

Hoarding Policy

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1.0 Aim / Purpose of the Policy

- 1.1 This policy details how Coastline Housing will manage the issue of compulsive hoarding and unsanitary properties within its housing stock.
- 1.2 Compulsive hoarding is highly complex and requires a collaborative and integrated approach. This policy will ensure there is meaningful, co-ordinated multi agency partnership working to effectively deal with people who hoard, and will reduce duplication for both agencies and customers.
- 1.3 The policy has been developed in partnership with representatives from other relevant agencies to reflect best practice, and will facilitate positive and sustainable outcomes for customers, by involving them in the process at all stages. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Cornwall Council Safeguarding Adults guidance.
- 1.4 It is unknown how many households have a hoarding problem within our housing stock, but national research and statistics estimate between 2% and 5% of the population have a tendency to hoard.
- 1.5 It is reported that one in four domestic fire related deaths can be linked to hoarding. With this in mind Coastline developed a Service Level Agreement with Cornwall Fire Service. Coastline works closely the Fire Service to mitigate risk by undertaking joint visits and providing details and regular updates of identified hoarders. This enables the Cornwall Fire Service to have valuable insight into properties that may need to be treated as priority in the event of a fire.
- 1.6 Whilst the percentage of affected households is low, the impact on colleagues resources is disproportionately high, as these cases require regular ongoing monitoring and support. Early intervention may prevent a more serious problem developing.

1.7 Not all households with a hoarding problem will necessarily be unsanitary, although the nature of the problem will often lead to this. Some forms of hoarding are also closely linked with self-neglect and domestic squalor. Self-neglect and hoarding are a part of Cornwall Council's Safeguarding policy and Hoarding Protocol. Coastline worked cohesively with partners to produce the document Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Safeguarding Adults Board Multi-Agency Protocol 'People that hoard - A joined up approach for Cornwall'

1.8 Hoarding disorder is a complex psychological problem which has been recently classified as a diagnosable mental disorder in its own right.

2.0 Scope

2.1 This policy covers all types of tenure within Coastline's housing stock and applies to all colleagues working across the Coastline Group.

2.2 There is an expectation that everyone will engage fully in partnership working to achieve the best outcome for the customer, while meeting the requirements and duties of partnership agencies.

3.0 Aims of the policy

3.1 Coastline takes the issue of compulsive hoarding and unsanitary properties seriously and recognises the impact it can have on customers and their neighbours' lives, on our properties and workforce, including:

- Impact on other household members and neighbours;
- Health and Safety: unsafe and unhealthy living conditions and fire risk;
- Damage and deterioration of property due to excessive weight on ceilings;
- Condensation problems due to build-up of belongings around walls; and
- Being unable to carry out essential repairs and maintenance due to areas being inaccessible or unsanitary.

3.2 This policy sets out clear good practice guidelines to ensure that issues are dealt with in a supportive, fair and consistent manner, ensuring a flexible approach for customers with disabilities or vulnerability, complying with current legislation.

3.3 The policy will also ensure that cases of hoarding are investigated in a collaborative way and that information on the problems related to hoarding is shared amongst partner agencies, in compliance with data sharing protocols and arrangements. This will enable incidents of hoarding to be dealt with in an evidence based, structured, systematic, co-ordinated and consistent way.

3.4 The policy enhances and develops the "informal" multi-agency arrangements in place which maximise the use of existing services and resources and which may reduce the need for compulsory solutions, but ensures that when formal solutions are required, there is a process for planning solutions tailored to meet the needs of the customer.

4.0 Definitions

4.1 **Compulsive hoarding:** Hoarding is the excessive collection and retention of any material to the point that it impedes day to day functioning (Frost and Gross, 1993). Pathological or compulsive hoarding is a specific type of behaviour characterised by:

- Acquiring and failing to throw out a large number of items that would appear to hold little or no value and would be considered rubbish by other people;

- severe “cluttering” of the person's home so that it is no longer able to function as a viable living space;
- Significant distress or impairment of work or social life (Kelly 2010); and
- Deterioration to property.

4.2 **Unsanitary Properties:** The property is considered to be unsanitary and unacceptable for services or agencies to carry out their duties and/or:

- Potential health risk to household/neighbours;
- Is detrimental to the property; and/or
- Nuisance to neighbours.

5.0 General Characteristics Of Hoarding

- 5.1 **Fear and anxiety:** Compulsive hoarding may have started as a learnt behaviour or following a significant event such as bereavement. The person hoarding believes buying or saving things will relieve the anxiety and fear they feel. The hoarding effectively becomes their ‘comfort blanket’.
- 5.2 Any attempt to discard hoarded items can induce feelings varying from mild anxiety to a full panic attack with sweats and palpitations.
- 5.3 **Long term behaviour pattern:** Possibly developed over many years, or decades, of “buy and drop”. Collecting and saving, with an inability to throw away items without experiencing fear and anxiety.
- 5.4 **Excessive attachment to possessions:** People who hoard may hold an inappropriate emotional attachment to items.
- 5.5 **Indecisiveness:** People who hoard struggle with the decision to discard items that are no longer necessary, including rubbish.
- 5.6 **Unrelenting standards:** People who hoard will often find faults with others, require others to perform to excellence while struggling to organise themselves and complete daily living tasks.
- 5.7 **Socially isolated:** People who hoard will typically alienate family and friends and may be embarrassed to have visitors. They may refuse home visits from professionals, in favour of office based appointments.
- 5.8 **Large number of pets:** People who hoard may have a large number of animals that can be a source of complaints by neighbours. They may be a self-confessed “rescuer of strays”
- 5.9 **Mentally competent:** People who hoard are typically able to make decisions that are not related to the hoarding.
- 5.10 **Extreme clutter:** Hoarding behaviour may prevent several or all rooms of their property from being used for their intended purpose.
- 5.11 **Churning:** Hoarding behaviour can involve moving items from one part the property to another, without ever discarding anything.
- 5.12 **Self-Care:** A person who hoards may appear unkempt and dishevelled, due to lack of toileting or washing facilities in their home. However, some people who hoard will use public facilities, in order to maintain their personal hygiene and appearance.

5.13 **Poor insight:** a person who hoards will typically see nothing wrong with their behaviour and the impact it has on them and others.

6.0 What Is Hoarding Disorder?

6.1 Hoarding Disorder used to be considered a form of obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), but hoarding is now considered a standalone mental disorder in its own right.

6.2 However, hoarding can also be a symptom of other mental disorders. Hoarding Disorder is distinct from the act of collecting, and is also different from people whose property is generally cluttered or messy. It is not simply a lifestyle choice. The main difference between a hoarder and a collector is that hoarders have strong emotional attachments to their objects which are well in excess of their real value.

6.3 Hoarding does not favour a particular gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, educational or occupational history or tenure type.

6.4 Anything can be hoarded, in various areas including the property, garden or communal areas. However, commonly hoarded items include but are not limited to:

- Clothes;
- Newspapers, magazines or books;
- Bills, receipts or letters;
- Food and food containers;
- Animals;
- Medical equipment; and
- Collectibles such as toys, videos, DVDs, or CDs.

7.0 Types Of Hoarding

7.1 There are three types of hoarding:

- **Inanimate objects:** This is the most common. This could consist of one type of object or a collection of a mixture of objects such as old clothes, newspapers, food, containers or papers;
- **Animal Hoarding:** Animal hoarding is on the increase. This is the obsessive collecting of animals, often with an inability to provide minimal standards of care. The hoarder is unable to recognise that the animals are or may be at risk because they feel they are saving them. In addition to an inability to care for the animals in the home, people who hoard animals are often unable to take care of themselves. As well, the homes of animal hoarders are often eventually destroyed by the accumulation of animal faeces and infestation by insects; and
- **Data Hoarding:** There is little research on this matter and it may not seem as significant as inanimate and animal hoarding. However, people who hoard data could still present with same issues that are symptomatic of hoarding. Data hoarding could present with the storage of data collection equipment such as computers, electronic storage devices or paper. A need to store copies of emails, and other information in an electronic format.

7.2 People who hoard may keep things for the same reasons as anyone else, including sentimental value or utility value. Hoarders often view their behaviour as a lifestyle choice; however, it is when it negatively impacts on the hoarder's life or on others that it becomes an issue which requires action to be taken.

8.0 Procedures

8.1 All colleagues and contractors that enter a property are responsible for reporting hoarding cases to the Tenancy Management Team. The relevant officers will be assigned these cases to investigate and resolve.

8.2 The progress and the management of hoarding cases will be discussed by the Tenancy Manager and the relevant Tenancy Management Co-ordinator throughout the case and during 1-2-1s.

9.0 Intervention and enforcement measures

9.1 Coastline recognises that each case is different in terms of the type and extent of items hoarded, the risk, and the reasons behind the hoarding. We therefore use a combination of intervention and enforcement measures, including support to tackle the hoarding.

9.2 Dealing with such cases is always complicated and time consuming. However Coastline takes action to ensure we get an outcome which is positive and sustainable for our customers, although in some cases we acknowledge that there may be a requirement for repeat action.

9.3 Both Coastline and Environmental Health have recourse to legal proceedings. Environmental Health can take action under the Public Health Act 1936 when premises are classed as Filthy and Verminous, and if the householder refuses to address the hoarding, action may be taken to clear the property to which there is no right of appeal and costs may be recharged.

9.4 Coastline could take possession proceedings if a customer's action was considered detrimental to the condition of the property, or a Health and Safety risk. However we will endeavour to work with people and keep them in their homes.

10.0 Fire safety considerations

10.1 There are a vast range of risks that hoarding poses to the social housing sector, none more important than that of the risk of fire.

10.2 The operational problems for the Fire Service posed by properties with large quantities of hoarding materials include:

- Difficulty in gaining access to property;
- Difficulty in making progress due to walking on top of hoarded materials rather than the ground;
- Difficulty in locating casualty;
- Difficulty in locating Gas and Electricity shut-offs;
- Potential for fires being hotter due to higher than average quantities of flammable materials within the property; and
- Difficulty in applying water to seat of the fire.

10.3 Furthermore, it is clear that escaping from a fire in a property with hoarded materials is far more difficult.

10.4 We will work with Cornwall Fire Service by identifying customers who display hoarding tendencies by assisting them to:

- Eliminate trailing electrical leads, especially under carpets and through doorways;
- Reduce overloaded sockets;
- Clear doorways to allow doors to close;
- Make utility shut offs accessible;
- Move flammable materials away from heat sources;

- Ensure the smoke alarms are clear from clutter and are working;
- Create alternative escape routes; and
- Manage materials used for smoking

11.0 Environmental health implications

- 11.1 Hoarding may adversely impact not only the hoarder's home environment but beyond it too, with infestations and complaints from neighbours often necessitating a duty to investigate on the part of the local authority.
- 11.2 Consequently, it is important that Coastline is aware of the relevant Environmental Health powers.
- 11.3 Section 83 of the Public Health Act 1936 states that where the 'filthy or unwholesome' condition of premises is 'prejudicial to health' (likely to cause disease), or the premises 'are verminous', Environmental Health shall give notice to the owner or occupier requiring them to take steps to cleanse the premises.
- 11.4 Section 79 (1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, states that 'any premises in such a state as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance' or 'any accumulation or deposit which is prejudicial to health or a nuisance' are considered statutory nuisances.
- 11.5 The same section also states that it is the duty of every local authority, where a complaint of a statutory nuisance is made to it by a person living within its area, to take such steps as are reasonably practicable to investigate the complaint.
- 11.6 Where a nuisance is found to exist or is likely to occur or recur, the authority has a further duty to serve an abatement notice.
- 11.7 It is also important to be familiar with 'amenity' powers such as those found in the Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978, the Town and County Planning Act 1990, and the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, and we should be aware of the need to refer to the appropriate agency where there is serious risk of harm to the customer, cohabittees, or animals.
- 11.8 However, reliance on Environmental Health powers merely postpones addressing the underlying issue, and without tackling the root cause of hoarding, the problems will often continue for many years.

12.0 Support

- 12.1 Where family or friends are already involved, and willing to co-operate, we encourage their assistance, however in doing this we will always comply with GDPR principles. Our priority is to engage with the resident personally, wherever possible.
- 12.2 Where the hoarder is already engaging with a support service, we will try to work alongside this existing arrangement. This is important because hoarders can at times be mistrustful of new services intervening.
- 12.3 Where the hoarder is not currently engaged, but appears willing to accept assistance, we will:
- Persevere to find ways to engage with the customer and we will work over a long period of time to get a result;
 - Find the right person who can best engage with the customer – this may not be the person who would normally take the role but an effective relationship where there is trust is essential to getting successful outcomes;

- Set up multi agency meetings early on to determine who has the best engagement and how efforts can be co-ordinated most effectively;
- Invest in resources as these cases take a disproportionate amount of time compared to other cases. Damage as a result of hoarding can result in costly repair works so preventative work is key and cost effective in the long run;
- Take a “hands on” approach and work with the customer to physically clear the property;
- Arrange for items to be collected on the same day as the clearance to ensure the customer does not bring items back into their home; and

When a case is resolved, regular check-up visits are needed to ensure the issue does not occur again.

12.4 Where support is offered but refused, it is important to note this in the case records, as this may be crucial evidence later, if legal action should be required.

13.0 Mental Capacity

13.1 The Mental Capacity Act 2005 provides a statutory framework for people who lack capacity to make decisions for themselves. The Act has 5 statutory principles and these are the values which underpin the legal requirements of the Act. They are:

1. A person must be assumed to have capacity unless it is established that they lack capacity;
2. A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision unless all practical steps have been taken without success;
3. A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision merely because he makes an unwise decision;
4. An act done or decision made, under this act for or on behalf of a person who lacks capacity must be done, or made in his or her best interests; and
5. Before the act is done, or the decision is made, regard must be had to whether the purpose for which it is needed can be as effectively achieved in a way that is less restrictive of the person’s rights and freedom of action.

13.2 When hoarding behaviour poses a serious risk to health and safety, professional intervention will be required. With the exception of statutory requirements, any intervention or action proposed must be with the customer’s consent. In extreme cases of hoarding behaviour, the very nature of the environment *should* lead professionals to question whether the customer has capacity to consent to the proposed action or intervention and trigger a capacity assessment.

13.3 Any capacity assessment carried out in relation to hoarding behaviour must be time specific, and relate to a specific intervention or action.

14.0 Information Sharing

14.1 Under the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR, we all have the responsibility to ensure that personal information is processed lawfully and fairly. All customers have a right to view any information held about them. Coastline colleagues will consider this when they are recording information about customers.

14.2 Where a decision is made that it is appropriate to share information about hoarded properties with partner agencies, this must be on a need to know basis, and all information should be transferred in a secure format.

14.3 The information sharing processes will follow those specified in the Safeguarding policies. Simply put, information will be shared within and between organisations in line with the principles set out below:

- Adults have a right to independence, choice and self-determination. This right extends to them being able to have control over information about themselves and to determine what information is shared. Even in situations where there is no legal requirement to obtain written consent before sharing information, it is good practice to do so;
- The customer's wishes should always be considered. However, protecting adults at risk establishes a general principle that an incident of suspected or actual abuse can be reported more widely and that in so doing, some information may need to be shared;
- Information given to a member of colleagues belongs to Coastline and not to the individual employee. An individual employee cannot give a personal assurance of confidentiality to an adult at risk;
- An organisation should obtain the adult at risk's consent to share information and should routinely explain what information may be shared with other people or organisations;
- Difficulties in working within the principles of maintaining the confidentiality of an adult should not lead to a failure to take action to protect the adult from abuse or harm;
- Confidentiality must not be confused with secrecy, and the need to protect the management interests of Coastline should not override the need to protect the adult; and
- Colleagues reporting concerns at work (whistleblowing) are entitled to protection under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

14.4 The decisions about what information is shared and with whom will be taken on a case by-case basis. Whether information is shared, with or without consent, the information shared should be:

- Necessary for the purpose for which it is being shared;
- Shared only with those who have a need for it;
- Be accurate and up to date;
- Shared in a timely fashion;
- Shared accurately;
- Shared securely; and
- Factual, with no opinion offered.

15.0 Safeguarding

15.1 When seeking to engage with cases of hoarding, we will need to take into consideration the new safeguarding guidance brought in under the Care Act 2014, which sets out the duties for local authorities and outlines how partner organisations, such as Coastline should work in partnership to help protect vulnerable people from abuse or neglect and has worked with partners to produce Cornwall Council's Hoarding Protocol.

15.2 The guidance provides a helpful tool for housing providers in multiagency discussions on working with hoarding, including when engaging local authorities in a response

15.3 Section 14.10 of the Care Act guidance states that **local authorities** must:

- Make enquiries, or cause others to do so, if it believes an adult is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect. An enquiry should establish whether any action needs to be taken to prevent or stop abuse or neglect, and if so, by whom; and

- Co-operate with partners to protect the adult, and in turn each relevant partner must also co-operate with the local authority.

15.4 The guidance states that the 6 principles of safeguarding work apply in respect of hoarding:

- Empowerment;
- Prevention;
- Proportionality;
- Protection;
- Partnership; and
- Accountability.

16.0 Partnership working

16.1 We understand the importance of multi-agency working and will liaise with any agencies who are currently working with our customers. Where there are no other agencies currently working with our customers and there is a need for support, we will make a referrals to relevant agencies and liaise with them, for example:-

- Coastline's housing colleagues;
- Education Health and social care;
- Safeguarding;
- Customer's GP; and
- Mental Health Team.

16.2 When working with customers who may have or appear to have a hoarding condition, the situation should be assessed using the Hoarding Assessment Form in conjunction with the Clutter Image Rating Tool Kit to decide what steps to take. Evidence of animal hoarding at any level should be reported to the RSPCA.

17.0 Financial considerations

17.1 The importance from a wellbeing and safety standpoint of appropriately working with customers with hoarding disorder is clear. However, it is also important to note the strong financial case for appropriate interventions.

17.2 For example, Catalyst Housing Association has calculated the average cost of a hoarding case from start to finish being around **£45,000**, whilst LHT, a Lettings agency in Liverpool, estimates, the cost incurred by a housing association during the lifetime of a tenancy of a hoarder, to be over **£35,000**

17.3 Costs soon accrue. The LHT research includes costs for:

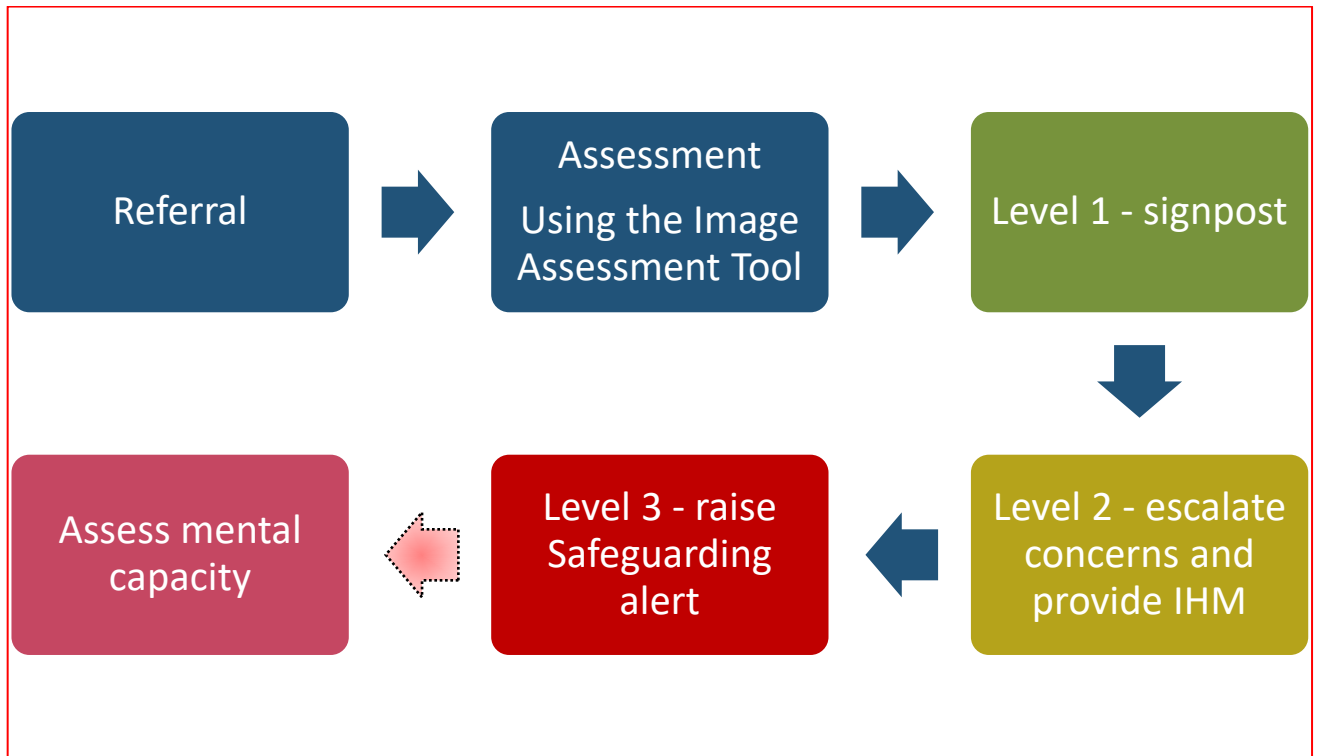
- Missed Gas Appointments (£1,500);
- Disruption to planned replacement programmes (£4,000);
- Potential costs due to eviction and court action (£6,500);
- Clearance Costs (£3,500);
- Repairs required to the property after the clearance (£6,500);
- Long Voids (£1,800);
- Relet Costs (£800); and

- Colleagues Time (£10,000).

18.0 Clutter Image Rating Tool Kit

18.1 The Clutter Image Rating Tool Kit is at Appendix A, the Clutter Image Rating Assessment Tool Guidelines are at Appendix B and the Hoarding Assessment form is at Appendix C.

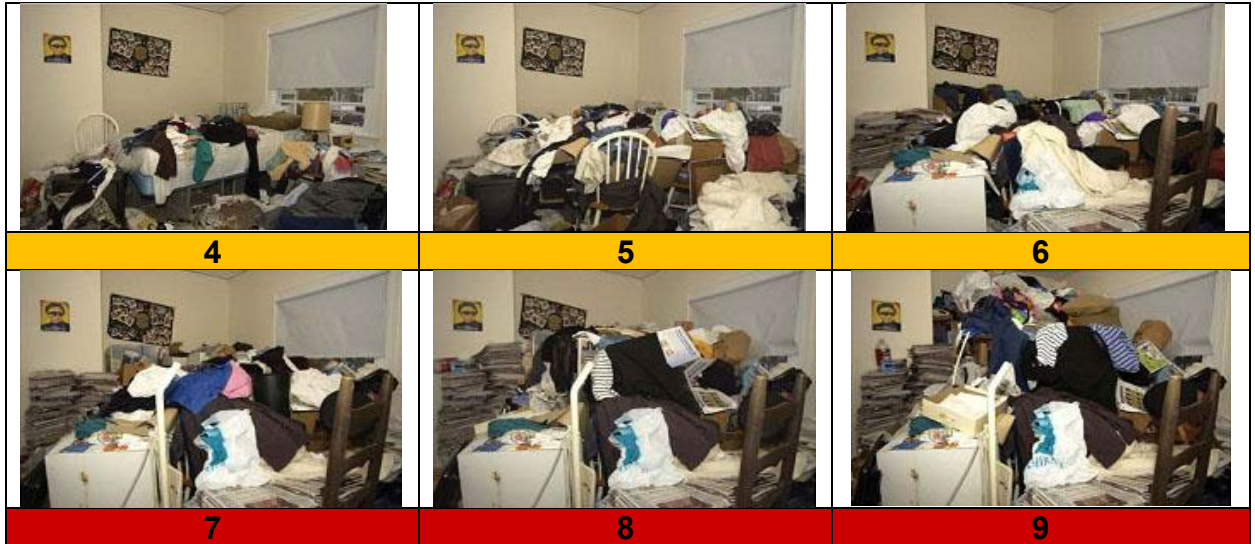
Appendix A Clutter Image Rating Tool Kit



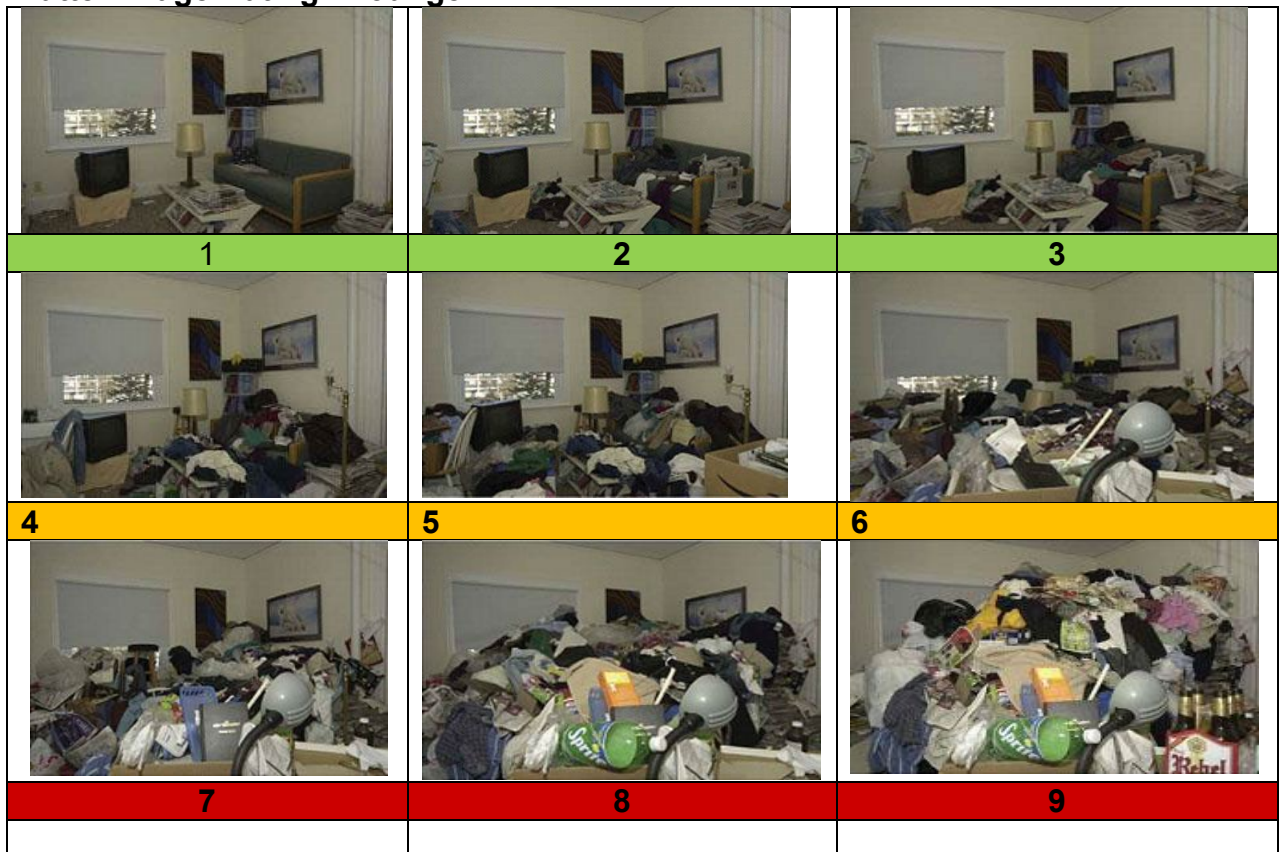
Refer to clutter assessment tool to guide which details the appropriate action you should take. Record all actions undertaken, detailing conversations with other professionals, actions taken and action yet to be taken. Select the photo that most accurately reflects the amount of clutter in each room and then refer to the Clutter Image Rating Assessment Tool Guidelines to assess the likely action to be taken

19.0 Clutter Image Rating - Bedroom



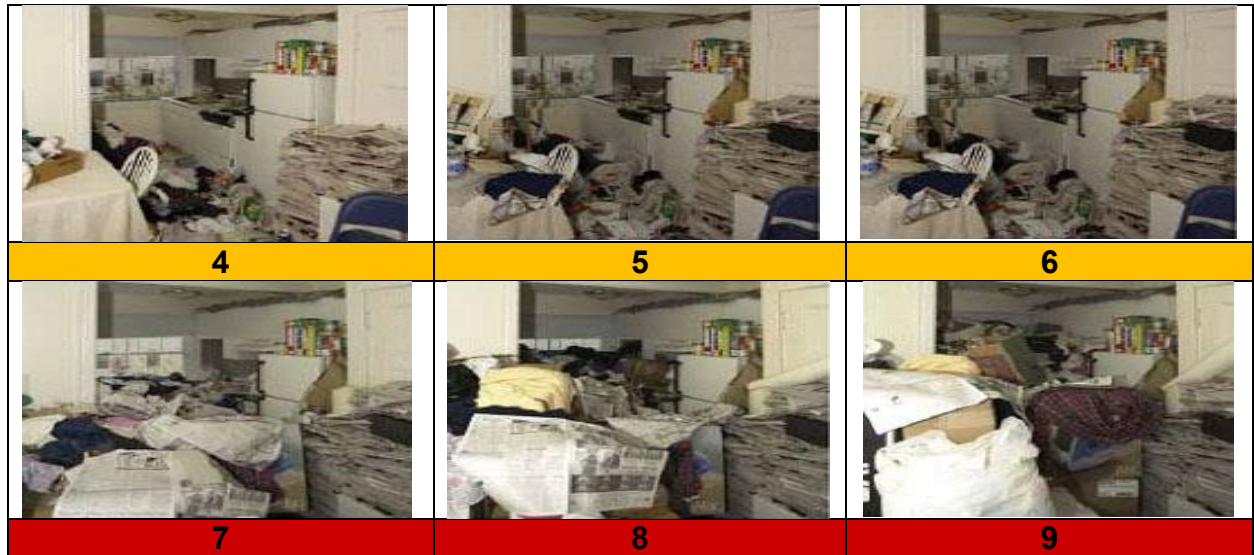


20.0 Clutter Image Rating - Lounge



21.0 Clutter Image Rating - Kitchen





22.0

Appendix B

Clutter Image Rating Assessment Tool Guidelines

Level 1 Clutter image rating 1 - 3	Household environment is considered standard. No specialised assistance is needed. If the resident would like some assistance with general housework or feels they are declining towards a higher clutter scale, appropriate referrals can be made subject to age and circumstances.
Property structure, services and garden area	All entrances and exits, stairways, roof space and windows accessible. Smoke alarms fitted and functional or referrals made to fire serviceto visit and install. All services functional and maintained in good working order. Garden is accessible, tidy and maintained.
Household Functions	No excessive clutter, all rooms can be safely used for their intended purpose. All rooms are rated 0-3 on the Clutter Rating Scale. No additional unused household appliances appear in unusual locations around the property. Property is maintained within terms of any lease or tenancy agreements where appropriate. Property is not at risk of action by Environmental Health.
Health and Safety	Property is clean with no odours, (pet or other). No rotting food. No concerning use of candles. No concern over flies. Residents managing personal care. No writing on the walls. Quantities of medication are within appropriate limits, in date and stored appropriately.
Safeguard of Children and Family members	No Concerns for household members.
Animals and Pests	Any pets at the property are well cared for. No pests or infestations at the property.
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	No PPE required.
Level 1	Actions
Referring Agency	Discuss concerns with resident. Raise a request to the Fire Service to provide fire safety advice. Refer for support assessment if appropriate. Refer to GP if appropriate.
Environmental Health	No Action.
Social Landlords	Provide details on debt advice if appropriate to circumstances.

	<p>Refer to GP if appropriate. Refer for support assessment if appropriate. Provide details of support streams open to the resident via charities and self-help groups. Provide details on debt advice if appropriate to circumstances. Ensure residents are maintaining all tenancy conditions.</p>
Practitioners	<p>Complete Hoarding Assessment Make appropriate referrals for support</p>
Emergency Services	<p>Ensure information is shared with statutory agencies and feedback is provided where appropriate.</p>
Animal Welfare	<p>No action unless advice requested.</p>
Safeguarding Adults	<p>No action unless other concerns of abuse are noted.</p>
MARU	<p>No action unless other concerns of abuse are noted.</p>

Level 2 <i>Clutter Image Rating 4 – 6</i>	<p>Household environment requires professional assistance to resolve the clutter and the maintenance issues in the property.</p>
Property structure, services and garden area	<p>Only major exit is blocked. Only one of the services is not fully functional. Concern that services are not well maintained. Smoke alarms are not installed or not functioning. Garden is not accessible due to clutter, or is not maintained. Evidence of indoor items stored outside. Evidence of light structural damage including damp. Interior doors missing or blocked open.</p>
Household Functions	<p>Clutter is causing congestion in the living spaces and is impacting on the use of the rooms for their intended purpose. Clutter is causing congestion between the rooms and entrances. Room(s) score between 4-5 on the clutter scale. Inconsistent levels of housekeeping throughout the property. Some household appliances are not functioning properly and there may be additional units in unusual places. Property is not maintained within terms of lease or tenancy agreement where applicable. Evidence of outdoor items being stored inside.</p>
Health and Safety	<p>Kitchen and bathroom are not kept clean. Offensive odour in the property. Resident is not maintaining safe cooking environment. Some concern with the quantity of medication, or its storage or expiry dates. No rotting food. No concerning use of candles. Resident trying to manage personal care but struggling. No writing on the walls.</p>
Safeguard of Children and Family members	<p>Hoarding on clutter scale 4 -7 doesn't automatically constitute a Safeguarding Alert. Please note all additional concerns for householders. Properties with children or vulnerable residents with additional. support needs may trigger a Safeguarding Alert under a different risk.</p>
Animals and Pests	<p>Pets at the property are not well cared for. Resident is not unable to control the animals. Animal's living area is not maintained and smells. Animals appear to be under nourished or over fed. Evidence of vermin at the property. Spider webs in house. Light insect infestation (bed bugs, lice, fleas, cockroaches, ants, etc).</p>
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	<p>Latex Gloves, boots or needle stick safe shoes, face mask, hand sanitizer, insect repellent. PPE required.</p>
Level 2	<p>Actions In addition to actions listed below these cases need to be monitored regularly in the future due to risk of escalation or reoccurrence.</p>

Referring Agency	<p>Refer to Environmental Health as appropriate</p> <p>Raise a request to the Fire Service to provide fire prevention advice</p> <p>Provide details of garden services</p> <p>Refer for support assessment</p> <p>Referral to GP</p> <p>Referral to debt advice if appropriate</p> <p>Refer to Animal welfare if there are animals at the property.</p> <p>Ensure information sharing with all agencies involved to ensure a collaborative approach and a sustainable resolution.</p>
Environmental Health	<p>Refer to Environmental Health on 0300 1234 212 with details of customer and overview of problems.</p> <p>At time of inspection, Environmental Health Officer decides on appropriate course of action.</p> <p>Consider serving notices under Environmental Protection Act 1990, Prevention of Damage By Pests Act 1949 or Housing Act 2004.</p>
Practitioners	<p>Complete Hoarding Assessment Form.</p> <p>Ensure information sharing with all agencies involved to ensure a collaborative approach and a sustainable resolution.</p>
Emergency Services	<p>Ensure information sharing with all agencies involved to ensure a collaborative approach and a sustainable resolution.</p>
Animal Welfare	<p>Visit property to undertake a wellbeing check on animals at the property and invite RSPCA to undertake a joint visit.</p> <p>Educate client regarding animal welfare if appropriate.</p> <p>Provide advice / assistance with re-homing animals.</p>
Safeguarding Adults	<p>No action unless other concerns of abuse are noted.</p> <p>If other concerns of abuse are of concern or have been reported, progression to safeguarding referral and investigation may be necessary.</p>
MARU	<p>No action unless other concerns of abuse are noted.</p>

<p>Level 3</p> <p>Clutter image rating</p> <p>7 - 9</p>	<p>Household environment will require intervention with a collaborative multi agency approach with the involvement from a wide range of professionals. This level of hoarding constitutes a Safeguarding alert due to the significant risk to health of the householders, surrounding properties and residents. Residents are often unaware of the implication of their hoarding actions and oblivious to the risk it poses.</p>
<p>Property structure, services and garden area</p>	<p>Limited access to the property due to extreme clutter.</p> <p>Evidence may be seen of extreme clutter seen at windows.</p> <p>Evidence may be seen of extreme clutter outside the property.</p> <p>Garden not accessible and extensively overgrown.</p> <p>Services not connected or not functioning properly.</p> <p>Smoke alarms not fitted or not functioning.</p> <p>Property lacks ventilation due to clutter.</p> <p>Evidence of structural damage or outstanding repairs including damp.</p> <p>Interior doors missing or blocked open.</p> <p>Evidence of indoor items stored outside.</p>
<p>Household Functions</p>	<p>Clutter is obstructing the living spaces and is preventing the use of the rooms for their intended purpose.</p> <p>Room(s) scores 7 - 9 on the clutter image scale.</p> <p>Rooms not used for intended purposes or very limited.</p> <p>Beds inaccessible or unusable due to clutter or infestation.</p> <p>Entrances, hallways and stairs blocked or difficult to pass.</p> <p>Toilets, sinks not functioning or not in use.</p> <p>Resident at risk due to living environment.</p> <p>Household appliances are not functioning or inaccessible.</p> <p>Resident has no safe cooking environment.</p> <p>Resident is using candles.</p> <p>Evidence of outdoor clutter being stored indoors.</p>

	<p>No evidence of housekeeping being undertaken. Broken household items not discarded e.g. broken glass or plates. Concern for declining mental health. Property is not maintained within terms of lease or tenancy agreement where applicable. Property is at risk of notice being served by Environmental Health.</p>
Health and Safety	<p>Human urine and or excrement may be present. Excessive odour in the property, which may also be evident from the outside. Rotting food may be present. Evidence may be seen of unclean, unused and or buried plates and dishes. Broken household items not discarded e.g. broken glass or plates. Inappropriate quantities or storage of medication. Pungent odour can be smelt inside the property and possibly from outside. Concern with the integrity of the electrics. Inappropriate use of electrical extension cords or evidence of unqualified work to the electrics. Concern for declining mental health.</p>
Safeguard of Children and Family members	<p>Hoarding on clutter scale 7-9 constitutes a Safeguarding Alert. Please note all additional concerns for householders.</p>
Animals and Pests	<p>Animals at the property at risk due the level of clutter in the property. Resident may not able to control the animals at the property. Animal's living area is not maintained and smells. Animals appear to be under nourished or over fed. Hoarding of animals at the property. Heavy insect infestation (bed bugs, lice, fleas, cockroaches, ants, silverfish, etc.) Visible rodent infestation.</p>
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	<p>Latex Gloves, boots or needle stick safe shoes, face mask, hand sanitizer, insect repellent. Visit in pairs required.</p>
Referring Agency	<p>Raise Safeguarding Alert within 24 hours. Raise a request to the Fire Service within 24 hours to provide fire prevention advice.</p>
Environmental Health	<p>Refer to Environmental Health on 0300 1234 212 with details of customer and overview of problems. At time of inspection, EHO decides on appropriate course of action. Consider serving notices under Environmental Protection Act 1990, Prevention of Damage By Pests Act 1949 or Housing Act 2004.</p>
Practitioners	<p>Complete Hoarding Assessment Form. Ensure information sharing with all agencies involved to ensure a collaborative approach and a sustainable resolution.</p>
Emergency Services	<p>Attend Safeguarding multi agency meetings on request. Ensure information sharing with all agencies involved to ensure a collaborative approach and a sustainable resolution. Provide feedback to referring agency on completion of home visits.</p>
Animal Welfare	<p>Visit property to undertake a wellbeing check on animals at the property and invite RSPCA to undertake a joint visit. Arrange the removal of animals to a safe environment. Educate client regarding animal welfare if appropriate. Provide advice / assistance with re-homing animals.</p>
Safeguarding Adults	<p>Safeguarding alert should progress to referral for multi-agency approach and further investigation of any concerns of abuse.</p>

MARU	Refer to Children MARU if children or young people present within 24 hours.
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23.0

Appendix C

Hoarding Assessment Form

Name: Date:

Address:

Household members:

Name: Dob:

Name: Dob:

Name: Dob:

Name: Dob:

Name: Dob:

Name: Dob:

Any pets?: Yes No

If yes, what?:

Are there any concerns about hoarding?: Yes No

Using the Clutter Image Rating Assessment, complete the following:

Lounge Kitchen Dining Room Hall

Bedroom 1 Bedroom 2 Bedroom 3 Bedroom 4

Bathroom Landing Garden Other

Action taken:

Officer's signature:

Officer's name (print)