

MANAGING OUR COMMUNAL SPACES



Blackpool Coastal
Housing



Blackpool Coastal Housing (BCH) is committed to ensuring residents' safety and adhering to the requirements set out in the statutory Fire Risk Assessments completed on all BCH communal managed areas.



This information booklet explains our approach to managing our communal areas and the standards in place to comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

MANAGING OUR COMMUNAL AREAS POLICY

The safety of our customers is, and continues to be, our main priority. BCH also has a legal obligation to comply with Fire Safety regulations; this booklet provides information on how we will manage the communal areas and the standards we expect you to follow to ensure yours and your neighbours' safety.

Communal areas can be defined as shared spaces within the locality of your home and include:

- **Hallways and walkways**
- **Balconies**
- **Shared stairways**
- **Bin rooms**
- **Storage areas**
- **Access paths**
- **Communal gardens**
- **Drying areas**

It is important that communal areas are not used for the storage of your possessions or as a place to leave unwanted goods or waste items.

Clear and unobstructed spaces will enable the Fire and Rescue Service to gain access in an emergency situation and, in the event of a fire, will eliminate the risk of such items acting as a further accelerant.

It is a breach of your Tenancy/Lease Agreement to dump rubbish. If it is proven that rubbish has been left by you or your visitor, we will charge you for its removal.

Our policy states that the following items are not permitted to be stored in the communal areas:

- ◉ **Washing lines**
- ◉ **Shopping trolleys**
- ◉ **Lockers and cabinets**
- ◉ **Loose carpets/doormats**
- ◉ **Mail or newspapers**
- ◉ **Barbecues, fuel containers or gas bottles**
- ◉ **Plant pots/hanging baskets**
- ◉ **Garden furniture**
- ◉ **Pushchairs/prams/buggies**
- ◉ **Children's toys/equipment**
- ◉ **Mobility scooters/wheelchairs**

**Please note: this list is not exhaustive; communal areas should remain completely clear and free from obstruction.*

We understand that many of our customers have mobility issues and may need to use assistance aids such as wheelchairs and mobility scooters.

Our Neighbourhoods Team is on hand to agree storage solutions with you. If you are currently storing such items in the communal area of your block, please contact us as soon as possible to discuss this.

BCH has a statutory duty to review its Fire Risk Assessments on all communal blocks every two years. Alongside this, the Neighbourhoods Team complete regular inspections to help ensure areas remain clear and free from obstruction so that:

- **Residents can escape in the event of an emergency**
- **Fire and Rescue Services can carry out their duties**
- **Fires are not able to spread more quickly and cause further damage**

INSPECTIONS AND MONITORING

Part of the Neighbourhoods Team's role is to complete regular inspections on all the areas BCH manages. This includes:

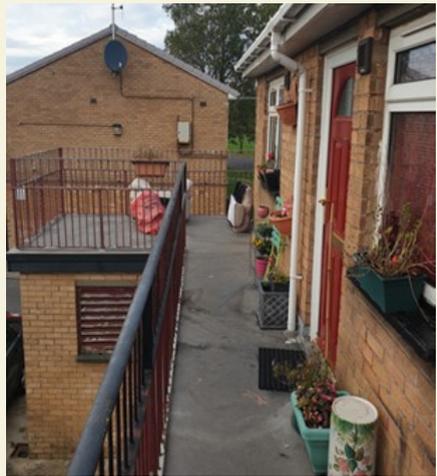
- ◆ Identifying overgrown gardens
- ◆ Misuse of communal areas
- ◆ Identifying poor property conditions
- ◆ Incorrect rubbish disposal, including fly tipping

In all instances, we will first work with you to provide advice and support you to resolve any issues. Formal action will only be taken if you refuse this support.

Communal areas should remain clear and free from obstruction...



ACCEPTABLE



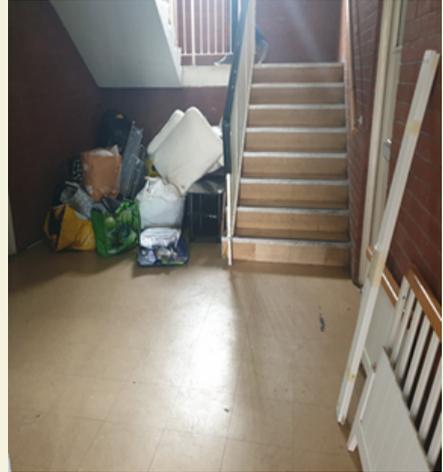
UNACCEPTABLE



Items should not be stored within the communal areas...



ACCEPTABLE



UNACCEPTABLE



If items are found in the communal areas, our Neighbourhoods Officer will follow these steps:

- 1** Contact will be made with you either by telephone or post. A letter will be sent to advise that an issue has been identified and give you time to remove any items.
- 2** A visit will be completed to check whether the items have been removed. If they have, no further action will be taken. If they haven't, a first warning will be issued to you. If you need more time to remove the items prior to this visit, please let us know.
- 3** Another visit will be arranged with you and completed. If the items remain and you have not made contact with us, the case will be escalated and further action will be taken. This may include; additional warnings, removal of items and recharge applied, or legal action.

COMMUNAL GARDENS

We understand that residents take pride in their neighbourhood and want the communal areas to look welcoming. We are committed to working with you to create communities that you and your neighbours are proud to live in.

As part of this commitment, improvement works can include the development of communal garden areas, fruit and vegetable planters and benches to improve the look of our neighbourhoods:



If you are interested in developing a communal garden area within your neighbourhood, please contact us.

CONTACT US

If you have any queries regarding the information contained within this booklet, please get in touch with us.

Our Neighbourhoods Team can be contacted in the following ways:



**Talk to us in person or write to us:
Blackpool Coastal Housing
@thegrange, Bathurst Avenue, Blackpool, FY3 7RW**



Tel: 01253 477900 (Choose Option 3)



Email: asb@bch.co.uk



Visit: www.bch.co.uk



**Send a message through your MyBCH account at
www.bch.co.uk/my-bch**

A full copy of BCH's Management of Communal Areas policy is available on request.



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