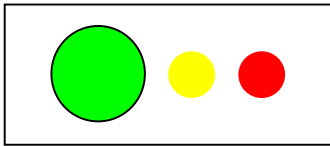
Shrubs/Rose beds/Hedges

The Customer Inspectors assessed the shrubs/rose beds and hedges in terms of the following:

- Maintenance
- Litter
- Appearance

This part of the checklist did not apply to all the green spaces that were visited.

Maintenance

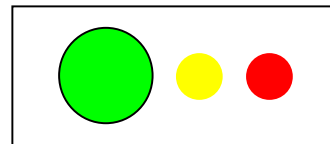


The maintenance of the shrubs/rose beds/hedges was considered to be good in six out of the eight green spaces, two of the green spaces were rated as 'neither satisfied or dissatisfied'. None of the green spaces contained shrubs, rose beds or hedges that were poorly maintained. This aspect therefore received a 'green' traffic light.



The photograph above shows an example of where shrubs have not been well maintained. The photograph was taken near to Bradleigh Road in Wargrave.

Litter

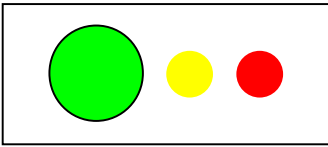


In regards to the shrubs, rose beds and hedges, seven of the green spaces were clear from litter giving it a 'green' traffic light.

Two of the green spaces were considered not be clear from litter, these areas were Hard Lane Estate, Windlehurst and Bradleigh Road, Wargrave.

The photograph above shows shrubs that are clear from rubbish. The photograph was taken on New Street in Sutton.

Appearance



The majority (six) of the shrubs/rose beds and hedges were rated positively in terms of appearance. A further two of the green spaces contained either a shrub, rose bed or a hedge that was considered to be dissatisfactory in its appearance. These areas included Hard Lane Estate, Windlehurst and Bradleigh Road, Wargrave.

The photograph to the right shows a hedge that has been rated as dissatisfactory by the Customer Inspectors, the photograph was taken at Hard Lane Estate in Windlehurst.



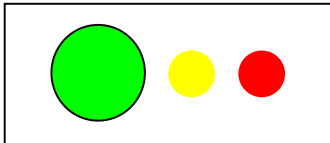
Development Sites/Vacant Land/Garage Sites/Demolition Sites

The Customer Inspectors assessed the development sites, vacant land, garage sites and demolition sites located within the green space area. These sites were assessed using the following criteria:

- Maintenance
- Litter
- Appearance

This part of the checklist did not apply to all the green spaces that were visited.

Maintenance



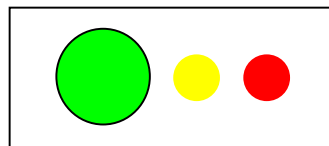
Of the green spaces that contained either a development site, vacant land, garage site or a demolition site, three of them were rated as 'satisfied' in terms of the maintenance. Three sites were rated as 'neither satisfied or dissatisfied' and two sites were not considered to be well maintained. The two poorly rated sites were located in the Hard Lane Estate in Windlehurst and Acorn Street, Wargrave.



The photograph below shows an example of where vacant land has not well maintained, the photograph was taken on Acorn Street in Wargrave.



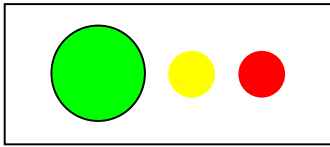
Litter



The majority of these sites (four) were rated as 'satisfied' by the inspectors. One site was rated as 'neither satisfied or dissatisfied' and the site at Acorn Street in Wargrave was rated as dissatisfactory.

The photograph above illustrates a garage site free from litter, the photograph was taken at Gorse Lane, Sutton.

Appearance



Four out of the eight sites containing a development site, vacant land, garage site or demolition site were rated as 'satisfied' in terms of their appearance. Three of the sites the Customer Inspectors visited considered the appearance to be dissatisfactory.



The photograph below shows an example of vacant land that was considered poorly in its appearance. The photograph was taken at Acorn Street, Wargrave.

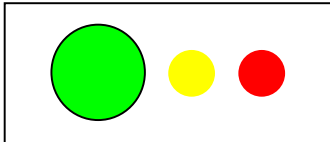
Trees on Helena Public Spaces

The Customer Inspectors assessed the trees on Helena public spaces using the following criteria:

- Appearance

This part of the checklist did not apply to all the green spaces that were visited.

Appearance



The appearance of the trees on Helena public spaces were highly rated highly with eight of the eleven sites being rated as 'satisfied' by the Inspectors. Only one site contained trees that were rated poorly, this site was at Acorn Street in Wargrave.

The photograph to the right highlights trees on Helena public spaces that were rated highly, the photograph was taken on Gorsey Lane in Sutton.



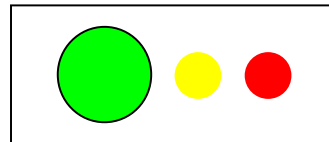
Cleanliness of the Estate

The Customer Inspectors assessed the cleanliness of the overall estate, this was conducted using the following criteria:

- Litter
- Appearance

This part of the checklist did not apply to all the green spaces that were visited.

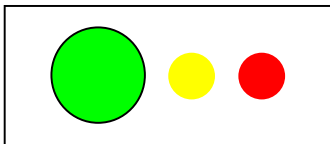
Litter



The cleanliness of the estates were rated positively by the Inspectors, the majority of the estates were rated as 'satisfied' (six) in terms of litter. The Inspectors were 'neither satisfied or dissatisfied' with three of the visited green space areas and were dissatisfied with only one of the green spaces, this was Hard Lane, Windlehurst.

The photograph above shows the estate that was rated poorly in terms of litter, the photograph was taken on Whalley Avenue on the Hard Lane Estate in Windlehurst.

Appearance



The appearance of the overall estate was also rated highly with six of the areas being considered to be of a 'satisfied' standard. Three green spaces were rated as 'neither satisfied or dissatisfied'. The Customer Inspectors were dissatisfied with two of the green spaces this included Ridgewood Drive, Sutton and Hard Lane, Windlehurst.



The photograph above shows an example of a green space area that was rated poorly in terms of its appearance.

Customer Inspectors Recommendations

The Customer Inspectors have given their own suggestions as to how the green spaces can be improved. This information was gathered at a breakout session during a Customer Inspector meeting. The Customer Inspectors were asked collectively to recommend ideas to improve the Green Spaces.

The Customer Inspectors highlighted that the Green Spaces did not provide areas for children to play. A number of suggestions included:

- Football areas
- Playgrounds
- Skating areas

It was also suggested that the children should take part in creating and developing such areas.

Reference was made throughout the report about the lack of colour and interest in the Green Spaces that were visited. Suggestions were made around incorporating more features, this includes:

- Meadow planting
- Additional flowering trees
- Blossom trees
- Wild life parks
- Hanging baskets
- More colourful flowers
- Bird feeders
- Rockery
- Wall art

The Green Spaces that were visited by the Inspectors were often large green open spaces. The Inspectors suggested breaking this up with interesting pathways.

A number of grassed areas had been ruined by cars parking on the edges, the Inspectors highlighted that if this is the case then part of the areas may be better suited to parking bays.

The Inspectors recommended that benches were placed in areas that have been improved to allow tenants and residents to sit and enjoy the area.

Some of the garage sites and derelict land required tidying and improving. The Inspectors recommended that more planters and hanging baskets were incorporated into such areas. A graffiti wall was also suggested to improve the look of the sites.

One Customer Inspector was unable to take part in any of Green Space inspections. However from previous experience they were able to make the following suggestions and recommendations.

Customer Inspector Recommendations

“Firstly I would recommend prior to any Environmental/Green Space works taking place the relevant TRA’s or community groups to be consulted. The local residents are usually aware of environmental problems in the area and have ideas of how to improve their environment. For example, a substantial amount of work was done in Gillars Green, but the blocks of flats still look as ugly as before. I believe that better maintenance of balconies and initiatives of flower growing would make the appearance of blocks of flats more bearable

When it come to grass cutting its important that cut grass is not left behind to rot. The look of it ruins otherwise neatly cut grass

Parking on grass edges by residents or Helena staff should be clearly discouraged. If there is a real need for more car parking places, then they should be provided.

Bin areas should look more attractive as has been done in Gillars Green. However more climbing and flowering plants along the railings are asked for.

Green Spaces everywhere could be enhanced with flowers, bulbs and bedding plants.

Serious thought should be given to garage sites which are often used for anti-social behaviour. Could this land be put to better use?

Maintaining litter free Green Spaces is very important if the clean appearance is desired. Unfortunately, I have noticed that the many shrubs we have in Gillars Green tend to gather rubbish. Apparently the Council is not responsible for clearing rubbish on the front of blocks of flats. This means that provisions should be made for Helena Partnerships to regularly clear the rubbish, the same applies to the alley ways”

The original version of the recommendations can be found in Appendix 5.

Improvements to Future Inspections

This section contains recommendations about the research project that was carried out and how future inspection of green spaces can be improved.

The Customer Inspectors highlighted in their feedback about the difficulty with reading the green space maps. To overcome this problem more training should be given to the Inspectors and also the maps to be on a larger scale.

To help ease analysis a tick box selection for the different areas in St Helens and also the different kinds of weather conditions.

Some of the information from the green space inspections was conflicting the results of the checklist demonstrate high levels of satisfaction however a great number of photographs were taken highlighting dissatisfaction.

For any future inspections the Inspectors should complete an example checklist as a group. This ensures they all have a full understanding of the task and know what to take photographs to take.

Next Steps

Findings from this report along with the recommendations from the Customer Inspectors will be presented to the Customer Excellence Panel by the Customer Inspectors. The managers from the service area will attend the Customer Excellence meeting to hear their feedback.

Considering the Customer Inspectors recommendations and other performance data the Customer Excellence Panel will then develop a set of actions for the service area.

A summary of findings and agreed actions will be published in Helena Headlines.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Green Space Checklist



Green Space Checklist

Customer Inspector(s).....

Date..... Time.....

Area.....

Weather Conditions.....

Please remember to take plenty of photographs to highlight Green Spaces you are satisfied and dissatisfied with.

Use the key below to complete the Green Space Inspection.

Key
☺ - Satisfied
☹ - Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
☹ - Dissatisfied
N/a - Not applicable

Grassed Areas				
	☺	☹	☹	N/a
Maintenance (E.g. cut etc...)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Litter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appearance (E.g. Weed growth etc...)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edges of the Grass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Shrubs/Rose Beds/Hedges				
	☺	☹	☹	N/a
Maintenance (E.g. cut etc...)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Litter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appearance (E.g. Need replanting, design etc...)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Green Space Checklist

Development Sites/Vacant Land/Garage Sites/Demolition Sites				
	☺	☹	☹	N/a
Maintenance (E.g. Cut, Trimmed, Weed kill etc...)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Litter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appearance (E.g. graffiti, weeds, rubbish etc...)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Trees on Helena Public Spaces				
	☺	☹	☹	N/a
Appearance (E.g. Condition and Safety etc...)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Cleanliness of the Estate				
	☺	☹	☹	N/a
Litter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appearance (E.g. graffiti, weeds, rubbish etc...)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Use this space to write any comments you have about the Green Space you have inspected.

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Green Space Checklist

Overall how would you rate the Green Space?		
☺	☹	☹
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How would you feel about living in view of this Green Space?		
☺	☹	☹
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you have any suggestions to how Helena Homes can improve this Green Space? (E.g. planting, landscaping, new pathways, railings, fencing etc...)
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Thank you for taking the time to complete this Green Space Inspection.

Appendix 2: Green Space Briefing



BRIEFING NOTE FOR CUSTOMER INSPECTORS: THE GREEN SPACE SERVICE

What is Green Space?

Green space is any outside area that includes vegetation of any kind, it can be grass, hedges, trees, shrubs, rose beds, raised beds, planters, other planting. Often these areas also have paths, paving, walls and other non-green components to make up the overall landscape. When we talk about *green space* in Helena's housing estates, we are talking generally about the outside environment with an emphasis on the green elements described above, but also including the other components. We also have garage sites (hard landscaped areas with garages) and development land (i.e. land which will be developed but is currently not built on and is often grassed) and these are included within the overall *green space* definition.

Green space is important for a number of reasons. Our lives are surrounded and enriched by green assets. Some like parks are planned and designed; others may be natural such as coastlines. Often they are unintended consequences of other types of planning, e.g. motorway verges. It is the network of green spaces that create what's often now known as *Green Infrastructure (GI)*. These elements perform a vast range of functions. The benefits of well managed and designed green space include:

- Health and wellbeing
- Encouraging and safeguarding biodiversity
- Ensuring a more interesting and appealing environment
- Reconnecting people with their natural environment
- Enabling the development of places where people want to live/work to create sustainable communities
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Social cohesion
- Food and energy security
- Economic productivity

What do we do?

At present, the Helena landscape is maintained by an external contractor: Glendale. They will be maintaining the Helena land until 31st December 2009. Glendale cut the grass, trim the hedges and maintain the shrub beds and trees. They also manage a number of OAP gardens (the list is now closed and the system for managing these gardens is under review).

We are in the process of setting up a completely different way of managing our green spaces by developing our own Green Space Service. The aim of this service is to:

- increase the quality of the maintenance and management of the green spaces on our estates;
- to make our estate landscapes more diverse and interesting;
- to ensure a greater involvement of the local communities to create sustainable landscapes and
- to ensure a more responsive service that is better value for money.

This means that from January 2010 we will have a Helena in-house team that carry out landscape maintenance and will also work within the communities to start to improve the green spaces. Improvements will not happen over night but will be started from 2010 onwards and will enable a much more coherent landscape approach to be taken, that actively involves our residential communities. The new teams will be maintaining (and improving) our planting (shrubs, mixed planting, hedges, trees) apart from the grass. The grassed areas will be cut and maintained by an external contractor (process of selection of the contractor is underway and they will be carrying out the work from January 2010).

Aim of the inspection

The aim of the inspection is to establish the quality of our landscapes at the present time. The data will act as a start-point, a base line to determine the landscape quality now, prior to us starting an in-house service. The inspection will be used in conjunction with other assessments (by Neighbourhood teams and our own specific horticulture-based assessments) to identify green space opportunities and issues.

What will happen as a result of the inspections?

All results and findings will be used to establish a database of information related to the quality of our estates. The specific findings will be used as a start point for further consultation with communities. The inspections will provide data that can be fed into these consultations and will assist in the direction of landscape improvements including improvements to planting, changes to maintenance regimes and provision of more diverse landscapes.

Appendix 3: Raw Data

Date

1: 7 August 09
 2: 7 August 09
 3: 19 August 09
 4: 19 August 09
 5: 19 August 09
 6: 26 September 09
 7: 7 August 09
 8: 8 August 09
 9: 15 August 09
 10: 15 August 09
 11: 07 August 09

Time

1: 9:30am
 2: 10:00am
 3: 8:45am
 4: 9:25am
 5: 9:50am
 6: 10:00am
 7: 10:00am
 8: 11:45am
 9: 10:00am
 10: 10:40am
 11: 10:40am

Areas

1: New Street, Sutton (Raven Stone)
 2: Ridgewood Drive, Sutton
 3: Farmwood Street, Fingerpost
 4: Ashcroft Street, Fingerpost
 5: Sorogold Street, Fingerpost
 6: 4 Hard Lane, Windlehurst
 7: Field Close
 8: Gorsey Lane bungalows sheltered
 9: Acorn Street - Wargrave
 10: 3 Bradleigh Road
 11: Forest Road Flats

Weather Conditions

1: Sunny
 2: Sunny
 3: Sunny and Dry
 4: Dull and Cloudy
 5: Dull and Sunny
 6: Dry and Cloudy
 7: Sunny and Dry
 8: Sunny and Dry
 9: Dry and Cloudy
 10: Dry and Cloudy
 11: Sunny and Dry

Grassed Areas									
		😊		😐		☹️		N/a	
	Base	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Maintenance	11	7	63.6	3	27.3	0	0	1	9.1
Litter	11	8	72.7	1	9.1	1	9.1	1	9.1
Appearance	11	5	45.5	2	18.2	1	9.1	3	27.3
Edges of Grass	11	5	45.5	2	18.2	0	0	4	36.4

Shrubs/Rose Beds/Hedges									
		😊		😐		☹️		N/a	
	Base	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Maintenance	11	6	54.5	2	18.2	0	0	3	27.3
Litter	11	7	63.6	0	0	2	18.2	2	18.2
Appearance	11	6	54.5	0	0	2	18.2	3	27.3

Development Sites/Vacant Land/Garage Sites/Demolition Sites									
		😊		😐		😞		N/a	
	Base	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Maintenance	11	3	27.3	3	27.3	2	18.2	3	27.3
Litter	11	4	36.4	1	9.1	1	9.1	5	45.5
Appearance	11	4	36.4	1	9.1	3	27.3	3	27.3

Trees on Helena Public Spaces									
		😊		😐		😞		N/a	
	Base	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Appearance	11	8	72.7	2	18.2	1	9.1	0	0

Cleanliness of the Estate									
		😊		😐		😞		N/a	
	Base	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Litter	11	6	54.5	3	27.3	1	9.1	1	9.1
Appearance	11	6	54.5	3	27.3	2	18.2	0	0

Use this space to write any comments you have about the Green Space you have inspected.

- 1: Too much green grass in the middle, hadn't been cut and no colour. Too much grass. Talking to tenant and she said it hadn't been cut for ages. Should do something for children on the estate like a park.
- 2: No colour at all on the estate only a few residents gardens. Could do with a couple of roses now and then.
- 3: Piece of land on O Keefe Road were two houses was needs something doing to it.
- 4: Overall this needs colour to look better, too much green
- 5: Fence on Sorogold Street needs repair and a tidy up along the fence. South John Street needs cut and colour, shrubs.
- 6: Site 4 in Area four is closed by gates so could not walk through. Site 5 lots of moss and weeds on pathways (Health and Safety issues in the winter) Sorry couldn't find anything positive to say about this area.
- 7: We feel that the shrub areas cold be improved the bushes have been clipped and have good appearance yet the ground round it is scruffy and uncut. rose beds could be dead head to enhance foliage
- 8: From talking to a resident it appears Glendale's are not cutting tenants front lawns as the majority are cutting own. Some rose beds haven't been dead headed so look drab.
- 9: 1 apple tree, hard standing no 1 5.75m long x 8.70mm wide, grass on one side cut, hard standing no2, weeding, grass was cut
- 10: trees too close to bridge

Overall, how would you rate this Green Space?						
	😊		😐		☹️	
Base	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
11	8	72.7	1	9.1	2	18.2

How would you feel about living in view of this Green Space?						
	😊		😐		☹️	
Base	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
11	6	54.5	1	9.1	4	36.4

Do you have any suggestions to how Helena Homes can improve this Green Space?

- 1: Planting and landscaping
- 2: Residents suggest that a small park would be suitable as there isn't anywhere for them to play. There a wide space with nothing on.
- 3: Needs colour and more shrubs. There is a piece of land that needs something done to these.
- 4: Too green, needs colour.
- 5: Needs some landscaping to look better instead of looking too green. There is lots of land that can look better.
- 6: All sites would benefit from landscaping/planting perhaps some trees. Site 5 - New paths/planting/landscaping this is an open plan cul de sac but some tenants have tried to brighten up their fronts up by planting underneath their windows. not enough parking spaces so grass areas have been used.
- 9: The green space area is only good for building on, it is on the edge of the estate so is no good for garden site. I never understood why they demolished a pair of semis that stood on this site
- 10: Catherine Way was ok - bit overgrown, Bradleigh road area very flat, tyrar road area - lots of areas to plant trees - currently no plants! - everything was green could do with some colour
- 11: The building ground was immaculate

Appendix 4: Original Customer Inspector Feedback

Customer Inspector Feedback

Loved the green space inspection
However I was very dissapointed at the standard
of maintenance on the estate I inspected
The checklist was easy to follow, but the
maps were very hard to read.
Although I only did one inspection I would
like to do more.
The maps could be made easier to comment
on breakdown map into smaller sites 1-E

A1	A2	A3
A4	A5	A6
A7	A8	A9

A1 to A9

Customer Inspector Feedback

I paired with my partner -
checklist and camera with us.
I found the checklist fine
to mark and with space to add
further comments.

The maps as to check correctly
area could be a little misleading

Weather made this activity
pleasant.

most open spaces lacked colour.

Customer Inspector Feedback

The green space inspection was interesting. As for the maps was a bit complicated, form was easy to understand and fill in, and some estate was very nice with grass cut perfect but the edges not been touched. Some could do with a bit of extra colour.

Customer Inspector Feedback

The form was easy to understand.
Simple to fill in
The estate was larger than expect
which often ~~was~~ made it awkward to
say an overall opinion
Maybe next time do it earlier due
to weather

Customer Inspector Feedback

Panel Rooms Easy to fill in and Maps
not to bad need to explain better
with which green space is helena's
and councils.

Also Panel that some green space
that had been done was not done
proper Parks had been left unfinished.
There was not a lot of colour to
be seen.

All in all it was nice to see
different places and how they have
been done

Appendix 5: Original Customer Inspectors Recommendations

①

Customer Inspector Recommendations

GREEN SPACE INSPECTION Oct. 2009

Unfortunately, I was not able to take part in this exercise. However, I was asked to write down any ideas of recommendations I might have. Especially, having observed various environmental works taking place in Gillars Green estate, Ecclestone.

Firstly, I would recommend prior to any environmental / Green space works taking place the relevant TRAs or Community Groups to be consulted. The local residents are usually aware of environmental problem areas and have ideas of how to improve their environment. For example, a substantial amount of work was done in Gillars Green, but the blocks of flats look still

(2)

Customer Inspector Recommendations

as ugly as before. I believe that better maintenance of balconies and initiatives of flower growing would make the appearance of blocks of flats more bearable.

When it comes to grass cutting, it's important that cut grass is not left behind to rot. The look of it ruins otherwise neatly cut grass.

Parking on grass edges by residents or Helena staff should be clearly discouraged. If there is a real need for more carparking places, then they should be provided.

Bin areas should be made looking more attractive as has been done in Gillars Green. However, more climbing & flowering plants along the railings

are much asked for.

Green spaces everywhere could be enhanced with flowers, bulbs and bedding plants.

Serious thought should be given to garage sites, which are often used for antisocial behaviour. Could the land be put to better

P.T.O.

(I am sorry I had to continue on the wrong side of the paper, I had no additional sheet of paper).

Maintaining litter-free Green space is very important if the clean appearance is desired. Unfortunately, I have noticed that the many shrubs we have now in Gillars Green tend to gather rubbish. Apparently Council is not responsible for clearing the rubbish on the front of the blocks of flats. This means that provisions should be made for Helena Partnerships to clear this rubbish regularly. Same applies to alleyways.