We are responsible for making sure our neighbourhoods are safe, secure and well maintained. This means carrying out communal repairs, cleaning and maintaining communal grounds for our neighbourhoods.

OUR RATING SYSTEM

The standards below have been worked into Gold, Silver and Bronze rating system, with 'Gold' being the ideal standard we want to achieve and 'Bronze' being the standard that needs our immediate attention.

MAINTAINING OUR STANDARDS

Ideally, after each attendance by our cleaners or grounds maintenance teams, the respective area should be at the Gold standard. However, there will be times when, due to external influences such as weather conditions or the re-prioritising of staff resources, that a Bronze standard will be reached.

We will aim to address these immediately – or on the next scheduled Neighbourhood Inspection (link to website) – depending on the task that has failed to meet the standard.

We need to help in keeping the communal areas clean and pleasant for all and would encourage reporting any spaces to be considered 'Bronze' rated to your Neighbourhood Management Officer (TenancyOfficers@Castlepoint.gov.uk)

NEIGHBOURHOOD INSPECTIONS

We carry out routine neighbourhood inspections which are our opportunity to identify and monitor:

- Health and safety issues
- Communal repairs
- Improvements to the area
- Performance contractors such as cleaning and ground maintenance
- Issues such as fly-tipping and parking

Link to Website – Neighbourhood Inspections

NEIGHBOURHOOD STANDARDS FOR CLEANING

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FOR CLEANING

Communal lights
Clean and dust free, bulbs replaced if necessary.

Lifts: floors, doors, panels and frames
Swept, mopped, clean and free from dirt and dust.

Communal windows
The window has no dirt, dust, cobwebs and the general level of cleanliness is excellent. The condition of the window, its frame or sill should not affect the judgment of its cleanliness.

Ledges and window sills
Ledges and window sills are clean and free from dust and cobwebs.

Entrance lobby

Entrance lobby swept and mopped, free from junk mail and newspapers.

Handrails, banister rails, ledges

All clean and dust-free.

Floors and staircases

Swept, mopped and vacuumed, stain and mark-free.

Walls and ceilings

Clean and mark-free.

Bin areas

Clean and free from over-spilled rubbish.

Litter

Bins are emptied, not overflowing, communal areas free from large items of litter.

Communal areas

Obstructions reported and removed.

Door entry systems

Operating correctly and faults reported.

Communal Lights	
Gold	
	The lights are fully operational and all light fittings are clean, well maintained and free from dirt, dust and cobwebs both inside and out. The fittings are in good condition with no signs of damage, staining or deterioration.
Silver	
	The lights are operational and generally clean, however there may be minor signs of dust, light dirt build-up or occasional cobwebs around the fitting. The overall appearance remains acceptable, but cleaning or minor maintenance may soon be required to achieve the expected standard.
Bronze	

	There is clearly a build-up of dirt and cobwebs inside and outside of the light fittings. The cleaning of the light fittings has been neglected, and it may have cracks in the surround.

Lifts	
Gold	
	The lift car, including the floor, walls, doors, control panels, runners and door frames, is clean and well maintained. There is no visible dust, dirt, litter, staining or graffiti. The lift appears to be cleaned regularly and is free from unpleasant odours.
Silver	
	The lift is generally clean and functional, but there are minor signs of dust, dirt, light staining or small amounts of litter. Standards remain acceptable; however, additional cleaning or attention is required to achieve the expected level of presentation.
Bronze	
	There is a significant build-up of dirt, litter, dust or staining within the lift. Cleaning standards are poor, with clear evidence that routine cleaning has not been carried out. Unpleasant odours, graffiti, damaged surfaces or heavily soiled areas may also be present.

Communal Windows	
Gold	
	The window glass, frames, sills and surrounds are clean and well maintained. There is no visible dust, dirt, staining or cobwebs, and the overall standard of cleanliness is excellent, indicating regular cleaning has been undertaken.
Silver	

	The window is generally clean and presentable; however, there are minor signs of dirt, dust, water streaking or isolated cobwebs. The standard remains acceptable but would benefit from additional cleaning to achieve the expected level of presentation.
Bronze	
	The window is in a poor condition with significant build-up of dirt, dust, staining and/or cobwebs on the glass, frames or surrounds. Cleaning has clearly been neglected, resulting in an unsatisfactory appearance and a poor standard of cleanliness.

Ledges and Window Sills	
Gold	
	Ledges, window sills and surrounding surfaces are clean, well maintained and free from dust, dirt, cobwebs, litter and debris. There is clear evidence that regular cleaning is being undertaken, and the overall standard of presentation is excellent.
Silver	
	Ledges and window sills are generally clean and in an acceptable condition; however, there are noticeable accumulations of dust, dirt, cobwebs, dead insects or light litter in some areas. Additional cleaning is required to restore the expected standard.
Bronze	
	The condition of the ledges and window sills is unacceptable, with significant accumulations of dirt, dust, grime, cobwebs, insects and/or litter. There is little or no evidence of recent cleaning. A Bronze rating will also be awarded where hazardous items are present, such as broken glass, sharp objects or other debris that could pose a risk to residents or visitors.

Entrance Lobby	
Gold	

	The entrance lobby is clean, welcoming and well maintained. Floors have been swept and mopped, with no visible dirt, dust, litter, detritus, cobwebs or chewing gum. Corners, skirting boards and entrance areas are free from debris, and there is no accumulation of junk mail, newspapers or other unwanted items.
Silver	
	The entrance lobby is generally clean and functional; however, there are minor accumulations of dirt, dust, litter, detritus or cobwebs in some areas. Small amounts of junk mail or debris may be present, and there is limited evidence that the floors have been cleaned recently. The standard remains acceptable but requires attention to restore a high-quality appearance.
Bronze	
	The entrance lobby is in a poor and neglected condition, with significant accumulations of dirt, dust, litter, detritus, cobwebs and/or chewing gum. Floors show little or no evidence of recent cleaning, and junk mail, newspapers or other debris are present. Personal belongings, refuse or stored items may also be obstructing communal areas and creating potential fire or health and safety hazards.

Handrails, Ledges and Bannister Rails	
Gold	
	Handrails, bannister rails, ledges, skirting boards and light switches are clean, well maintained and free from dust, dirt, cobwebs and litter. High-touch surfaces show clear evidence of regular cleaning and present an excellent standard of cleanliness.
Silver	
	Handrails, bannister rails, ledges, skirting boards and switches are generally clean; however, there are noticeable accumulations of dust, dirt, cobwebs or light litter in some areas. Cleaning standards remain acceptable but require attention to restore the expected standard.
Bronze	

	Handrails, bannister rails, ledges, skirting boards and switches are heavily soiled, with significant accumulations of dirt, dust, grime, cobwebs and/or litter. There is little or no evidence of recent cleaning, and the overall condition gives the appearance that routine cleaning and maintenance have been neglected.

Floors and Staircases	
Gold	
	Floors, landings and staircases are clean, well maintained and free from dirt, dust, detritus, litter and spillages. There is clear evidence that the surfaces have been swept and mopped regularly, and they are clean to the touch with no visible staining or debris.
Silver	
	Floors, landings and staircases are generally clean and safe to use; however, there are noticeable accumulations of dust, dirt, litter or minor debris in some areas. There is limited evidence of recent sweeping or mopping, and additional cleaning is required to restore the expected standard.
Bronze	
	Floors, landings and staircases are in a poor condition, with obvious accumulations of dirt, dust, debris, litter and/or staining. There is little or no evidence of recent cleaning, and the overall appearance indicates that routine cleaning and maintenance have been neglected. Any excessive debris or spillages that could present a slip, trip or health and safety risk will be scored as Bronze.

Walls and Ceilings	
Gold	
	Walls and ceilings throughout all communal areas are clean, well maintained and free from marks, scuffs, stains, dust, cobwebs and damage. Decorative finishes are in good condition, and there is clear evidence that the area is regularly monitored and maintained to a high standard.
Silver	

	Walls and ceilings are generally clean and in an acceptable condition; however, there are isolated scuff marks, minor stains, dust, cobwebs or other cosmetic defects visible in some areas. The overall appearance remains satisfactory but would benefit from remedial cleaning or minor maintenance.
Bronze	
	Walls and ceilings are in a poor condition, with widespread dirt, scuff marks, staining, cobwebs and/or damage evident throughout the communal areas. There is little or no evidence that cleaning, redecoration or maintenance issues have been addressed, resulting in an unsatisfactory overall appearance.

Bin Areas	
Gold	
	Bin storage areas are clean, tidy and well maintained. Floors and surrounding surfaces are free from litter, spillages, debris and unpleasant odours. Waste is appropriately contained within bins, and there is clear evidence of regular cleaning and waste management.
Silver	
	Bin storage areas are generally clean and functional; however, there are small amounts of litter, dirt, debris or minor spillages present. Some build-up is evident, but only limited cleaning or maintenance is required to restore the expected standard.
Bronze	
	Bin storage areas are in a poor condition, with significant accumulations of litter, dirt, debris, spillages and/or unpleasant odours. Waste may be overflowing or stored incorrectly, and there is little or no evidence of recent cleaning. Immediate attention is required to restore acceptable cleanliness and hygiene standards.

NEIGHBOURHOOD STANDARDS FOR BLOCKS (GENERAL STANDARDS)

Fly-tipping
Clear of fly-tipping.

Graffiti
Clear of graffiti.

Car parks
Swept and free from litter and weeds

Garage and garage areas
Garage areas are clear of litter, weeds, debris and garages are usable, have good access and lockable doors and are free of graffiti, vandalism and fly tipping.

Paths, walkways and courtyards
Swept, free from litter, leaves and weeds.

Abandoned vehicles
Reported and removed.

Communal repairs
Reported and completed.

Litter	
Gold	
	All communal areas are free from litter, bulky items and fly-tipping. Bins are not overflowing, waste is properly contained, and there is clear evidence that waste management arrangements are effective and regularly maintained.
Silver	

	Communal areas are generally free from litter; however, small amounts of litter or isolated bulky items may be present. Bins may be approaching capacity or occasionally overflowing, indicating that waste removal or management requires attention.
Bronze	
	Significant amounts of litter, bulky waste or fly-tipped items are present within communal areas. Bins are overflowing, waste is not being managed effectively, and there is clear evidence that regular waste removal or cleansing services have not been carried out. The accumulation of litter may present environmental, health and safety, or fire risks.

Fly-Tipping	
Gold	
	Communal areas, bin stores and external estate areas are free from fly-tipped waste, bulky items and abandoned possessions. There is no evidence of unauthorised dumping, and all waste is stored and disposed of appropriately.
Silver	
	There are isolated instances of fly-tipping or bulky waste in communal or external areas, such as black bags, packaging, furniture, shopping trolleys or other discarded items. While the issue is limited in scale, the volume of waste exceeds the expected standard and requires attention.
Bronze	
	There is significant fly-tipping or an accumulation of bulky waste within communal areas, bin stores or around the estate. Multiple items such as furniture, white goods, construction materials or refuse have been abandoned, obstructing communal spaces or creating environmental, health and safety, or fire risks. There is little evidence that the issue has been addressed in a timely manner, and urgent action is required.

Graffiti	
Gold	

	There is no visible graffiti, vandalism, tagging or unauthorised markings within communal areas, inside the building, on external walls, or anywhere within the surrounding estate. The environment is clean, well maintained and presents a positive appearance.
Silver	
	There are isolated instances of graffiti, tagging or unauthorised markings within the building, on external walls or in surrounding communal areas. The graffiti is limited in extent and does not significantly detract from the overall appearance of the environment, but remedial action is required.
Bronze	
	Graffiti, tagging or vandalism is widespread, excessive or highly visible within the building, on external walls or across communal estate areas. Offensive, discriminatory or threatening graffiti will be automatically be scored as Bronze and treated as a priority.

Car Parks	
Gold	
	The car park is clean, well maintained and free from litter, leaves, fly-tipping and other debris. Parking bays, markings and signage are clearly visible and in good condition. The area provides a safe, tidy and welcoming environment for residents and visitors.
Silver	
	The car park is generally clean and serviceable; however, there are noticeable accumulations of litter, leaves, weeds or other debris in some areas. Parking markings may show signs of wear, and additional cleaning or maintenance is required to restore the expected standard.
Bronze	

	The condition of the car park is unacceptable, with significant accumulations of litter, leaves, weeds, fly-tipping or other debris. Parking areas may be poorly maintained, and hazardous materials such as broken glass, sharp objects, spillages or other obstructions may be present. The overall condition indicates that routine cleaning and maintenance have been neglected and immediate attention is required.

Garages and Garage Areas	
Gold	
	Garage areas are clean, safe and well maintained, with no significant litter, debris, weeds, fly-tipping, graffiti or vandalism. Garages are accessible, in good repair and capable of being used for their intended purpose. Doors, locks and surrounding surfaces are in good condition, and the overall appearance reflects effective estate management.
Silver	
	Garage areas are generally clean and serviceable; however, there may be minor accumulations of litter, debris, weeds or moss. Isolated instances of fly-tipping, low-level graffiti, minor vandalism or defects may be present, but these do not significantly affect the usability or safety of the garages. Some maintenance or remedial work may be required to restore the expected standard.
Bronze	
	Garage areas are in a poor condition, with significant accumulations of litter, debris, weeds, fly-tipped waste or evidence of vandalism. Garages may be difficult to access, insecure, damaged or unsuitable for their intended use. Hazardous materials, bulk refuse, extensive graffiti or significant disrepair may be present, creating environmental, health and safety, or fire risks.

Pathways, Roads and Courtyards	
Gold	
	Pathways, roads, courtyards and communal external areas are clean, well maintained and free from litter, leaves, debris, weeds and hazardous objects. Surfaces are safe, accessible and provide a positive environment for residents and visitors.

Silver	
	Pathways, roads and courtyards are generally clean and maintained; however, minor accumulations of litter, leaves, detritus or weeds are evident in some areas. The level of cleanliness remains acceptable and is consistent with the expected cleaning cycle, although some attention is required to restore a high standard of presentation.
Bronze	
	Pathways, roads and courtyards are in a poor condition, with significant accumulations of litter, leaves, debris, weeds or other waste materials. Hazardous items such as broken glass, sharp objects or fly-tipped materials may be present. The overall appearance suggests that routine cleaning and maintenance have been neglected, and remedial action is required to restore acceptable standards.

NEIGHBOURHOOD STANDARDS FOR GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FOR CLEANING

Grass areas

Regularly cut, all cutting swept from hard surfaces, associated shrubs well maintained.

Weed clearance

Area free of weeds.

Shrub bed and hedge maintenance

Free from leaves, litter and weeds. Chippings/ mulch kept within beds, not overgrown or obstructing paths.

Trees

Overgrown shoots and saplings cut back and hanging branches removed.

Grass Areas	
Gold	

	Grassed areas are well maintained, recently cut and presented to a high standard. Grass is healthy, with minimal weed growth, and all edges are neatly defined. Grass has been cut back to its original line and does not encroach onto pathways, flower beds, shrub borders or other communal areas.
Silver	
	Grassed areas are generally maintained but show signs that routine grounds maintenance is overdue. Grass may be longer than expected, with some weed growth and minor encroachment onto pathways, flower beds or shrub borders. The overall appearance remains acceptable but requires attention to restore the expected standard.
Bronze	
	Grassed areas are poorly maintained, with excessive grass growth, significant weed infestation and widespread encroachment onto pathways, flower beds and other communal areas. There is little or no evidence of recent grounds maintenance, and the overall appearance is untidy and below the expected standard.

Weed Clearance	
Gold	
	The area is free from visible weeds, with planted beds, pathways, hardstanding areas and boundaries maintained to a high standard. Any previous weed growth has been effectively treated and removed, leaving the area clean, tidy and well presented. There is clear evidence of a proactive and regular weed control programme.
Silver	
	There are noticeable weeds present in some areas, and evidence of previous weed treatment may be visible. Some dead weeds may remain in situ, or weed growth may indicate that routine maintenance is overdue. The overall standard remains acceptable but requires attention to restore the expected level of presentation.
Bronze	

	There is extensive weed growth across the area, including well-established and newly emerging weeds. Weeds may be encroaching onto pathways, roads, parking areas, planted beds and communal spaces. There is little or no evidence of recent weed control measures, and any previous treatment appears to have been ineffective or incomplete.

Shrubs and Beds	
Gold	
	Shrub beds, planted areas and hedges are well maintained, healthy and visually attractive. Shrubs and hedges have been pruned with no evidence of overgrowth. Footpaths, grassed areas, parking bays and seating areas are unobstructed, and planting is contained within its designated area.
Silver	
	Shrub beds and hedges are generally well maintained but show signs that routine maintenance is becoming due. There may be some new growth, light overgrowth or isolated areas requiring pruning; however, pathways, grassed areas, parking bays and seating areas remain largely unobstructed. The overall standard remains acceptable but would benefit from attention.
Bronze	
	Shrub beds and hedges are poorly maintained, with significant overgrowth, dead vegetation or evidence that routine maintenance has not been carried out for an extended period. Vegetation may be obstructing footpaths, grassed areas, parking bays, lighting, signage or seating areas. The condition detracts from the appearance of the estate and may present health and safety, accessibility or security concerns.

Trees	
Gold	

	Trees are healthy, well maintained and structurally sound, with a balanced canopy and good foliage cover. There is no significant lean, deadwood, disease or damage evident. Trees do not obstruct footpaths, roads, parking areas, lighting or residents' windows, and there is no indication that they present a safety risk.
Silver	
	Trees are generally healthy and safe but may show minor signs of stress, deadwood, structural weakness or limited disease. Some branches may be beginning to encroach on footpaths, parking areas, lighting or residents' windows, but do not currently present a significant risk. Routine maintenance or arboriculture attention may be required to prevent further deterioration.
Bronze	
	Trees are in a poor condition, displaying significant lean, substantial deadwood, structural defects, disease or damage. Branches may be obstructing footpaths, roads, parking areas, lighting or residents' windows, or creating a risk to residents, vehicles or property. The condition of the tree indicates that maintenance is overdue and urgent inspection or remedial action is required.