



Decimus

Elijah Decimus Community Projects & Local Advocacy

COMMUNITY INSPECTION REPORT – OCTAVIA HOUSE UNDERPASS & SURROUNDING PUBLIC REALM, CATFORD TOWN CENTRE

ED-CT-190726-01

Sunday, 19 July 2026

Responsible Authority Community-Led Inspection – Catford Residents

and Visitors

10 Findings Recorded



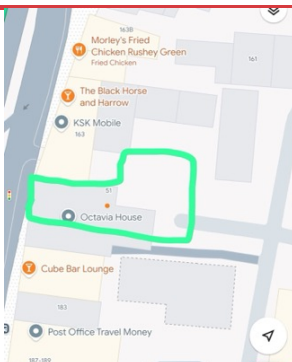
UNDERPASS CLEANLINESS & PUBLIC REALM MAINTENANCE

Responsible Party Lewisham Council – Public Realm / Street Cleansing / Highways

The pedestrian underpass was found to be in a poor overall condition, with litter, food packaging, drink containers and general waste present throughout. The flooring exhibits significant embedded dirt, staining and grime, while the walls are visibly discoloured and marked, creating a neglected appearance. As a key pedestrian route, the underpass does not provide a clean, welcoming or attractive environment for residents and visitors.

SOLUTION

Undertake a comprehensive deep clean of the underpass, including pressure washing the flooring and walls where appropriate, remove all litter, repaint the walls with a durable anti-graffiti finish where necessary, inspect lighting and CCTV, and introduce a scheduled maintenance programme with regular inspections to maintain cleanliness and improve the overall appearance of the area.



INSPECTION AREA PLAN

Responsible Party N/A – Location Plan

The highlighted area identifies the full extent of the community inspection undertaken on 19 July 2026 between approximately 07:38 and 07:40, following Friday and Saturday night activity within Catford Town Centre.

The inspection covered:

- * The pedestrian underpass beneath Octavia House.
- * The surrounding public footways and highway.
- * The adjacent car park immediately behind Octavia House.
- * The frontage of nearby commercial and licensed premises.
- * Trees, kerb lines, pedestrian routes and surrounding public spaces within the highlighted inspection boundary.

The inspection identified a number of recurring environmental and community safety concerns, including widespread litter, broken glass, suspected evidence of nitrous oxide use within the adjacent car park, heavily stained paving, dirty and deteriorating underpass walls, and locations that appeared to be affected by anti-social behaviour following the night-time economy.

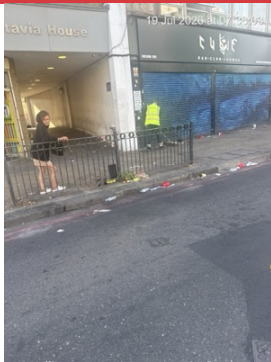
The purpose of this inspection was to objectively document the condition of the public realm, identify issues affecting residents and visitors, and provide practical recommendations to support improvements to cleanliness, public safety and the overall presentation of Catford Town Centre.

Solution / Recommendation

The inspection area should be reviewed by the relevant Council services through a coordinated approach involving Street Cleansing, Public Realm, Environmental Enforcement, Community Safety, Licensing, Highways and any relevant landowners or managing agents.

Consideration should be given to:

- * Enhanced weekend cleansing operations.
- * Routine inspections following periods of high night-time activity.
- * Professional deep cleaning of the underpass.
- * Cleaning and repainting of the underpass walls.
- * Prompt removal of broken glass and hazardous waste.
- * Improved environmental maintenance within the adjacent car park.
- * Review of CCTV, lighting and surveillance signage.
- * Targeted enforcement where recurring anti-social behaviour is identified.
- * Engagement with nearby licensed premises to reduce the environmental impact of the night-time economy.
- * Partnership working with community organisations to support authorised environmental improvement initiatives.



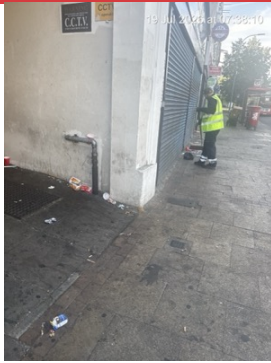
LITTER, STREET CLEANSING & PUBLIC REALM MAINTENANCE

Responsible Party Lewisham Council – Street Cleansing / Public Realm Services

Significant quantities of litter, including disposable cups, bottles and general waste, were observed across the public highway and around the entrance to the underpass during the morning inspection (19 July 2026). The volume of waste appears consistent with recurring overnight activity and detracts from the appearance of Catford Town Centre. Although a cleansing operative was present, the recurring nature of the issue suggests that current weekend cleansing arrangements may require review. Consider enhanced early-morning cleansing, additional litter bins where appropriate, and engagement with nearby licensed premises to help reduce repeat occurrences.

SOLUTION

Review and enhance weekend cleansing arrangements, particularly following Friday and Saturday nights. Introduce an earlier morning clean-up schedule where required, install additional litter bins if justified, undertake regular inspections, and work with nearby licensed premises to reduce litter associated with the night-time economy. Consider targeted enforcement for littering and anti-social behaviour, supported by community awareness initiatives where appropriate.



UNDERPASS ENTRANCE MAINTENANCE & CCTV SIGNAGE

Responsible Party Lewisham Council – Street Cleansing / Public Realm Services

Comments

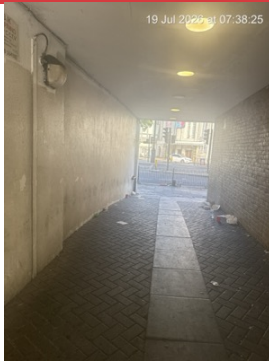
The entrance to the pedestrian underpass was observed to be poorly maintained, with litter, staining and visible dirt affecting the overall appearance of this key access point. CCTV signage is present however, its visibility and effectiveness as a deterrent should be reviewed. The area creates an unwelcoming first impression for residents and visitors entering Catford Town Centre.

Solution

Undertake a comprehensive deep clean of the entrance, including pressure washing the paving and walls where appropriate.

Review the visibility and operational status of CCTV and install larger, clearer signage if required to improve deterrence.

Introduce routine inspections and scheduled maintenance to maintain cleanliness and improve the overall appearance and perception of safety. Floor requires deep cleaning.



UNDERPASS ENVIRONMENT, APPEARANCE & COMMUNITY SAFETY

Responsible Party Lewisham Council – Street Cleansing / Public Realm Services

The underpass presents a neglected appearance, with litter visible throughout, heavily stained flooring and discoloured walls. Although lighting is present, the overall condition of the underpass creates an environment that feels uninviting and can negatively affect people's perception of safety. This route is regularly used by residents, workers and visitors and should be maintained to a higher standard.

SOLUTION

Undertake a full deep clean of the underpass, including pressure washing the flooring and walls where appropriate, repaint the walls using a durable anti-graffiti coating, remove all litter, review the effectiveness of lighting and CCTV coverage, and implement a scheduled inspection and maintenance programme to ensure the underpass remains clean, safe and welcoming throughout the year.



UNDERPASS WALL CONDITION & APPEARANCE

Responsible Party Lewisham Council – Street Cleansing / Public Realm Services

The underpass walls are heavily discoloured, stained and marked, giving the area a neglected appearance. Dirt has built up over time, particularly at lower level where repeated contact and environmental staining are evident. Although the structure appears generally sound, the overall presentation detracts from the quality of the public realm and contributes to an environment that feels unwelcoming for pedestrians.

SOLUTION

Undertake a professional clean of the walls to remove accumulated dirt and staining, repair any damaged areas where necessary, and repaint using a durable anti-graffiti masonry coating. Implement a planned inspection and maintenance programme to preserve the appearance of the underpass and prevent deterioration over time.



LITTER ACCUMULATION AT UNDERPASS ENTRANCE

Responsible Party Lewisham Council – Street Cleansing / Public Realm Services

Litter has accumulated at the entrance to the pedestrian underpass, including discarded drinks containers, food packaging and general waste. Debris has collected around the railings and pedestrian route, creating an untidy appearance and contributing to the wider perception of neglect. The location appears to be a recurring litter hotspot, particularly following the night-time economy.

SOLUTION

Increase the frequency of cleansing at this location, particularly following Friday and Saturday nights. Review the provision and positioning of litter bins, undertake targeted environmental enforcement where appropriate, and work with nearby businesses and licensed premises to help reduce litter generated in the surrounding public realm. Regular monitoring should be introduced to prevent repeat accumulation and maintain a cleaner, more welcoming entrance to the underpass.



NITROUS OXIDE MISUSE AND LITTER WITHIN ADJACENT CAR PARK

Responsible Party Landowner / Managing Agent (Car Park) with Lewisham Council Community Safety, Environmental

Enforcement and the Metropolitan Police where appropriate

Two large nitrous oxide canisters, together with drinks containers and other litter, were observed within the adjacent car park behind Octavia House. Their presence suggests suspected recent substance misuse and contributes to a poor appearance of the area. As the car park is directly connected to the nearby pedestrian underpass and town centre, activity in this location has the potential to affect the perception of safety and cleanliness of the surrounding public realm.

SOLUTION

Confirm ownership and management responsibility for the car park and arrange prompt removal of the canisters and associated litter. Consider regular inspections, improved lighting where appropriate, visible CCTV and surveillance signage, and joint working between the landowner, Lewisham Council and the Metropolitan Police if the location is identified as a recurring hotspot for anti-social behaviour or substance misuse. Environmental improvements should complement outreach support for vulnerable individuals where appropriate.



LITTER ACCUMULATION AROUND TREE PIT AND PUBLIC FOOTWAY

Responsible Party Lewisham Council – Street Cleansing / Public Realm Services

Litter, including drinks containers, food packaging and general waste, has accumulated around the tree pit and adjacent kerbline. Waste trapped within tree pits can detract from the appearance of the public realm, encourage further littering and make the area appear neglected. The location forms part of a busy pedestrian route within Catford Town Centre and should be maintained to a higher standard.

SOLUTION

Remove all litter from the tree pit, surrounding footway and kerbline as part of routine cleansing operations. Introduce enhanced weekend cleansing where recurring accumulation is identified, review the provision of nearby litter bins, and undertake targeted environmental enforcement where appropriate. Regular inspections should be carried out to prevent repeat build-up and maintain a clean, welcoming town centre environment.



BROKEN GLASS AND LITTER WITHIN ADJACENT CAR PARK

Responsible Party Lewisham Council – Street Cleansing / Public Realm Services

Significant quantities of litter and broken glass were observed across the adjacent car park, including discarded bottles, drinks containers, food packaging and other waste. The broken glass creates a clear risk of cuts, punctured tyres and injury to pedestrians, cyclists, animals and anyone using or passing through the area.

The condition of the car park suggests that cleansing and inspection arrangements may be insufficient, particularly following weekend night-time activity. As the car park is directly connected to the underpass and surrounding public routes, its condition negatively affects the safety, cleanliness and appearance of the wider town centre.

SOLUTION

Arrange an urgent comprehensive clean-up of the car park, including the safe removal of all broken glass and hazardous waste. Confirm the responsible landowner or managing agent and introduce a regular inspection and cleansing schedule, with additional checks following Friday and Saturday nights.

Consider improved lighting, prominent CCTV signage, suitable waste bins, engagement with nearby licensed premises and targeted enforcement where recurring littering, glass disposal or anti-social behaviour is identified. Any broken glass reported should be treated as a priority public safety issue and removed promptly.