

Street Cleansing Operations Hendon Area Environment Sub Committee

The current street cleansing operation comprises the following elements:-

- Cyclical scheduled sweeping
- Responsive Cleaning
- Town Centre Cleaning
- Secondary Shopping Areas
- Graffiti Removal
- Working with Schools
- Encouraging resident participation and assistance
- Clearance of fly-tips
- Clearance of fallen leaves

Cyclical scheduled sweeping

Sweeping is carried out every 6 weeks and includes all residential roads in the borough. This operation includes manual sweeping of pavements, servicing of litter bins, manual and mechanical sweeping of channels and highway (where parked vehicles allow) and litter picking of highway grass verges. The area street scene supervisors check and monitor the standard of the work during and after the sweeping takes place.

The sweeping operatives carrying out the work wear London Borough of Barnet uniform for easy identification. Where possible the same operative will be used on the same locations so that residents get to know who they are and when the sweeping takes place.

This service is currently being reviewed and consideration is being given to improving it by including small mechanical sweeping equipment and offering a more flexible operation by targeting areas that require more frequent cleaning.

Responsive Cleaning

Responsive Cleaning is operated through several responsive cleaning teams working in areas across the borough. These teams carry out pre-planned cleaning at locations we know to be hot spots for littering and fly tipping, in addition to this supervisors are able to direct these teams at short notice to deal responsively with reports we receive via Customer Services.

Residents are able to contact Customer Services on 02083594600 or report problems directly on line by using the Barnet web site and clicking on barnet fix my street. When received these reports are prioritised and responded to within 24 hours, as far as practically possible.

If the issue cannot be dealt with immediately, we will let the customer know why and let them know when they can expect the problem to be fixed.

Issues that we can deal with straight away will include: accumulated litter, dog fouling, overfull litter bins, broken glass, road traffic accidents, dead animals and fly-tipping.

Town Centre Cleaning

Cleansing of all of the boroughs 21 town centres occurs every day except 25th December.

Dedicated town keepers are based in every town centre, they inspect their areas every day and report any problems to their supervisors including any damage that has occurred overnight such as graffiti or vandalism to street furniture. Once they have inspected their areas they proceed to cleaning up and emptying litter bins. In some of the larger town centres the town keeper has an assistant with them to speed up the operation.

Town keepers and assistants interact with shop keepers everyday and try to deal with issues as they arise.

Some of the areas adjacent to town centres often suffer from dumped household waste from flats above shops that are accessed using service roads at the rear of the shops.

We are currently reviewing staff skills set and interactions with trade waste and refuse services, with a view to considering some enforcement which will enable us to take action against those irresponsible residents causing the problem.

Secondary Shopping Areas

There are over 70 of these smaller shopping areas within the borough some of which are extremely busy and most of which include fast food outlets such as Kebab and Fried Chicken shops and Burger bars.

These areas require daily visits by cleansing teams who empty litter bins and sweep and remove all litter. These areas also suffer from household waste from flats above shops being deposited onto the highway which subsequently has to be removed by our teams.

As with town centre cleaning we are looking at staff skills and interactions with other environment functions to consider appropriate action including pro-active discussion with managing agents as well as enforcement.

Graffiti Removal

A graffiti removal service operates across the borough which includes parks and open spaces, residential areas and town centres. Some town centres suffer from anti social behaviour including using public areas as toilets, these areas are also jet washed and disinfected by our graffiti team on a regular basis. Offensive graffiti will be removed within 24 hours once reported to Customer Services. The cleansing team also work with colleagues in the community safety team to provide intelligence on tags which is also shared with Safer Neighbourhood Police teams.

Working with Schools

The Cleansing service regularly communicates with schools direct and via our Children's Services Directorate. Pupils and parents do create additional problems with littering around schools during term time. We try to ensure that the anti-littering message gets passed on to students and parents.

Pupils in younger age groups at primary schools are visited by colleagues in our Waste & Sustainability team who discuss issues such as littering and recycling with groups of children.

Encouraging resident participation and assistance

The Cleansing team have recently introduced 'Adopt a Street' as a cleansing initiative. This initiative was successfully launched last year and now several resident groups have officially adopted their street.

To enhance residents' local environment the scheme provides training, tools and equipment for groups to carry out basic operations such as litter picking and clearing fallen leaves. Where appropriate the scheme has also supplied spring flowering bulbs which residents planted in verges, road salt / grit for winter gritting and pruning shears so that tree basal growth can be cut back. Normal cleansing services continue to be provided in these roads but the work residents do certainly enhances their roads. Interested residents can participate by contacting 'pledgebank' on the website.

Clearance of fly-tips

The cleansing team remove all reported fly tips within 24 hours and sooner in many cases. Local Ward Councillors often report fly tips directly to the service which is a great help to us in providing a rapid response. Unfortunately West Hendon suffers from fly tipping more than other areas in the borough. Many irresponsible residents dump bulky waste items regularly onto the footpath and expect it to be removed by the council, which necessitates additional cost not only for collection but also for disposal. This is clearly the actions of a few which means that other residents have to suffer this blight and nuisance in their neighbourhoods.

The Cleansing team would welcome Councillors suggestions and comments on how this anti-social behaviour could be tackled or even reduced. Any improvement in this activity would be welcomed alongside consideration of the enforcement activity mentioned above. Together this will enable action to be taken effectively against those irresponsible residents causing the problem.

Clearance of fallen leaves

The Cleansing team use additional resources during the Autumn and have been very successful in recent years providing both responsive and planned clearance of leaves. Barnet is one of the greenest London boroughs with over 30,000 highway trees, the majority of which are deciduous. The removal of all these fallen leaves is a major challenge every autumn and we are currently planning for this years operation. Residents who are concerned about fallen leaves can report the problem to customer services and the cleansing team will try to respond to any requests for removal within 5 working days.