

2022

Neighbourhood Champion Information Pack



A guide to being a
Neighbourhood Champion

L&Q



Introduction

Neighbourhood Champions are L&Q residents who volunteer to help our local housing management teams to look after a local area.

This guide sets out what this volunteer role involves based on advice and feedback from established L&Q Neighbourhood Champions and the staff members who work with them.

Neighbourhood Champions are just one of many ways that we work in partnership with residents and are a valuable part of L&Q's resident network. Read about this network, and how to get more involved, here.

We asked established Neighbourhood Champions and the officers who work with them to describe what Neighbourhood Champions do:

“Make sure everything is clean, maintained and that you are listening to what everyone is saying”

“My role is to make sure the block and grounds are maintained and clean”

“To brief incoming Neighbourhood Housing Lead on the estate”

“Take notice of what neighbours are saying”

“Neighbourhood Champions can be a voice for those who find it difficult to speak up”

“Help get the message out and manage expectations among neighbours”

“Highlight health and safety concerns for attention”

“Work with L&Q to help it be more transparent in their approach to residents”

“Help get messages across to my neighbours”

“Get things sorted out!”

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Role profile and volunteer agreement

We have developed a **role profile** and **volunteer agreement** to outline what is expected of you in the role and how we will work together. Please read these documents in the **toolkit section** of this information pack to see if this seems like a role for you.

If you would like to learn more about the role, you are welcome to come along to a virtual get together for L&Q Resident Associations and Neighbourhood Champions to hear more about their experiences and pick up some tips as you get started.

See **Section 2**.

Sign up

If after reading through the role profile and volunteer agreement you decide that you would like to volunteer as a Neighbourhood Champion, please complete and return your application form and volunteer agreement, in the toolkit section of this information pack, to your Neighbourhood Housing Lead.

Our next steps

After receiving your application form and volunteer agreement, your Neighbourhood Housing Lead will introduce themselves as your main point of contact at L&Q.

You can find out who your Neighbourhood Housing Lead is by looking at the notice board in your block, if you have one, or calling the Customer Service Centre on **0300 456 9996**, Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm (excluding bank holidays).

Your Neighbourhood Housing Lead will send your application form and volunteer agreement through to L&Q's central resident involvement team so that you are:

- Added to the central list of Neighbourhood Champions
- Invited to an induction to welcome you to the role and answer any questions you may have
- Added to an involved resident mailing list to receive information on training, get togethers and peer learning sessions and ongoing support.

If there are already Neighbourhood Champions in the same area you live in, you will be introduced to them so that you can start to work together.

You will then be set up as an L&Q Neighbourhood Champion.

Estate inspections

As a Neighbourhood Champion, as well as reporting day-to-day communal issues to your Neighbourhood Housing Lead or the Customer Service Centre for our attention, you will be invited to join your Neighbourhood Housing Lead on estate inspections.

What are estate inspections?

We are committed to maintaining all L&Q neighbourhoods to a high standard that residents can be proud of. We want our neighbourhoods to be clean and safe and that the improvements we deliver are socially and environmentally sustainable.

Estate inspections assess the condition of neighbourhoods against L&Q's Estate Standards and calculate an overall grade for the neighbourhood.

Estate inspections assess how well the estate is managed (e.g. looking at signage, door entry systems, grounds maintenance, health and safety), rather than stock condition (e.g. design or age of buildings, future planned work).

L&Q categorise its neighbourhoods using the gradings:

Met: estates are well maintained, clean, tidy and safe

Not Met: estates do not fulfil the 'Met' criteria; estates have repair/condition/health and safety issues which require attention or funding or support. Neighbourhood Housing Lead and Neighbourhood Champions refer to our Estate Standards Criteria when conducting the inspection to help determine the correct grading.

What's the Neighbourhood Champions' role in estate inspections?

As a Neighbourhood Champion you can work in partnership with your Neighbourhood Housing Lead to complete estate inspections. You can:

- Act as another pair of eyes, helping to spot any problems or issues of concern
- Give your views and decide in partnership with the L&Q officer whether an inspection area meets the 'met' or 'not met' standard for estate inspections
- You can also provide a written statement of your findings, particularly if you were unable to attend the scheduled inspection
- Ensure that the Neighbourhood Housing Lead records information about estate services and inspection gradings on estate noticeboards and keeps you posted on progress with estate improvements so you can keep your neighbours informed.

Feedback on contractors

Many of our estates have cleaning and/or grounds maintenance contractors that maintain the communal areas. As a Neighbourhood Champion, we welcome your feedback on their performance either during or between the estate inspections. This is to ensure that contractors are providing residents with a great service. To help you do this your Neighbourhood Housing Lead will give you a copy of the contractor specification, so you know what to expect from them.

Getting Started

Estate Improvements

Our Neighbourhood Improvement Fund is used for improvements to the neighbourhood. These usually include improvements to prevent crime, increase security, sustainability and community. The improvement must demonstrate how it will benefit all, or a significant proportion of residents.

Speak to your Neighbourhood Housing Lead to share your ideas on how the improvement fund could be best spent to meet local community need. Please note that leaseholder blocks or estates are not eligible for estate improvement from the fund.

Other sources of funding

Community Investment

The L&Q Foundation's **Place Makers Fund** awards grants to constituted local groups and charities who are committed to changing lives and enhancing communities.

In addition, there are other funding streams that can be accessed by residents. This includes a small donations pot for more community focussed projects and some developments have their own localised community development budgets.

For more information contact **Foundation@lqgroup.org.uk** to be directed to an appropriate funding pot for your community building initiative.

Local community funding

Visit your borough's Centre for Voluntary Services (CVS) and the Greater London Authority (GLA) to see what local community grant funding or community chests might be available in your local area.



Find your CVS here:

<https://londonplus.org/cvs-and-volunteer-centres/cvs>



Search GLA funding here:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/funding>

If you are a Trafford resident, please visit the following pages to find out about local funding available in your region:

Fund and Capacity Building:

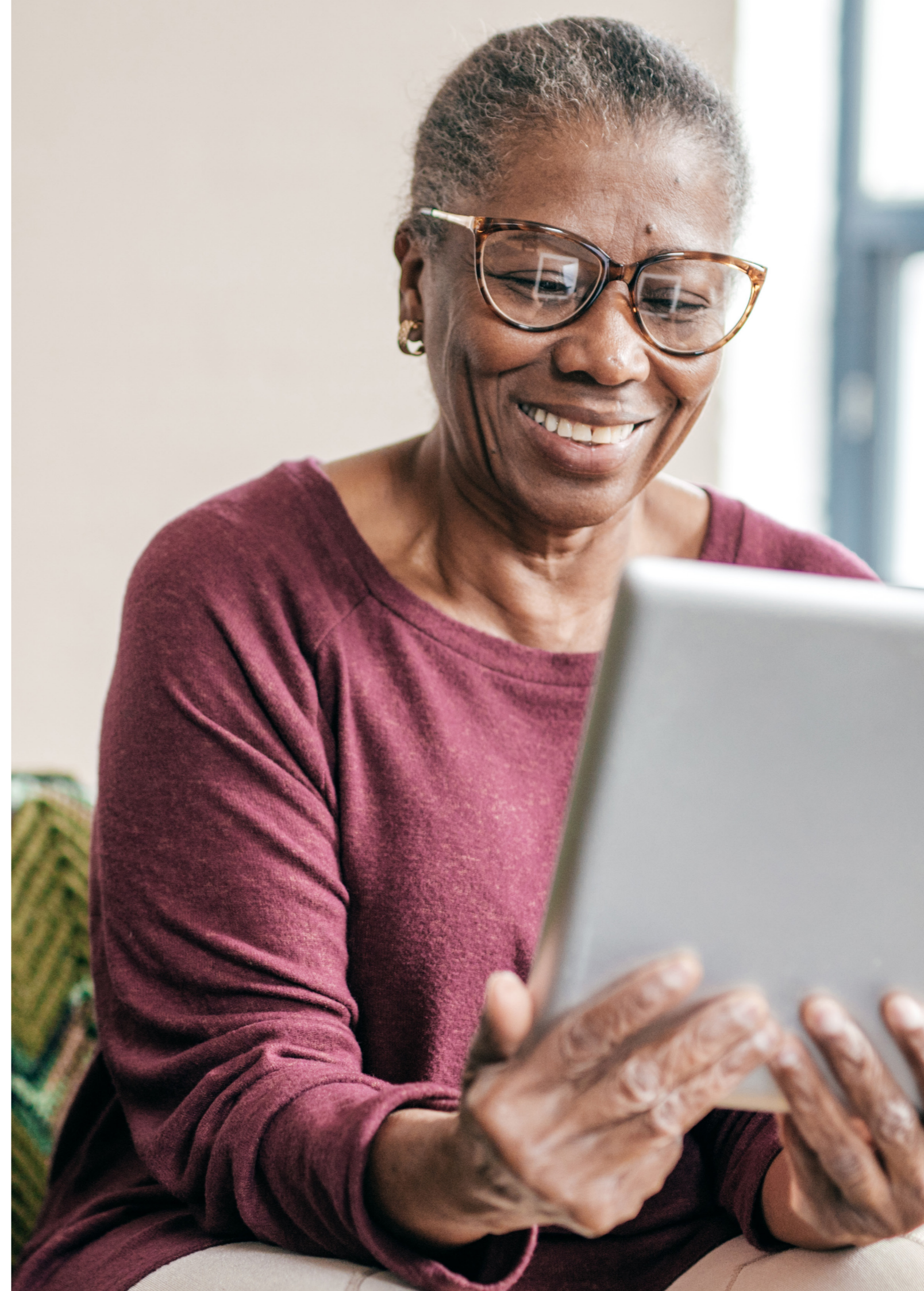
<https://www.traffordhousingtrust.co.uk/our-services/communities-grants-and-support/>

Thrive:

<https://www.thrivetrafford.org.uk/>

Trafford Community Collective:

<https://www.traffordcollective.org.uk/>



Induction

Once you have got started as a Neighbourhood Champion and established your relationship with your key business contact, your Neighbourhood Housing Lead, you will be contacted by our central resident involvement team to welcome you to the L&Q resident network.

As a Neighbourhood Champion, you will receive our quarterly resident involvement update. This will give you sight of how residents are involved in service improvement initiatives across the whole of L&Q and help feed into the estate-level conversations you're having with local teams.

This will give you sight of wider service improvement plans across L&Q's neighbourhood and help feed into the estate-level conversations you're having with our local teams.

You will also be invited to the Annual Resident Conference, which is an opportunity for residents to meet with L&Q's most senior membership and monitor progress made throughout the year.

Buddying

When you receive your welcome email, you will be asked if you would like to be 'buddied up' with another Neighbourhood Champion to support peer learning.

Training

You will receive invitations to join our Peer Learning and Training Programme for Neighbourhood Champions and Resident Associations. These are an opportunity for you to hear and share experiences and good practice as well as flagging up any challenges you have faced as a Neighbourhood Champion and how to overcome these. The get together will also provide training based on what you say would be most helpful.

Make sure you are signed up to TPAS Connect to access information and training.

Sign up at:

<https://www.tpas.org.uk/member-search> and search for 'London and Quadrant'.



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Getting more involved

We are passionate about involving residents in all that we do at L&Q, to help us improve our services, support neighbourhoods and achieve better resident-focused outcomes and ways of working.

That's why we offer a wide variety of formal and informal volunteering opportunities for you to have your say and improve what we do.

Find out more by completing the webform at the bottom of the page:
<https://www.lqgroup.org.uk/en/landq-community/resident-involvement>

“
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”



Role profile and volunteer agreement

This role profile and volunteer agreement outlines what is expected of you in your voluntary role and what support you can expect to receive from us to carry out your role effectively. It also provides some supportive information on how to resolve any challenges that you may encounter when carrying out your role. In so doing, it aims to ensure a consistently positive and rewarding experience for the L&Q residents and staff involved.

Role: Neighbourhood Champion

Location: Your local area

Key contact: Your Neighbourhood Housing Lead

In this role you will collaborate with our local neighbourhood teams to look after your local area.

This includes

- Welcoming incoming Neighbourhood Housing Leads and introducing them to the area
- Participating in estate inspections
- gathering feedback from your neighbours relating to communal areas to share with your Neighbourhood Housing Lead
- Reporting communal repairs to the Customer Service Centre or your Neighbourhood Housing Lead
- Identifying estate improvement opportunities and sharing them with your Neighbourhood Housing Lead to consider for the neighbourhood improvement fund
- Providing feedback on the works carried out by L&Q contractors to your Neighbourhood Housing Lead

- Organising estate and community building events e.g. community litter picks.

As a Neighbourhood Champion, L&Q will

- Provide you with a volunteer role profile and induction to outline the role, time commitment and answer any questions you may have
- Keep you informed of all upcoming estate inspections
- Discuss any support needs with you during your volunteer induction and any reasonable adjustments that might need to be made to support your participation
- Tell you what you can expect from the cleaning and maintenance contractors
- share the results from the estate inspection and the action plan to address communal issues raised
- Record information about estate services and inspection gradings on estate noticeboards so it is accessible to all residents
- Provide meaningful and timely responses to Neighbourhood Champion queries
- Respond to your estate improvement ideas and help you complete estate improvement applications
- Inform you of other ways to get involved with L&Q
- Use your feedback to drive improvements
- Strive to resolve any concerns fairly and reasonably, applying our complaints procedure when it's needed

- Inform you of staffing changes in good time and who to engage with during times of staff changes
- Ensure your health, safety and welfare including, when appropriate, providing adequate insurance cover for you to carry out your voluntary role
- Ensure that involvement opportunities are open and accessible to all L&Q residents
- Encourage a positive, supportive and meaningful volunteering experience and listen to your feedback on how this could be improved.

Neighbourhood Champions will

- Work together, respectfully and collaboratively, with L&Q residents and staff, according to our code of conduct for involved residents, to improve things for the benefit of all residents
- Inform the resident involvement team at induction of any additional support needs so that we can make reasonable adjustments to support your involvement
- Demonstrate a strong commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, ensuring that all residents have a voice and are fairly represented
- Seek to represent the various needs of the area and must not discriminate on the grounds of nationality, political opinion, race, religious opinion, gender, age, sexuality or disability
- Be courteous and neighbourly even in times of conflict or disagreement
- Be non-political
- Not 'speak for' individual residents or hold caseloads and instead signpost residents to L&Q for more information

- Acknowledge that your recommendations are advisory and not binding
- Respect the confidentiality of other residents and avoid mentioning specific cases that may identify an individual
- Give constructive feedback on the performance of our contractors and staff members
- Report any communal repairs when you see them to our customer service centre
- Inform your Neighbourhood Housing Lead if you would like to step down from your voluntary role as a Neighbourhood Champion
- Let us know how the volunteer opportunity could be improved based on your experience.

L&Q will end a Neighbourhood Champion's role when:

- They are found to be committing antisocial behaviour; or
- The Neighbourhood Housing Lead and their Area Housing Manager agree that the Neighbourhood Champion is not performing their role as agreed or has not kept to the code of conduct.

If a Neighbourhood Champion is not carrying out their role as agreed in the volunteer agreement, we will take steps to resolve the problem. If we are unable to resolve the problem, the Neighbourhood Champion will be informed by writing when their role has been ended.

Signed

This agreement is in honour only. It is not intended to be a legally binding contract and either L&Q or the volunteer can end the agreement at any time.

Signed: _____

Print name: _____

Date: _____

Signed on behalf of L&Q: _____

Print name: _____

Date: _____

- Neighbourhood Champion Application Form

Please print out any/all of these forms and return to L&Q at this address:



Neighbourhood Champion application form



Thank you for your interest in becoming a Neighbourhood Champion, To sign up, please complete and return the following form to your Neighbourhood Housing Lead.

Please fill out all sections

Name:

Address:

Email:

Telephone:

Name of Neighbourhood Housing Lead:

Date DD/MM/YYYY:



For more information

L&Q Group

T: 0300 456 9998

www.lqgroup.org.uk