

Neighbourhood Expert Role

Full Guide

Our Neighbourhood Experts act as a volunteer representative body for other customers living in their block of flats, street or whole neighbourhood. They take pride in their homes and neighbourhood, providing us with a direct link into the community for our environmental and neighbourhood teams while working together to maintain and improve their area.

The main role of our Neighbourhood Experts is to monitor the communal cleaning, grounds maintenance and other services that take place around their homes and neighbourhoods. You can be involved as much or as little you want. You will not be responsible for taking or reporting individual issues for your neighbours – a Neighbourhood Expert's role deals solely with the communal areas where you live.

What are the main requirements to do the role?

- Be a Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council tenant or leaseholder
- Be over 18 years old
- Have an interest in improving your local area
- Be willing to work in partnership with the council
- Have a few hours a month to spend on this role

Neighbourhood Experts agree:

- To be open and honest when working with colleagues and partners
- To treat each other fairly and respectfully at all times
- To refer to this handbook for guidance and follow procedure
- That their first point of contact for issues not covered in their inspection will be Customer Services
- To work closely with BMSDC to maintain the quality of service within their neighbourhoods

Babergh and Mid Suffolk Agree:

- We will pass on your feedback to the relevant teams (Neighbourhoods, Housing, Waste and Building Services)
- We will be open and honest on how we are actioning your feedback
- We will update you about findings from our Quarterly Neighbourhood Inspections
- We will treat you fairly and with respect

A quick guide on the role

Do

- Conduct Neighbourhood inspections to understand the condition of your neighbourhood
- Complete the Neighbourhood Reporting Form on an ad-hoc basis when you see something you'd like to report in your area. We suggest try to at least complete the form Quarterly.
- Send us any additional information you think might be helpful or add to your reports
- Feel free to speak with neighbours to understand if they aren't satisfied with their parts of their neighbourhood
- Work with the Neighbourhood Team to understand the work we are doing in the area and how we have taken on your feedback.
- Meet with the Neighbourhood Officer to understand what they have found in their quarterly inspection.*
- Work with Neighbourhood Officer to ensure the area is tidy between Quarterly Inspections- They might contact you to check if works have been done (e.g investigate to see if fly tipping has been cleared)*

*Quarterly inspections are only carried out at blocks/bungalows with internal/external communal areas

Do not

- Send multiple reports in for the same inspection, try to stick to one form so we can keep all your information in one place.
- Send multiple reports in for the same incident/ piece of feedback. If you feel your feedback has not been taken into consideration, please contact the Tenant Engagement Team.
- Knock on neighbour's door if you think they aren't following they aren't meeting their tenancy agreement.
- Report individual issues for yourself or neighbour using the form. The role is to report Neighbourhood issues exclusively.
- Report ASB information using the form, there is an official process for this and can be found here:
<https://www.babergh.gov.uk/web/babergh/w/anti-social-behaviour>
<https://midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/anti-social-behaviour>

How to complete the form

Complete the Neighbourhood Expert Reporting Form on an ad hoc basis when you have something to report, but we do suggest our neighbourhoods conduct a quarterly inspection to understand the condition of their neighbourhood.

The form is online and can be completed using laptop, tablet, or phone on all internet browsers. If you would like a paper copy, please request these from the Tenant Engagement Team.

The three areas you can report on are:

- Untidy Communal areas (inside and outside)
- Fly Tipping and items inside communal areas
- Communal Repairs

You can also tell us about any other issue relating to your communal area that is not on the form.

On the form you can upload pictures, we recommend using this feature as this will help us identify the problem quicker and easier. If the form says your picture is too big to upload, you can send the picture to tenant.engagement@babberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

You do not need to complete all section of the forms, and only the ones that are relevant to what you are reporting to us.

Once you have submitted your form, the Tenant Engagement Team will send your report to the Neighbourhood Team as well as any other relevant teams. The Neighbourhood Officer or Tenant Engagement Officer should contact you once they have actioned the items in your report.

Staying Safe

- If another customer asks what you are doing walking around the area, calmly explain to them you are a Neighbourhood Expert. If they are unhappy, rather than try to explain further, remove yourself from the situation and report to the Tenant Engagement Team
- We advise that you carry out inspections in daylight hours in order to be as safe as possible. If you wish to go after dark, tell someone you know that you are going to do the inspection for your safety.
- Don't offer to report someone else's personal repairs if you are made aware of them through being a Neighbourhood Expert – Signposting them to the Customer Service number
- Do not enter another tenant's property to inspect repairs

Contact Details and useful links

Customer services: 0300 1234000

Citizens Advice Bureau: 0808 223 1133

Tenant Engagement Team: Tenant.engagement@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

Reporting ASB:

<https://www.babergh.gov.uk/web/babergh/w/anti-social-behaviour>

<https://midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/anti-social-behaviour>

Reporting Fly Tipping:

<https://www.babergh.gov.uk/report-fly-tipping>

<https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/report-fly-tipping>

Our policies page:

<https://www.babergh.gov.uk/en/housing-policies-and-procedures>

<https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/en/housing-policies-and-procedures>

Customer Access Points

Stowmarket

Address: 54 Ipswich Street, Stowmarket, IP14 1AD

Opening hours: Every Tuesday 10am - 5pm, every Friday 9am - 4.30pm

Sudbury

Address: Sudbury Library, Market Hill, Sudbury, CO10 2EN

Opening hours: Every Monday 9am - 5pm, every Thursday 9am - 5pm

Hadleigh

Address: Hadleigh Library, 27-29 High Street, Hadleigh, IP7 5AG

Opening hours: Every Wednesday 1.30pm - 4.30pm

Shotley

Address: Shotley Village Hall, The Street, Shotley, IP9 1LX

Opening hours: The last Friday of every month, 1.00pm - 4.00pm