

**AGENDA ITEM 6  
REPORT NO. LA/9/18**

**HIGHLAND COUNCIL**

**Committee:** Lochaber Committee

**Date:** 11 April 2018

**Report Title:** Maintenance of Council Housing Estates

**Report By:** Director of Community Services

**1 Purpose/Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report advises Members on the proposed “Rate your Estate” toolkit . The Rate your Estate toolkit has been developed to offer a consistent method for estate management service to our tenants, as well as making management standards for Highland Council managed estates objective and transparent.
- 1.2 It is anticipated that the Rate your Estate toolkit will bring together current working practices across Community Services locally and provide a more streamlined estate management service moving forward. The aim is to deliver more effective estate management services that tackle local issues, sustain tenancies and neighbourhoods and help deliver customer satisfaction.

**2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
  - i. approve the Rate your Estate toolkit being rolled out across Council housing estates in Lochaber.
  - ii. agree further discussion with Lochaber Members to decide a timetable detailing priority estates.

### 3 Background

- 3.1 The Lochaber area already has a well-developed approach to delivering estate management services through Housing staff and Tenant Participation Officers working closely with tenants, residents and other external partners. An example of this is the Claggan Residents Association. The Association regularly monitors the condition of estates in the local area and through these inspections the Association has identified areas of concern and potential improvements.
- 3.2 The Service aims to further develop this pro-active approach throughout the Highland Council area. The Rate your Estate toolkit will help the Council regularly monitor the condition of its estates. It also offers a comprehensive management framework and improvement planning process to assist staff carry out regular estate inspections.

### 4 'Rate Your Estate' Toolkit

- 4.1 To ensure that estates are kept clean and in good condition estate inspections will be carried out by Housing staff, Local Members, tenants and other representatives. Locaber Housing Association staff and tenants will be involved where there are joint estates management responsibilities within communities. Inspections will be carried out twice a year following a timetable of priority estates which will be agreed with Members.
- 4.2 To rate an estate we have created a grading system. The grading system comprises of four grades which are 3, 2, 1 and 0.

A grade 3 estate (excellent)	85% - 100%
A grade 2 estate (good)	65% - 84%
A grade 1 estate (satisfactory)	51% - 64%
A grade 0 estate (poor)	0% - 50%

- 4.3 The toolkit provides a photographic representation of each grade for each area covered in an inspection supplemented by a short description of the standard. Both description of the standard and supporting photograph will be used to determine the standard that is awarded.
- 4.4 The toolkit aims to create an objective basis for an estate evaluation. It is important to remember there will always be an element of subjectivity with any judgement of estate standards. There are differences across all managed estates in terms of design therefore the photographic examples given are not absolute and will only be used as a reference point to what a 3, 2, 1 and 0 standard may look like.
- 4.5 The toolkit will be used as a guide, recording document and action plan. Following an estate inspection the area Pricipal Housing Officers will be responsible for ensuring that all issues identified along with scores are actioned.
- 4.6 A copy of the Rate your Estate toolkit will be circulated separately to Members.

## 5 Areas Identified for Improvement

- 5.1 The Environmental Improvement Budget within the Housing Capital Programme is used to deliver small-scale capital projects that make lasting and noticeable improvements to an area. This refers to local priority projects to improve the environment of HRA housing estates. The ward allocations for Lochaber for 2018-19 are:-

Lochaber	Number of Properties	Budget
11. Caol and Mallaig	524	£ 24,439
21. Fort William and Ardnamurchan	827	£ 38,571
Total	1351	£ 63,010

- 5.2 We will continue to work with tenants to develop future environmental projects in their area. Outcomes will be reported back to tenants via the Housing Matters Newsletter and social media platforms.
- 5.3 In addition to the Rate your Estate Inspections Housing staff will continue to visit areas and follow up on complaints and concerns regarding environmental standards.

## 6 Implications

- 6.1 Resource – the inspection regime will be carried out and funded using existing resources.
- 6.2 Legal – the inspection regime will assist the Housing Service in meeting its requirements as established by the Scottish Social Housing Charter.
- 6.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) – the inspection regime will assist the Housing Service in engaging with communities and reacting to locally-identified priorities.
- 6.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever – no implications.
- 6.5 Risk – no implications.
- 6.6 Gaelic – no implications.

Designation: Director of Community Services

Date: 27 March 2018

Author: Sandra MacLennan, Housing Manager, South  
Brian Cameron, Housing Policy & Investment Manager

Background Papers: Rate Your Estate Toolkit

# 'Rate Your Estate'



---

## Guide for Estate Inspections

---

## Estate Inspections

To ensure that estates are kept clean and in good condition inspections are carried out by Housing staff, Local Members, tenants and other representatives. Inspections are to be carried out twice a year and will provide a snapshot look at standards based on a set of criteria.

To 'Rate your Estate' we have created a grading system. The grading system comprises of four grades which are 3, 2, 1 and 0.

A grade 3 estate (excellent) .....	85% - 100%
A grade 2 estate (good) .....	65% - 84%
A grade 1 estate (satisfactory) .....	51% - 64%
A grade 0 estate (poor) .....	0% - 50%

This toolkit provides a photographic representation of each grade for each area covered in an inspection supplemented by a short description of the standard. Both description of the standard and supporting photograph should be used to determine the standard that is awarded.

The toolkit aims to create an objective basis for an estate evaluation. It is important to remember there will always be an element of subjectivity with any judgement of estate standards. There are differences across all managed estates in terms of design therefore the photographic examples given are not absolute and should only be used as a reference point to what a 3, 2, 1 and 0 standard may look like.

The toolkit is for use as a guide, recording document and action plan only.

Following an estate inspection all issues identified along with scores will be fed back to the respective housing management area.

Outcomes will be reported back to the community via the Housing Matters Newsletter and social media platforms.

For more information please contact Amanda Gregory, (Principal Tenant & Customer Engagement Officer) on 01463 252968 or email [amanda.gregory@highland.gov.uk](mailto:amanda.gregory@highland.gov.uk)

This Rate Your Estate toolkit has been produced to provide an excellent and consistent estate management service to our customers, as well as making estate management standards on Highland Council managed estates objective and transparent.





## Trees

Trees should be well maintained, cut back and attractive to the eye.

3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trees are well maintained</li><li>• Branches are cut back</li><li>• No fallen leaves</li><li>• Look appealing</li></ul>
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trees are maintained</li><li>• Branches are in need of attention</li><li>• Leaves are present but have been attended</li></ul>
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trees need more attention</li><li>• Branches need to be cut back</li><li>• Leaves present and need extra attention</li></ul>
0		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trees are clearly not maintained</li><li>• Branches need major attention</li><li>• Leaves are present and do not look like they have been attended</li><li>• Tree is in a hazardous condition</li></ul>

## Parking Areas

Parking areas should be swept and litter picked, including where litter or debris surrounds parked vehicles or other stationary objects.

3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area is swept and free from litter and debris</li> <li>• Any abandoned or illegally parked vehicles have been reported to the relevant officer</li> <li>• Any bulk items have been reported and collection arranged</li> <li>• No hazardous conditions</li> </ul>
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area is predominantly clear of litter and debris</li> <li>• Abandoned or illegally parked vehicles have been reported to the relevant officer</li> <li>• Any bulk items have been reported and collection arranged</li> <li>• No hazardous conditions</li> </ul>
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Litter, debris and leaves noticeable</li> <li>• No hazardous items</li> <li>• Not clear that cleaning has taken place or planned</li> </ul>
0		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excessive build up of litter, debris and leaves</li> <li>• Bulk refuse present that has not been removed, or made safe with collection arranged</li> <li>• No evidence that cleaning has taken place as planned</li> <li>• Repair and maintenance work is required</li> </ul>



## Drains and Gullies

Drains and gullies should be unblocked and free from debris, also grates, covers and supporting structures should be in good condition.

3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Drains and gulleys are unblocked</li><li>• No debris present</li><li>• Grates, covers and supporting structure in good condition</li></ul>
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Drains and gulleys are unblocked</li><li>• Mostly free from debris</li><li>• Grates, covers and supporting structure in acceptable condition</li></ul>
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Drains and gulleys are partially blocked</li><li>• Moderate amounts of debris present</li><li>• Grates, covers and supporting structures in poor condition</li></ul>
0		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Drains and gulleys are blocked</li><li>• Excessive amounts of debris present</li><li>• Grates, covers and supporting structure are obscured from view</li></ul>

## Garage / Lock up sites

All sites should be free from litter, debris and hazardous items.  
 Garages should be useable, have locking doors and good access, also free from graffiti and vandalism

3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area is clear of litter, debris and hazardous conditions</li> <li>• Garages are useable with locking doors</li> <li>• Good access to garages</li> <li>• No vandalism or graffiti</li> <li>• Garages are numbered</li> </ul>
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area is mostly clear of litter, debris and hazardous condition</li> <li>• Would require little work to bring up to 3 star standard</li> <li>• May contain small amounts of graffiti in good state of repair</li> <li>• Garages are numbered</li> </ul>
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Litter, debris and hazardous conditions are noticeable</li> <li>• Garages need slight repairs</li> <li>• Small amounts of fly-tipping</li> <li>• Minor vandalism or inoffensive graffiti</li> <li>• Garages are not numbered</li> </ul>
0		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excessive build up of litter, debris and hazardous conditions</li> <li>• Garages need major repairs</li> <li>• Fly-tipping not removed or reported</li> <li>• Major vandalism or offensive graffiti</li> <li>• Garages are not numbered</li> </ul>




## Hedges and Gardens

Hedges and gardens should be well maintained, cut back and attractive to the eye

3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hedges and gardens are well maintained</li><li>• Hedges are cut back</li><li>• Grass is cut</li><li>• No weeds present</li><li>• Look appealing</li></ul>
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hedges and gardens are maintained</li><li>• Hedges are in need of slight attention</li><li>• Grass needs minor attention</li><li>• No weeds present</li></ul>
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hedges and gardens need more attention</li><li>• Hedges need cut back</li><li>• Grass is long but can be brought back into order</li><li>• Weeds are present and need extra attention</li></ul>
0		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hedges and gardens are clearly not maintained</li><li>• Hedges need major attention</li><li>• Grass has not been maintained for some time</li><li>• Weeds are present and do not look like they have been attended</li><li>• Gardens in unacceptable condition</li></ul>

## Boundary Fences/Walls

Walls and fences should be in a good condition and causing no hazards

3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Walls/fences in good condition</li><li>• No hazards</li></ul>
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Walls / fences in fair condition</li><li>• No hazards</li></ul>
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Walls/fences in poor condition</li><li>• No hazards</li></ul>
0		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Walls/fences in poor condition</li><li>• Poses a risk to tenants and members of the public</li></ul>



## Dog Fouling

Areas should be free from dog fouling, with penalty notice signs and dog fouling bins provided.

3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Area is free from dog fouling</li><li>• Penalty notice signs in place</li><li>• Bins provided for dog foul disposal</li></ul>
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Area mostly free from dog foul</li><li>• Penalty notice signs in place</li><li>• Bins provided for dog foul disposal</li></ul>
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Area has some dog foul</li><li>• Penalty notice signs in place</li><li>• Bins provided for dog foul disposal</li></ul>
0		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Area has excessive dog foul</li><li>• No penalty notice signs in place</li><li>• No bins provided for dog foul disposal</li></ul>





## Street Lighting

Street lighting should be in good working order, clean and free from vandalism.

3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lights are in good working order</li><li>• Free from vandalism/graffiti</li><li>• Excellent presentable condition</li></ul>
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lights are in good working order</li><li>• Mostly free from vandalism/graffiti</li><li>• Acceptable presentable condition</li></ul>
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Most lights are in good working order</li><li>• Moderate vandalism/graffiti</li><li>• Acceptable presentable condition</li></ul>
0		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Several lights not in good working order</li><li>• Excessive vandalism/graffiti</li><li>• Unacceptable condition</li></ul>





## Communal Grassed Areas, Shrubs & Amenity Areas (incl playparks)

These areas should be kept free of litter and refuse. Any bulk refuse left in these areas should be removed, or if necessary made safe and arrangements made for collection. There should be no hazardous items present i.e. broken glass etc.

3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area is completely free from litter, debris and leaves</li> <li>• Bulk refuse is either not present or has been made safe awaiting collection</li> <li>• All play equipment is in good working order</li> <li>• No hazardous items</li> </ul>
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area is mostly free of letter, debris and leaves</li> <li>• Bulk refuse is either not present or has been made safe awaiting collection</li> <li>• All play equipment is in good working order</li> <li>• No hazardous itmes</li> </ul>
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noticeable amounts of litter, debris and leaves</li> <li>• Not clear that cleaning has taken place as regularly planned</li> <li>• Some items of play equipment damaged but deemed safe</li> <li>• No hazardous items</li> </ul>
0		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excessive build up of litter, debris and leaves</li> <li>• Bulk refuse present that has not removed or made safe awaiting collection</li> <li>• No evidence that cleaning has taken place as regularly as planned</li> <li>• Some items of play equipement damaged and deemed hazerdous</li> <li>• Hazardous items</li> </ul>

## Fly Tipping

We will aim to remove fly tipping within five working days of it being reported to a member of staff.

3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No fly tipping present</li></ul>
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fly-tipping present but has been reported and is awaiting collection</li></ul>
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fly tipping present, has been reported but collection not yet arranged</li></ul>
0		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fly-tipping present and has been there for sometime</li></ul>



## Graffiti

Offensive graffiti should be removed within 24 hours of it being reported, or being found by a member of staff. All other graffiti should be removed within 7 days

3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no graffiti visible in the area</li> <li>• There may be evidence of graffiti that has been painted over or removed but the graffiti itself is not visible</li> <li>• No graffiti anywhere else in the inspected area</li> </ul>
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very few instances of non offensive graffiti,</li> <li>• The graffiti has been reported and awaiting clearance</li> </ul>
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is many instances of graffiti in the area</li> <li>• The graffiti that is present is non offensive</li> <li>• The graffiti has been reported</li> </ul>
0		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is excessive amounts of non offensive graffiti visible in the area</li> <li>• Offensive graffiti in any quality is a 0 standard</li> <li>• The graffiti has not been removed</li> </ul>


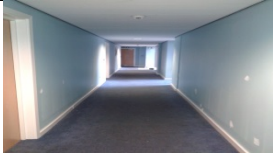


## Communal Bin Area

Bin areas should be well maintained, litter free and clear of weeds and moss

3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Area is well maintained</li><li>• No litter present</li><li>• Clear of weeds and moss</li></ul>
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Area is mostly well maintained</li><li>• Small amount of litter present</li><li>• Mostly clear of weeds and moss</li></ul>
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Area is maintained to an acceptable standard</li><li>• Litter present</li><li>• Some weeds and moss</li></ul>
0		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Area is not maintained</li><li>• Litter bins overflowing resulting in a health hazard</li></ul>


## Communal – cleanliness of stairs/landings/walls/windows

Areas should be free from dirt or litter, in good condition and are swept, mopped and cleaned. Walls should be clean and free from scuff marks

3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No dirt, dust or litter present</li> <li>• Area swept and mopped</li> <li>• Stairs in excellent condition</li> <li>• Walls very clean, no dust present</li> <li>• Walls obviously wiped and dusted regularly</li> <li>• No dirt, dust or cobwebs present on windows</li> <li>• Generally excellently clean</li> </ul>
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No dirt, dust or litter present</li> <li>• Area swept and mopped</li> <li>• Stairs in average condition</li> <li>• Walls very clean</li> <li>• No scuff marks present on walls</li> <li>• Windows in generally acceptable condition</li> </ul>
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some dirt, dust or litter present</li> <li>• Evidence area was swept &amp; mopped</li> <li>• Stairs in average condition</li> <li>• Walls clean</li> <li>• Some scuff marks present on walls</li> <li>• Windows in poor condition e.e. water streaks/condensation</li> </ul>
0		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dust, dirt or litter present</li> <li>• Area not swept or mopped</li> <li>• Stairs in poor condition</li> <li>• Walls not cleaned regularly</li> <li>• Dust present on walls</li> <li>• Scuff marks present on walls</li> <li>• Windows in very dirty condition e.g. covered in dust and dirt</li> </ul>

## Communal – cleanliness of light fittings

Lights should be in excellent condition, clean with covers intact and in full working order

3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not dirt, dust or cobwebs present</li><li>• Cover intact</li><li>• Light in working order</li></ul>
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Very little or no dirt, dust or cobwebs present</li><li>• Cover intact</li><li>• Light in working order</li></ul>
1	 <small>© Can Stock Photo</small>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dirt, dust or cobwebs present</li><li>• Cover slightly damaged</li><li>• Light in working order</li></ul>
0		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lots of dirt, dust or cobwebs present</li><li>• Cover broken</li><li>• Light out of order</li></ul>

## Footpath, Kerb, Steps & Roads

Footpath, kerb and steps should be kept free of litter and refuse. Any bulk refuse left in these areas should be removed, or if necessary made safe and arrangements made for collection. There should be no hazardous items present i.e. broken glass etc.

3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Footpath, kerb, stairs &amp; roads in good condition</li> <li>• No hazards</li> </ul>
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Footpath, kerb and stairs &amp; roads in average condition</li> <li>• No hazards</li> </ul>
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Footpath, kerb and stairs &amp; roads in poor condition</li> <li>• No hazards</li> </ul>
0		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Footpath, kerb and stairs &amp; roads in poor condition</li> <li>• Poses a risk to tenants and members of the public</li> </ul>

## Roof / Rhones / Downpipes

Roofs should be free from moss, roof structure intact with tiles/ridge tiles in good condition. Rhones and downpipes should be free from obstruction, intact and free from leaks.

3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No moss on roof, roof structure intact, tiles/ridge tiles in good condition</li> <li>• Rhones clear, intact, free from obstruction and leaks</li> <li>• Downpipes clear, intact, free from obstruction and leaks</li> </ul>
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very little moss on roof, roof structure intact, tiles/ridge tiles in good condition</li> <li>• Rhones clear, intact, free from obstruction and leaks</li> <li>• Downpipes clear, intact, free from obstruction and leaks</li> </ul>
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate amount of moss on roof, a few missing and/or broken tiles/ridge tiles</li> <li>• Rhones slightly blocked and intact</li> <li>• Downpipes slightly blocked and intact</li> </ul>
0		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lots of moss on roof, numerous missing and/or broken tiles/ridge tiles</li> <li>• Rhones blocked, overflowing, leaking and/or unsecure</li> <li>• Downpipes blocked, overflowing, leaking and/or unsecure</li> </ul>

## External - General Aesthetics

The external fabric of properties should be in excellent condition, all external paintwork should be in clean and in good order. All properties should be wind and watertight.

3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• External fabric of building is in excellent condition – no defects</li><li>• Property wind and watertight</li><li>• External paintwork in excellent condition – no defects</li></ul>
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• External fabric of building is in good condition – minor amount of cracking/damage and/or staining</li><li>• Property wind and watertight</li><li>• External paintwork in good condition – no defects</li></ul>
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• External fabric of building is in fair condition – moderate amount of cracking/damage and/or staining</li><li>• Property wind and watertight</li><li>• External paintwork is in fair condition</li></ul>
0		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• External fabric of building is in poor condition – significant cracking/damage and/or staining</li><li>• Property is not wind and water tight</li><li>• External paintwork is in poor condition</li></ul>