

# Cleaning & Caretaking service standard



# CONTENTS

**INTRODUCTION..... P. 3**

**SERVICE SCOPE & STANDARD..... p. 4**

**WHEN & HOW TO CONTACT US.....p. 20**

**OTHER CONSIDERATIONS..... p. 22**



# INTRODUCTION

## Cleaning and Caretaking Service

The cleaning and caretaking service has been provided by Milton Keynes City Council (MKCC) since 1992. It covers nearly 500 internal communal areas where the service is being delivered by our internal teams, and 25 sheltered schemes where it is delivered by an external contractor. From the beginning, the purpose of the service has been to enhance the quality of life of all residents living in the properties managed by MKCC.

## Purpose of this service standard

Although today our mission remains the same, this handbook is the result of a collaborative effort between residents and staff to make the service more transparent, effective, and compliant with [Consumer Standards in Social Housing](#). The handbook describes cleaning and caretaking standards using a combination of text and photographs, which form our quality assurance framework to be used by residents, and staff, to easily find what the good standard looks like, as that is what we are striving for. We have recognised though, that to be truly successful in consistently achieving the good service standards we must have in place an easy method for residents and staff of identifying the poor standards of service too, and the ways those can be reported and escalated. We believe this handbook will be a tool to help to achieve that.

## Scope of the document

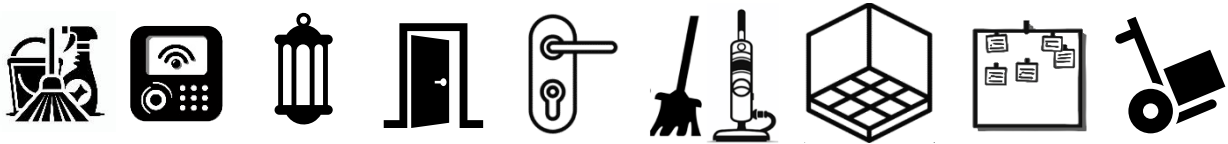
**Pages 4-17** cover the scope of the cleaning and caretaking service, highlight those things that are outside of the scope but still should be monitored and reported by the teams, and list things to look for when assessing the achieved standards. **Page 18** is a summary of the standards where we advise on when and how to contact us. **Pages 19-20** list other considerations related to the service. Although, it may not cover all scenarios, we hope this document will be a step towards shaping consistent, good standard across all our blocks in Milton Keynes.

# SERVICE SCOPE & STANDARD




## Internal 1. Entrances, halls, & lobbies

**Frequency:** On every visit

**Service scope:** Cleaning intercoms, external light, doors (glazing, frames and handles). Sweeping/vacuum cleaning/mopping floors or doormats at entrances. Cleaning marks on walls, organising notice board where applicable. Removal of abandoned personal belongings. Faulty to be reported as repairs.



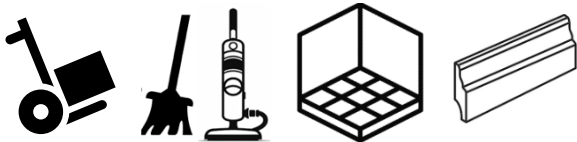
**Service standards:**

	<p><b>Good standard we aim for.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Free of dust, litter, or hazards.</li><li>• No visible marks, stains, or smears.</li><li>• Well-maintained, clean appearance.</li></ul>
	<p><b>Poor standard to be improved.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Noticeable dust, litter, or hazards.</li><li>• Visible marks, stains, or smears.</li><li>• Abandoned personal belongings reported, cleaning not evident.</li></ul>
	<p><b>Very poor standard to be prioritised.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Excessive dust, litter, or hazards.</li><li>• Excessive marks, stains, or smears.</li><li>• Door faults, and other safety issues.</li></ul>




## Internal 2. Floors

**Frequency:** On every visit

**Service scope:** Any abandoned personal belongings should be removed. Skirtings should be dusted. Depending on floor type, the floor should be vacuumed or swept, then mopped. If floor is being mopped safety signs should be left throughout and removed when floor is dry. Some stains and marks may require deep cleaning.



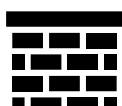
### Service standards:

	<p><b>Good standard we aim for.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Swept, mopped, clean, and free of litter.</li><li>• No visible marks or stains.</li><li>• Clear corridors.</li></ul>
	<p><b>Poor standard to be improved.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not swept, noticeable dirt build-up.</li><li>• Visible marks and stains.</li><li>• Visible dust on skirtings.</li></ul>
	<p><b>Very poor standard to be prioritised.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unsafe debris or other hazards.</li><li>• Excessive marks and stains.</li><li>• Required service is not taking place.</li></ul>




## Internal 3. Internal walls (to include graffiti & cobwebs)

**Frequency:** On every other visit or as necessary

**Service scope:** Walls should be cleaned of marks, and graffiti where possible. For graffiti that cannot be removed arrangements for cleaning by a contractor. Wall features, like vent covers, pipes, handrails to be dusted. Heavy marks may require repainting.



### Service standards:

		<p><b>Good standard we aim for.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walls clean, free of marks, stains, and cobwebs.</li> <li>• Skirting boards dust free.</li> <li>• No graffiti, walls appear clean.</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Poor standard to be improved.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walls have visible marks, stains, or dust.</li> <li>• Skirting boards have visible dirt, dust.</li> <li>• High levels have visible cobwebs.</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Very poor standard to be prioritised.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excessive marks, stains, or cobwebs.</li> <li>• Skirting boards have excessive dirt, dust.</li> <li>• Offensive graffiti present, walls show no sign of planned cleaning.</li> </ul>

# Internal 4. Stairs & stairwells

**Frequency:** On every other visit or as necessary

**Service scope:** Staircases should be treated in a similar way to floors. In addition, banisters and step treads should be dusted and cleaned regularly, and handrails should be cleaned on every visit. Skirtings should be dusted or wet wiped. Broken treads or banisters to be reported as repairs.



## Service standards:

	<p><b>Good standard we aim for.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clean stairs, free of dust, dirt, and litter.</li><li>• Walls, skirting clean, marks &amp; dust-free.</li><li>• Clean bannisters, rails, step threads.</li></ul>
	<p><b>Poor standard to be improved.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Noticeable build-up of dust, litter, marks, and stains on stairs.</li><li>• Walls, skirting boards, have dust &amp; marks.</li><li>• Rails, bannisters, step treads dusty, and dirt build-up visible.</li></ul>
	<p><b>Very poor standard to be prioritised.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Excessive litter, and stains on stairs.</li><li>• Rails, bannisters, step treads have deep dirt, no evidence of cleaning activities.</li><li>• H&amp;S issues not reported or fixed.</li></ul>







## Internal 5. Lifts

**Frequency:** On every visit

**Service scope:** Lifts should be checked in terms of H&S, any issues addressed or reported. Lift buttons, and doors should be cleaned paying attention to finger marks. Floor inside lift should be swept and clean, walls should be clean, cobwebs should have been removed. Faulty lifts reported to a contractor.



### Service standards:

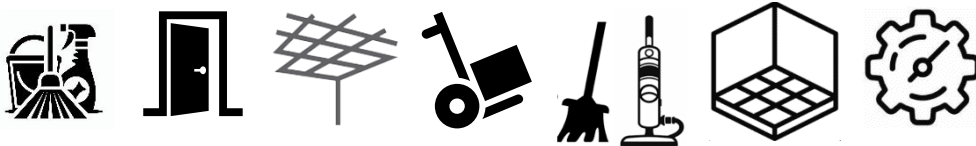
		<p><b>Good standard we aim for.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clear lift floor, no litter, marks, or stains.</li><li>• Corners free of dust or dirt.</li><li>• Clean walls, doors, working buttons.</li></ul>
		<p><b>Poor standard to be improved.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Noticeable litter, marks on floor.</li><li>• Dirt and dust in corners and walls.</li><li>• Some removable stains, working buttons.</li></ul>
		<p><b>Very poor standard to be prioritised.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Excessive litter, dirt, stains on the floor.</li><li>• Excessive marks, stains on walls &amp; doors.</li><li>• Health and Safety hazards, button issues.</li></ul>



## Internal 6. Service cupboards (does not include private cupboards)

**Frequency:** On every visit

**Service scope:** Door should be cleaned, including glazing where applicable. Abandoned personal belongings should be removed. Floor should be swept. Cobwebs should be removed. Trades access and light times may need adjusting. Storage of any personal belongings will not be allowed.



### Service standards:



#### Good standard we aim for.

- Area is swept and clear.
- All locks working, reported if defective.
- No unauthorised items.



#### Poor standard to be improved.

- Build-up of dust, litter, dirt.
- All locks working, reported if defective.
- Unauthorised items, but not causing direct H&S risk, and arranged to be removed.



#### Very poor standard to be prioritised.

- Excessive build-up of litter, dust, dirt.
- Defective locks not reported, bulk items, builder's rubble, unauthorised items.
- Blocked access to electrical cupboards.

# Internal 7. High levels (to include cobwebs)

**Frequency:** Once every 12 months

**Service scope:** Those areas that can be accessed with the use of a step ladder should be kept clear of cobwebs & marks. Other areas that are beyond easy reach of the caretaking team should be monitored and scheduled to be cleaned when necessary. Areas beyond easy reach to be reported to a contractor.



## Service standards:

 	<p><b>Good standard we aim for.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High-level areas free of dust, cobwebs.</li><li>• Well-maintained high-level elements.</li></ul>
 	<p><b>Poor standard to be improved.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Noticeable dust, dirt, and cobwebs.</li><li>• High-level elements faulty, no light.</li><li>• High-level areas don't appear overly dirty but require attention.</li></ul>
 	<p><b>Very poor standard to be prioritised.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Excessive dust, dirt, and cobwebs.</li><li>• H&amp;S issues not fixed or reported despite regular visits.</li><li>• Requires urgent attention.</li></ul>




# Internal & External 1. Communal windows

**Frequency:** Arranged as and when necessary

**Service scope:** Internal & external low-level windows, should be cleaned once every 8 weeks or more often if necessary. Cleaning should include glazing, frames, & handles. Low-level windows are those that can easily be reached by the team. High level windows will be arranged to be cleaned by a contractor. Issues with catches, hinges, handles, broken glazing reported as repairs.



## Service standards:

	<p><b>Good standard we aim for.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Glazing clean, and marks &amp; smear-free.</li><li>• Frames and ledges are clear of dust, dirt, and cobwebs.</li><li>• Provides a clear view through the window.</li></ul>
	<p><b>Poor standard to be improved.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Glazing has noticeable marks, smears.</li><li>• Frame and ledges have visible dust.</li><li>• Build-up of dust or dirt on window frames or ledges.</li></ul>
	<p><b>Very poor standard to be prioritised.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Excessive marks, smears, and dirt.</li><li>• Significant build-up of dust, and dirt on window frames and ledges.</li><li>• Damage and H&amp;S issues.</li></ul>

## Internal & External 2. Communal lighting

**Frequency:** On every visit

**Service scope:** The main activity is checking if lightning is working. Caretakers will arrange for non-working bulbs to be replaced by the contractor. Cobwebs around reachable light covers should be removed, and they should be dusted and cleaned. Replacing non-working bulbs and removing dead insects from inside light covers is carried out by a contractor.



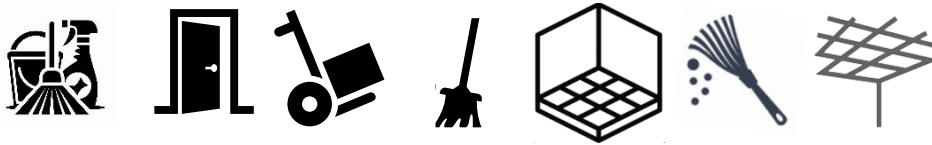
### Service standards:

	<p><b>Good standard we aim for.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All lights are working.</li> <li>• Area around light is dust, cobwebs free.</li> <li>• Clean light shade.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Poor standard to be improved.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One or two light bulbs not working.</li> <li>• Noticeable dirt, cobwebs around light.</li> <li>• Light shade not clean.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Very poor standard to be prioritised.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some lights not working at all. Dark.</li> <li>• Excessive dirt, cobwebs around light.</li> <li>• Very dirty light shade.</li> </ul>

## Internal & External 3. Bin stores

**Frequency:** On every visit

**Service scope:** Access to bin stores should be kept free of obstruction, litter should be removed, floors should be swept after collections. Floors should be regularly cleaned with water and disinfectant, especially in case of any spillages. Bin enclosures that belong to flats are for residents to look after. Issues with catches, hinges, handles, broken glazing reported as repairs.



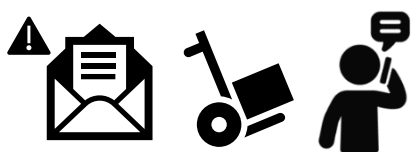
### Service standards:

		<p><b>Good standard we aim for.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bin room clear of blockages.</li> <li>• Floor clear of litter.</li> <li>• Clean floor washed throughout.</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Poor standard to be improved.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visible litter or refuse on floor.</li> <li>• Floor may not be cleaned and washed.</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Very poor standard to be prioritised.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bin room blocked by excessive refuse.</li> <li>• Not cleaned, washed, offensive odour.</li> <li>• H&amp;S issues not addressed despite regular visits.</li> </ul>




## Internal & External 4. Abandoned personal belongings

**Frequency:** On every visit

**Service scope:** Residents should be informed in advance that storage of personal belongings is not allowed, and they will be removed without further notice. Caretaking team should either remove abandoned personal belongings and dispose of them, or they should secure them, and arrange them to be removed. Storage of any personal belongings will not be allowed.



### Service standards:

	<p><b>Good standard we aim for.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Obstructions reported and removed.</li><li>• Floor completely clear of slip hazards.</li></ul>
	<p><b>Poor standard to be improved.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Areas may have items but those are not blocking access and have been arranged to be removed.</li></ul>
	<p><b>Very poor standard to be prioritised.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Areas are blocked by personal belongings posing H&amp;S risk.</li><li>• H&amp;S issues not addressed despite regular visits.</li></ul>

# External 1. Pathways, courtyards, & hard standing

**Frequency:** On every visit

**Service scope:** All those areas should be litter picked. Any personal abandoned belongings, or bulk waste should either be removed or made safe. Any issues with weeds or unmaintained gardens should be reported to the relevant team. Overgrown gardens, weeds, to be reported to a contractor.



## Service standards:

	<p><b>Good standard we aim for.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The area is clean and tidy.</li> <li>• No bulky items or hazardous materials.</li> <li>• Regular cleaning is evident.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Poor standard to be improved.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The area has some litter and debris.</li> <li>• Cleaning doesn't happen often enough.</li> <li>• No health and safety risks.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Very poor standard to be prioritised.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The area is neglected and messy.</li> <li>• There are bulky abandoned items, blocking access, or hazardous materials.</li> <li>• Service is either rare or bad.</li> </ul>

## External 2. Parking areas

**Frequency:** On every visit (does not apply to Sheltered Schemes)

**Service scope:** This does not include car parks on adopted highways. Car parks should be treated as hard standing described on page 20. In addition, any illegally parked cars should be reported to Neighbourhoods' Officers. Public car parks on adopted highways are responsibility of Highways.



### Service standards:

		<p><b>Good standard we aim for.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking area is clean and clear.</li> <li>• No unwanted vehicles or items.</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Poor standard to be improved.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some litter and debris.</li> <li>• May have an abandoned vehicle, but it is not posing H&amp;S risk.</li> <li>• Refuse is safe, waiting to be collected.</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Very poor standard to be prioritised.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lot of litter, debris, and weeds.</li> <li>• Abandoned vehicles are dangerous.</li> <li>• Bulky abandoned items blocking access, and not reported.</li> </ul>



## External 3. Grassed areas & shrubs

**Frequency:** On every visit

**Service scope:** This does not include public open spaces. Any personal abandoned belongings, or bulk waste should either be removed or made safe. Any issues with weeds or unmaintained gardens should be reported to the relevant team. Overgrown gardens, weeds, to be reported to a contractor.



### Service standards:

A photograph of a well-maintained garden. It features a green lawn, a central tree, a gravel path, and a brick house in the background. A green trash bin is visible in the foreground.	<p><b>Good standard we aim for.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grass and shrubs are neat and tidy.</li><li>• No litter, debris, or hazards.</li></ul>
A photograph of a garden that is somewhat overgrown. A patio table and chairs are visible, along with a large tree and a brick building. There is some litter and debris scattered around.	<p><b>Poor standard to be improved.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some litter and debris.</li><li>• Bulky abandoned items are present, but are safe, waiting to be collected.</li><li>• Requires work, but no hazards.</li></ul>
A photograph of a garden that is very overgrown and messy. There is a lot of litter and debris, including what appears to be a broken glass bottle and some needles. A brick building is visible in the background.	<p><b>Very poor standard to be prioritised.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A lot of litter and debris, very messy.</li><li>• Bulky abandoned items are unsafe, and unreported.</li><li>• Hazards like glass or needles present.</li></ul>

# WHEN & HOW TO CONTACT US

**Measuring Success** - Here we present what to look for when assessing cleaning and caretaking service standard, and what to do when it doesn't meet expectations. To further help us shape the standard, please consider taking part in a [satisfaction survey](#) by scanning the QR code with your phone or tablet camera.



## Good standard we aim for.

- Looks clean and in good condition. Odour free.
- Minimal signs of litter, debris, or marks and stains.
- Regular, good cleaning is happening as planned.

**ACTION: scan QR code above to share your views**

## Poor standard to be improved.

- Clearly shows marks and signs of litter and debris.
- Appears as if cleaning hasn't happened as planned.
- Requires attention to bring it up to an acceptable standard.

**ACTION: report to either [MyCouncil](#) or 01908 691 691\***

## Very poor standard to be prioritised.

- Shows no signs of recent cleaning. It is "smelly."
- Has excessive litter, debris, or marks and stains.
- Poses health & safety risks to anyone using or passing by.

**ACTION: report as an urgent request to 01908 691 691\***

**\*If you live in a [Sheltered Scheme](#), please report all issues with cleaning to your Scheme Manager.**

**Escalating Issues** – If you've been reporting poor service standard, but you don't feel your concern is being addressed, report the issue as a complaint. For more information, click on the link to visit [our complaints page](#), scan the QR code, or call us on **01908 253 817**.



# OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Cleaning and Caretaking Team may not always be able to resolve some of the issues with poor standard of internal communal areas. Moreover, there may also be factors that will negatively impact the cleanliness of blocks. Some of them are:

## Building Condition

As buildings age, they naturally show signs of use and may require major maintenance works.



## Unforeseen Circumstances

Weather, vandalism, building works, repairs, can all impact cleanliness.



## Cleaning Frequency

How often an area is cleaned affects its cleanliness. Areas with heavier foot traffic may get dirtier quicker.



## Service Level Agreements

Some locations have agreements that adjust cleaning based on feedback. Contact our Caretaking Team for details.



## Blocks Managed by Others

Some blocks are managed by other landlords. Report any issues to them first. If unsatisfied, then contact us



## Sheltered Schemes

Scope of service in Sheltered Schemes may differ to what we covered in this document. Currently cleaning in all schemes takes place three times a week as standard.



**Service Failures** – In general needs blocks, where we fall below our promised good standard, we will make relevant adjustment to accounts through the end of year reconciliations, which will then be applied to accounts. We would not consider refunds to residents through weekly or monthly charges. In sheltered schemes, when there is a service failure, we would rectify any valid issues immediately.

# ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORT

## What is and how to use QR code?

A QR code is a type of barcode that can be scanned by a smartphone or a tablet to access some information or perform some action. For example, a QR code can take you to our website or to an online form. To use a QR code we shared in this document, you need to follow these steps:

1. Use camera app in your phone or table as you would normally do, when taking a photograph.
2. Point camera at the QR code.
3. Follow a link that will appear on your screen.



\*Please note, you need to be connected to the Internet to use QR code.

## What is and how to use MyCouncil?

**MyCouncil** is an online system managed by Milton Keynes City Council that residents of Milton Keynes can use to report any issues they are facing. After setting up the account, residents can report various issues, to include those with cleaning and caretaking, and check progress of the reported issues. You will only need to setup your account once, and you can then easily access it at any time.

## Further help

Please note, if you unable to access, open, or view any of the information on these pages, please contact us on **01908 691 691** or **Civic, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes MK9 3EJ**. If you live in a Sheltered Schemes, please approach your Scheme Manager. We can offer you a more accessible version of this document or provide you with paper version of the customer satisfaction survey that you will be able to post to us.

## Version control

Report Version Controls			
Authors	Version	Published date	Review date
	1.0	30 November 2023	30 November 2024

