



NOTICE OF MEETING

CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND TACKLING HOMELESSNESS

THURSDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2024 AT 10.00 AM

COUNCIL CHAMBER - THE GUILDHALL, PORTSMOUTH

Telephone enquiries to Allison Harper, Local Democracy Officer - Tel: 023 9268 8014
Email: Allison.Harper@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

If any member of the public wishing to attend the meeting has access requirements, please notify the contact named above.

Membership

Councillor Darren Sanders (Cabinet Member)

Councillor Cal Corkery
Councillor Raymond Dent

Councillor Charlotte Gerada
Councillor Daniel Wemyss

(NB This agenda should be retained for future reference with the minutes of this meeting).

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AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for Absence**
- 2 Declarations of Members' Interests**
- 3 Proposal to consult on Portsmouth City Council's policy for allocating social housing (Pages 7 - 12)**

Purpose of Report

To seek permission to consult on Portsmouth's policy for allocating social housing, which sets out the arrangements for allocating housing accommodation within the meaning of Part VI of the Housing Act 1996, including:

1. The selection of applicants to be offered tenancies by Portsmouth City Council.
2. Nominations to tenancies offered by private registered providers of social housing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness agrees that a formal consultation will be undertaken on the requirements of an effective allocations policy. Consultation would seek the views of:**
 - a) Private registered providers of social housing and local authority housing service.**
 - b) Local residents likely to be affected by any changes to policy, including those currently on the housing register.**
 - c) Members of the Portsmouth City Rough Sleeping and Homelessness Partnership Group.**
 - d) Partner organisations likely to be affected by the policy including council directorates.**
 - 2. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness notes that the consultation would run from around 14th May 2024 to around 24th June 2024, with officers reviewing the current policy ahead of the consultation.**
 - 3. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness notes that the outcome of the review and consultation would be presented to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness along with any proposed changes to the policy.**
- 4 Update on our preparedness for the Social Housing Regulation Act and Building Safety Act (Pages 13 - 112)**

Purpose of Report

The report was requested by Councillor Darren Sanders, Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness.

1. To update on some of the legislative and regulatory changes that have been introduced since the publication of the Social Housing White Paper in 2020.

2. To set out the actions taken by Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services in response to legislative change and future planning.
3. To notify that the Director of Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services is nominated as the 'responsible person' who is the point of contact and ensures compliance with the social housing regulatory standards.
4. To notify that the Building Safety Manager is nominated as the 'responsible person' for ensuring health and safety in Council properties and housing owned buildings and recognising that the manager will be supported by the Corporate Health and Safety Team, and that ultimate responsibility lies with Portsmouth City Council as a Registered Provider.
5. To update on the recruitment to the new posts of Housing Policy Officer and Housing Complaints Lead.
6. To note the following policies have been recently revised - the lettings policy, domestic abuse policy and safeguarding policy.
7. To update on the development of a new Resident Engagement Pledge and plan for 2024 - 2027 and note the resident engagement strategy for the residents within the Council's high-rise buildings.
8. A report providing a further update on the work underway and planned will be brought forward mid-municipal year notwithstanding that other reports will be presented for decision as and when needed throughout the year.

5 Portsmouth City Council's Tenancy Strategy 2024 - 2029 (Pages 113 - 128)

Purpose of Report

To present the Tenancy Strategy which details Portsmouth City Council's approach to tenancies for all registered providers of social housing across the city including the local authority as a registered provider.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness approves the Council's Tenancy Strategy 2024 - 2029 (Appendix 1), to be effective from 1st April 2024.**
- 2. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness notes that this publication of the Tenancy Strategy does not constitute a major change to the existing Tenancy Strategy. The changes to this strategy remove reference to the local authority as a registered provider allowing for the publication of the Local Authority Housing Lettings Policy.**

- 3. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness notes that there are no changes to this strategy which impact registered providers within the city and accordingly the strategy is not being consulted on. Copies of the republished strategy will be shared with registered providers explaining the change.**

6 Damp and Mould Policy (Pages 129 - 168)

Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to update members of a review of the Council's Housing Services processes for managing damp and mould in council housing and to seek approval to implement a new Damp and Mould Policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness approves the new Damp and Mould Policy (Appendix A - Damp and Mould Policy, version 1.1) and asks Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services to implement the new policy with immediate effect.**
- 2. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness approves the implementation plan set out in section 5.**
- 3. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness requests an information only report to be brought back mid-year to update on the progress of the work.**

7 Park Homes Pitch Fee review 2024 & Park Homes Policy (Pages 169 - 204)

Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to make recommendations regarding the Park Homes pitch fee review, and agree the approach that will be applied to the upcoming annual pitch fee review process for April 2024. This report also makes recommendations for officers to conduct a resident consultation regarding the implementation of a Park Home Policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. That the Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness increase Park Home pitch fees in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for England. The rate of CPI applied will be the last available figure that was published 28 days before the review date (1st April 2024). Due to CPI being published mid-month in arrears, the rate applicable will be the January 2024 CPI rate.**
- 2. That an annual report will be brought to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness for decision before each pitch fee review process commences.**

- 3. That the Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness instructs officers to conduct a 4 week resident consultation starting 1st March 2024 regarding the implementation of a Park Homes Policy. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness should instruct officers to bring a report back to cabinet regarding the findings of this consultation and a further recommendation regarding the implementation of this policy.**
- 4. That, regardless of any consultation, the current policy of not charging any sales commission is reconfirmed.**

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Agenda Item 3



Portsmouth
CITY COUNCIL

Title of meeting:	Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness
Date of meeting:	22 nd February 2024
Subject:	Proposal to consult on Portsmouth City Council's policy for allocating social housing
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Darren Sanders
Report by:	James Hill - Director for Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services
Author:	Jo Bennett - Assistant Director - Housing Need and Supply Shane Galvin – Head of Housing Needs Advice & Support
Wards affected:	All
Key decision:	No
Full Council decision:	No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To seek permission to consult on Portsmouth's policy for allocating social housing, which sets out the arrangements for allocating housing accommodation within the meaning of Part VI of the Housing Act 1996, including:
- 1.1.1 The selection of applicants to be offered tenancies by Portsmouth City Council,
 - 1.1.2 Nominations to tenancies offered by private registered providers of social housing.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Cabinet member for housing and tackling homelessness agrees that a formal consultation will be undertaken on the requirements of an effective allocations policy. Consultation would seek the views of:
- 2.1.1. Private registered providers of social housing and local authority housing service,
 - 2.1.2. Local residents likely to be affected by any changes to policy, including those currently on the housing register,

2.1.3. Members of the Portsmouth City Rough Sleeping and Homelessness Partnership Group,

2.1.4. Partner organisations likely to be affected by the policy including council directorates.

2.2. The Cabinet member for housing and tackling homelessness notes that the consultation would run from around 14th May 2024 to around 24th June 2024, with officers reviewing the current policy ahead of the consultation.

2.3. The Cabinet member for housing and tackling homelessness notes that the outcome of the review and consultation would be presented to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness along with any proposed changes to the policy.

3. Background

3.1 Local housing authorities are required by s.166A of the Housing Act 1996 to have an allocation scheme for determining priorities and procedure to be followed when allocating housing accommodation.

3.2 The council's allocation scheme was last reviewed in 2019, primarily accommodating the changes in homelessness legislation introduced by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

3.3 Portsmouth has since seen increasing numbers of homelessness applications in the face of a challenging housing market. A greater proportion of households offered accommodation via the housing register are now related to homelessness.

3.4 Homeless households still only make up a relatively small proportion of the housing register, but are allocated the majority of the social housing available in the city.

3.5 The high band of the housing register is increasingly oversubscribed, with properties only rarely being offered to anyone with a low or medium level of priority.

3.6 Portsmouth's Homelessness Strategy (2024-2029) determined the following action as required:

3.6.1 Undertake a review of how social housing is allocated: i) a review of the allocations policy for social housing, including its relationship with homelessness and ii) a review of how internal transfers and exchanges are utilised to make the best use of available stock.



3.7 A full review will be carried out by officers ahead of the proposed consultation, in conjunction with colleagues, including with colleagues Adult Social Care, Children Services and homelessness services.

4 Consultation

4.1 Section 168 and 166A of the Housing Act 1996 require local authorities to bring any major changes to allocations policy to the attention of those likely to be affected by it, and to the attention of registered providers so as they have the opportunity to comment.

4.2 The allocations policy is a significant policy which has an impact on a large number of residents and partner organisations. There is therefore a need to significantly consult with them.

4.3 The proposed contributors to consultation would include:

4.3.1 Private registered providers of social housing and local authority housing service,

4.3.2 Local residents likely to be affected by any changes to policy, including those currently on the housing register,

4.3.3 Members of the Portsmouth City Rough Sleeping and Homelessness Partnership Group,

4.3.4 Partner organisations likely to be affected by the policy including council directorates.

4.4 The proposed areas of focus for the review and consultation will include:

4.4.1 The relationship between homelessness and the housing register, including the level of priority that should be awarded to households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness,

4.4.2 The number of properties that return to the housing register for allocation from transfer applicants, including specific attention to the largest properties,

4.4.3 The need to make best use of the finite amount of housing available,

4.4.4 The names of the priority bands, particularly the perception of 'low' and 'medium',

4.4.5 Residency criteria and priority for the register, and how that relates to the council giving full effect to the Armed Forces Covenant,

4.4.6 The direct nomination quotas afforded to partners working with vulnerable people, and the effectiveness of the current agreements.

5 Following steps

5.1 On completion of the review and consultation, the findings would be returned for presentation to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness, along with any proposed changes to the policy.

6. Reasons for recommendations

6.1. To complete the action approved by the Homelessness Strategy 2024-2029.

6.2. To ensure that the council's allocations policy is up to date and gives priority to local residents with the greatest housing need whilst achieving the maximum benefit of the available housing for our residents.

6.3. To ensure the council continues to meet the statutory duties under Housing Act 1996.

7. Integrated impact assessment

7.1. An integrated impact assessment will be completed throughout the review and consultation process and would inform any proposed changes.

8. Legal implications

8.1 Full consideration to be given during and on completion of the review and consultation.

9. Director of Finance's comments

9.1 Comments to be sought following completion of the review and consultation.

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Signed by: James Hill - Director of Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services



Appendices:

None

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Portsmouth City Council Homelessness Strategy 2024-2029	Homelessness strategy 2024-29
Housing Act 1996	Housing Act 1996 (legislation.gov.uk)
Homelessness Reduction Act 2017	Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (legislation.gov.uk)
Portsmouth Allocation Scheme	Appendix 1 - Allocations Scheme 20190129 Portsmouth Allocation Scheme.pdf

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by:

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Agenda Item 4



THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

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Title of meeting:	Cabinet Member for Housing & Tackling Homelessness
Subject:	Update on our preparedness for the Social Housing Regulation Act and Building Safety Act.
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Darren Sanders
Date of meeting:	22 February 2024
Report by:	James Hill, Director for Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services
Author:	Nicola Clannachan, Head of Housing Community Services
Wards affected:	All

1. Requested by Cllr Darren Sanders, Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness

2. Purpose

- 2.1** To update on some of the legislative and regulatory changes that have been introduced since the publication of the Social Housing White Paper in 2020.
- 2.2** To set out the actions taken by Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services in response to legislative change and future planning.
- 2.3** To notify that the Director of Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services is nominated as the 'responsible person' who is the point of contact and ensures compliance with the social housing regulatory standards.
- 2.4** To notify that the Building Safety Manager is nominated as the 'responsible person' for ensuring Health and Safety in Council properties and housing owned buildings and recognising that the manager will be supported by the Corporate Health and Safety Team, and that ultimate responsibility lies with Portsmouth City Council as a Registered Provider.
- 2.5** To update on the recruitment to the new posts of Housing Policy Officer and Housing Complaints Lead.

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- 2.6** To note the following policies have been recently revised - the lettings policy, domestic abuse policy and safeguarding policy.
- 2.7** To update on the development of a new Resident Engagement Pledge and plan for 2024-2027 and note the resident engagement strategy for the residents within the Council's high-rise buildings.
- 2.8** A report providing a further update on the work underway and planned will be brought forward mid-municipal year notwithstanding that other reports will be presented for decision as and when needed throughout the year.

3. The Charter for Social Housing 2020 and Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023

- 3.1** The Government published its Social Housing White Paper in 2020 introducing a new Charter for Social Housing Residents. The Charter sets out Government's plans for new regulation, an enhanced Housing Ombudsman to improve complaints handling and new tenant satisfaction measures for social housing landlords to report against. All social housing landlords are expected to deliver on the below seven commitments, which residents should be able to expect from their landlord:
- 3.1.1 To be safe in your home.
 - 3.1.2 To know how your landlord is performing, including on repairs, complaints and safety, and how it spends its money.
 - 3.1.3 To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly, with access to a strong Ombudsman.
 - 3.1.4 To be treated with respect, backed by a strong consumer regulator and improved consumer standards for tenants.
 - 3.1.5 To have your voice heard by your landlord.
 - 3.1.6 To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in, with your landlord keeping your home in good repair.
 - 3.1.7 The government will ensure social housing can support people to take their first step to ownership.
- 3.2** The Social Housing (Regulation) Bill became law on the 20 July 2023 providing the legal basis for many of the measures set out in the Charter for Social Housing Residents. The key changes the Act will bring include:
- **Intervention** – the Regulator of Social Housing can set up a proactive regulatory approach to the consumer standards.
 - **Health and safety** – social housing landlords must designate a person to act as lead on compliance with health and safety obligations and publish their contact details.
 - **Regulatory standards** – the Regulator can set new regulatory standards and issue a code of practice on them.

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- **Tenant satisfaction measures** – the Regulator can require social housing landlords to collect tenant satisfaction measures.
- **Surveys** – the Regulator has the power to enter properties with only 48 hours' notice and make emergency repairs where there is a serious risk to tenants.
- **Emergency remedial action** – the Regulator can authorise persons to enter premises to take emergency remedial action to remedy failures by a landlord.
- **'Awaab's Law'** – the Regulator will set strict time limits for landlords to address hazards such as damp and mould.
- **Performance improvement plans** – the Regulator can give notice to require a landlord to prepare and implement a performance improvements plan where the landlord is failing to meet the regulatory standards.
- **Inspections** – the Regulator will carry out regular inspections of the largest social housing landlords and has the power to issue unlimited fines to failing landlords.
- **Professionalism** – the Regulator can set new qualification requirements for social housing managers.

4 Building Safety Act 2022

- 4.1 The Building Safety Act 2022 is new legislation that sets out safety requirements for landlords of High-Rise Residential Buildings (HRRBs). These are defined as buildings with at least two residential units which are at least 18 metres in height or have at least 7 storeys. The Act was fully implemented in October 2023. New fire safety guidelines have also been implemented for all buildings regulated by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO).
- 4.2 The Act creates three new bodies to provide oversight of the new regime: the Building Safety Regulator, the National Regulator of Construction Products and the New Homes Ombudsman.
- 4.3 The Act requires us to engage with the residents of each block, giving them specific information and we must also involve residents in certain building safety decisions. For each HRRB there must be a resident engagement strategy. There must also be a separate complaints procedure that residents and others can use to raise safety concerns.

5 Consumer Standards

- 5.1 Social housing landlords must meet 'consumer standards' set by the Regulator of Social Housing which cover things like making sure tenants get quality accommodation, have choice and protection, and can hold their landlords to account.
- 5.2 On the 25 July 2023, the Regulator published a consultation on a new set of proposed consumer standards and a code of practice on those standards. They are

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expected to come into force from April 2024 replacing the existing consumer standards. The proposed consumer standards are:

- **Safety and Quality Standard** – requires social housing landlords to provide safe and good quality homes and landlord services to tenants.
- **Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard** – requires social housing landlords to be open with tenants and treat them with fairness and respect so that tenants can access services, raise complaints when necessary, influence decision making and hold their landlord to account.
- **Neighbourhood and Community Standard** – requires social housing landlords to engage with other relevant parties so that tenants can live in safe and well-maintained neighbourhoods and feel safe in their homes.
- **Tenancy Standard** – sets requirements for the fair allocation and letting homes and for how those tenancies are managed and ended by social housing landlords.

- 5.3 In response to the changes set out a working group made up of representatives across service areas has been working on an extensive action plan to ensure our commitments to tenants are met

6 Building Safety Response

- 6.1 The Building Safety Team have worked proactively, aiming to ensure compliance with the multiple changes brought in by the amended Fire and Building Safety legislation, e.g., installing CO2 monitors across our housing stock, moving to a new electrical safety check regime and in creating revised Damp and Mould and Fire Safety policies.
- 6.2 The Building Safety Manager is nominated as the designated employee to act as a lead for health and safety compliance for housing owned properties and buildings, working in partnership with the Corporate Health and Safety Team. Ultimate responsibility for compliance lies with Portsmouth City Council.
- 6.3 The Building Safety Manager has registered all of the City Council's HRRBs with the Building Safety Regulator. The registration required key information to be provided, such as each buildings address, height, number of flats, number of stairwells etc. The Building Safety Team are now gathering supporting information and producing the building safety case reports for all PCC's 22 HRRB's. The aim is to have all Safety Case Reports ready ahead of the date when they could be required by the Regulator. PCC has commissioned FR Consultants Ltd to assist with relevant surveys and investigations.
- 6.4 To comply with the requirement to have a bespoke engagement strategy for each HRRB, residents across our 22 HRRBs have been consulted to inform an overarching strategy and information that will go to all residents over the age of 16 living in each HRRB. This engagement strategy is presented within the appendices of this report for noting (Appendix A).

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7 Consumer Standards response

- 7.1 The Director of Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services is nominated as the 'responsible person' who is the point of contact for the Housing Regulator and ensures compliance with the housing regulatory standards.
- 7.2 Officers have responded to the Regulator's consultation on the new proposed consumer standards, working with residents to ensure that their views on the proposals were represented in our response to the Regulator.
- 7.3 Officers have responded to the Regulator's consultation on their proposed approach to regulating the sector, and a further consultation on the proposed changes to the fee principles, which would see local authority landlords paying an annual fee set by reference to the number of social housing units owned (proposed at around £7-8 per property). This potential additional cost has been noted as a potential pressure in the budget for 24/25.
- 7.4 In preparation for the new regulatory regime due from April 2024 officers have reviewed the existing and proposed consumer standards to check if they are met, identifying actions that have been completed or are in the future work plan. A review of the evidence that can be provided to the Regulator to demonstrate our approach and performance is being undertaken, for example, Governance & Audit & Standards Committee (GASC) reporting, audit reports, systems development interventions and decision-making within the democratic process etc.
- 7.5 The recruitment to a new housing policy officer role supports services in writing and reviewing policies in line with an ever-changing operating environment. Working within the local authority many of our existing policies have been created in partnership with wider local authority services, however, there is a requirement for us to create more specific policies that are more explicit in our approach as a landlord and to set out future plans for our housing residents.
- 7.6 The policy officer has a plan to review all current policies and procedures to ensure that they are up to date, consulted on with residents, and published so that they are accessible to our residents, enabling greater transparency and accountability.
- 7.7 Revised policies are in the appendix of this report for noting, including the Lettings Policy (appendix B), Safeguarding Policy (appendix C), and Domestic Abuse policy (appendix D). A revised neighbourhood strategy is currently in draft and under consultation.
- 7.8 A Systems Development Service assessment of our Anti-Social Behaviour service has provided robust and critical challenge to ensure that we continuously improve. A resulting restructure of the service has been completed. A revised Anti-Social Behaviour policy is in draft and will be presented in a future meeting. The revised

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approach seeks to ensure that we are working closely with residents and key stakeholders to support communities to become more resilient and to feel safer.

- 7.9 The introduction of tenancy update visits seeks to ensure that requirement to regularly review who is living in our homes, and to collate demographic data about our tenants is met. Whilst our contractors visit each property annually to complete safety checks and flag issues or tenants that they have concerns about, these visits also enable Housing Officers to make sure that they are aware of current needs and consider building safety, for example identifying and completing personal evacuation plans for those unable to self-evacuate in an emergency or supporting with issues of hoarding. They also enable greater proactivity in identifying and tackling sub-letting, under and over-occupation, and in spotting any signs of unreported disrepair. Area office teams have prioritised visits to residents that may be more vulnerable or those with whom there has been no contact for over 18 months.
- 7.10 Housing Management follow the Portsmouth City Council allocations policy with the HNAS team having 100% nomination rights to allocate to all vacant Local Authority Housing properties. We have worked with HNAS to review the wider City Council allocations policy.
- 7.11 The qualifications held by housing managers across the Service has been reviewed in view of the new requirement that "senior housing executives" will require a foundation degree or level 5 qualification, whilst "senior housing managers" will require a level 4 qualification in housing management. Vastly experienced in delivering housing services over multiple decades, the Assistant Director for Housing, and the Head of Local Authority Housing are currently studying towards their Level 5 CIH qualification to ensure qualification at a suitable level. There are plans for further senior housing staff and those who have responsibility for the day-to-day management of the provision of services to enrol in the future. The service continues to offer apprenticeships at all levels in a range of disciplines, for example in customer service; housing; management and leadership; and building surveying.

8 Resident engagement and communication

- 8.1 A resident engagement survey was undertaken in winter 2022/23, seeking views on how we communicate and engage with tenants and leaseholders, and to pilot our approach to collecting tenant satisfaction measures. The report is available on the city council website. The results from this survey have been used to help inform plans for services moving forward.
- 8.2 In autumn and winter 2023, officers further sought residents' views on the creation of our Resident Engagement Pledge and our future plans for 2024-2027. Our priorities over the next 3 years are to:

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- Improve the way we communicate with residents, providing greater transparency about the services we provide.
- Engage with more residents and provide them with the opportunity to share feedback in ways that suit their needs.
- Ensure that residents are better able to scrutinise our performance and hold us to account.
- Get to know our communities better and empower them to make positive changes to address local issues.

Revised information sets out our commitment to partnership working with residents and our continuing commitment to encourage residents to be involved. The document is included in the appendix for noting (Appendix E).

- 8.3 A newly created resident engagement communications specialist post has been created, with a new communications strategy going forward, which incorporates plans to review equality of access to information and effective communication with those with additional needs or barriers to communication. Officers have worked with residents to review our current website, letters sent to residents, and the format and content of our tenant and leaseholder magazine HouseTalk and have further considered the way that we communicate with residents across service areas.
- 8.4 A new tenants and leaseholder website landing page <https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/services/housing/council-tenants-and-leaseholders/> assists with navigating to relevant information online. Visibility of our performance (how well or badly we are doing) is increasing with performance measures published in our revised resident magazine, HouseTalk, with plans for this information to be routinely published on our website. We seek to increase residents understanding about the service standards they should expect from us, and their own responsibilities through further updates to the website, the creation of video content, and the development of our social media presence.
- 8.5 Early work is underway to consider a 'housing service' logo which will help council housing tenants and leaseholders connect with the services provided by the landlord. The work will not create a separate 'brand' and will maintain the direct association of the housing service with Portsmouth City Council.
- 8.6 Alongside renewed online engagement the HNBS team are working collaboratively to encourage customers and ward councillors to attend estate walkabouts with representatives from across service areas, with the option for residents to request a HRRB block walk for residents who may want reassurance about building safety. The aim is to improve engagement and increase contact with residents - sharing vital messages and information and addressing issues that are important to residents. Examples include identifying repairs and jointly considering neighbourhood improvement priorities.

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9 Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM)

- 9.1 Whilst in the main the TSMs are prescribed by the Regulator, officers worked with residents on what our approach should be in capturing responses to our tenant perception survey, influencing the promotional material and incentives for participation, the additional survey questions, the design of the questionnaire and the introductory wording.
- 9.2 From August to December, following an amendment to our privacy notice, we invited our tenants and leaseholders to take part in the survey to be used to calculate the annual tenant satisfaction measures. The results of the survey will be made available on our website and in HouseTalk magazine, in a format agreed with residents, and shared with housing portfolio members.
- 9.3 Changes have been made to our computer systems to enable us to capture performance management information to be reported on, however there are some measures that we may not be able to report on as they are not in line with our current way of working - for example there is a requirement to specify target repair times and then to report on whether this has been met.
- 9.3.1 Our repairs service focuses on delivering the 'right repairs at the right time' and is driven by the customer nominal value. We provide the same level of repairs service out of hours as we do in hours. In practice we take an approach whereby residents set their own timescale for a repair to be done, and more than one repair can be reported at once meaning that data required to report cannot be extrapolated from the system.
- 9.3.2 Moreover, when responding to a repair contractors should ask if there are any other repairs that need completing and then respond to these, adding these additional works to the same record and extending the timescale for a repair to be closed.
- 9.3.3 We are confident that we are meeting all the statutory requirements and will need to discuss with the social housing regulator how we report on the performance of the repairs service and avoid a perverse consequence that we adopt a service standard to simply meet the targets.

10 Response to changes relating to complaints.

- 10.1 Officers have responded to the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code consultation on the complaints handling code and their outline proposals for monitoring compliance.
- 10.2 A review of the way that complaints are currently managed and reported on led us to propose that these should be brought into our service area, rather than continuing with the existing arrangement with Corporate Services. This move



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allows the Service greater visibility and understanding of complaints, enabling early identification of trends or themes and greater monitoring of resulting actions.

- 10.3 A new Housing Complaints Lead position has been recruited to, and steps are being taken to establish a new process and contact point for landlord specific complaints and any complaints in relation to building safety concerns. These will be in place for April 2024, with the new process communicated widely. We will ensure that we continue to work in partnership with the Corporate Complaints team, providing the necessary reports.

11 Conclusion

- 11.1 The legislative and regulatory changes which have been introduced are significant and wide-reaching, impacting the operational and strategic approaches taken in delivering Housing, Neighbourhood and Building services in the future, including where funds are allocated, the range of data collected and the way our residents are involved in all that we do.
- 11.2 As the council responds and reacts to this new legislative and regulatory regime, any changes in service delivery which may lead to additional expenditure or may attract opportunities for savings will be assessed and scrutinised appropriately.
- 11.3 Much of the work to date has focussed on establishing a strong foundation in readiness for the 1st of April 2024. Work will continue throughout the year to strengthen the initial work, further engage and consult, and to work with the social housing regulator to assure requirements are met where we have differences in how we measure the performance of our service.

.....
Signed by James Hill, Director of Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services

Appendices:

- Appendix A – Building Safety – Resident Engagement Strategy 2024
- Appendix B – Lettings Policy 2024
- Appendix C – Safeguarding Policy 2024
- Appendix D – Domestic Abuse Policy 2024
- Appendix E – Resident Engagement – Our Approach 2024-2027

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Charter for Social Housing 2020	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-charter-for-social-housing-residents-social-housing-white-paper
Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023	https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/36
Building Safety Act 2022	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-building-safety-act
Fire Safety Act 2021	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-act-2021
Regulator of Housing Regulatory Standards	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/regulatory-standards
Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code	https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Complaint-Handling-Code-Published-March-2022-1-1.pdf

Portsmouth City Council Building Safety - Resident Engagement Strategy 2024

1.0 Introduction

Buildings are at their safest when everyone including Landlord, Residents and others work together to maintain safety, security, and cleanliness of the block. The Building Safety Act 2022 (BSA) places an obligation on us (Portsmouth City Council) as Principal Accountable Person (PAP) and your landlord to produce a resident engagement strategy for all residential high-rise buildings. A high-rise building is a building 18m or above, or that have seven storeys or more.

Building Safety relates to fire safety and structural safety of a building.

1.1 Strategy Aims

This strategy document explains our approach to ensure how you, as a Portsmouth City Council (PCC) resident are included in building safety.

The aims are to ensure that you as residents:

- Feel safe in the building that you live in.
- Know what information you will be provided with about your building.
- Know how to report any issues about your home and block related to building safety.
- Know how you can get involved and influence building safety.
- Know what you will be consulted on.
- Know how your views will be sought.
- Know what we are doing in response to your feedback.
- Know how the effectiveness of the strategy will be measured.
- Know how to make a complaint if you feel your concerns are not being listened to.

2.0 Our High-Rise Buildings

PCC (Portsmouth City Council) is responsible for managing and maintaining 22 high-rise blocks of flats, containing a total of 2055 individual homes, including flats and maisonettes.

One block is solely an over 55s sheltered accommodation and eight blocks are a mixture of general needs accommodation and sheltered properties. Where there is sheltered accommodation sheltered scheme managers provide assistance to residents in the scheme. The remaining thirteen blocks are general needs accommodation.

There are a total of 35 leaseholders within our high-rise buildings.

The blocks house a diverse range of residents located in a variety of neighbourhoods across the city. Each block has a named Housing Officer with some blocks having additional on-site sheltered team members. All blocks are visited Mon-Fri by our Estate Services teams.

Block name	Number of properties	Sheltered / general needs	No of leaseholders	Area
Ladywood House	136	Sheltered Scheme Cat 1	0	Somerstown
Sarah Robinson House	120	General Needs	0	Portsea
Mill Gate House	76	Sheltered Scheme Cat 1 / General Needs	0	Portsea
Tipton House	136	Sheltered Scheme Cat 1 / General Needs	1	Somerstown
Edgbaston House	136	Sheltered Scheme Cat 1 / General Needs	1	Somerstown
Barkis House	136	Sheltered Scheme Cat 1 / General Needs	0	Buckland
Nickleby House	136	Sheltered Scheme Cat 1 / General Needs	0	Buckland
Handsworth House	153	Sheltered Scheme Cat 1 / General Needs	0	Somerstown
Pickwick House	88	Sheltered Scheme Cat 1 / General Needs	0	Buckland
Copperfield House	88	Sheltered Scheme Cat 1 / General Needs	0	Buckland
Wilmcote House	111	General Needs	0	Somerstown
Omega House	80	General Needs	2	Somerstown
Grenville House	30	General Needs	3	Portsea
Darwin House	43	General Needs	4	Landport
Brisbane House	30	General Needs	3	Buckland
Grosvenor House	54	General Needs	0	Somerstown
Blackwood House	26	General Needs	2	Buckland
Roslyn House	54	General Needs	17	Somerstown
Estella Road	189	General Needs	0	Buckland
Grafton Street	119	General Needs	1	Buckland
Westminster Place	78	General Needs	0	Buckland
Wingfield Street	36	General Needs	2	Buckland

Table 1 - Block Information

We are dedicated to improving the building safety of our stock, taking steps to ensure that our buildings remain safe for our residents.

To date we have reviewed whether our blocks have cladding which is considered to be dangerous. We have deconstructed two of our high-rise buildings, removed cladding from three blocks and have plans in place to undertake cladding replacement to a further three blocks, which remain safe for occupation in the interim period. We have installed a retrofitted sprinkler system and evacuation alert system within one block and have plans to increase this. Current Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) are in place, and we have a robust system in place to ensure properties are regularly inspected and health and safety actions are completed. In addition, we also undertake regular servicing and compliance tasks for example gas and electrical checks across our buildings and have developed clear signage and notices for blocks.

3.0 How was this Strategy Created?

We have worked with staff, councillors, and you our residents to develop the foundation of this overarching strategy. Between December 2022 and February 2024, we asked you, our residents of our high-rise buildings via various means including surveys and in-person meetings how you felt about the safety and maintenance of your homes, what information you would like about fire and building safety, and how you would like to be communicated with regarding building safety. This was to ensure that the engagement strategy is meaningful for the residents living within the buildings. We want to make sure it meets residents needs and requirements.

Of the 364 high rise tenants that responded to our tenant satisfaction survey in 2023/24, 81% feel their home is well maintained. 8% are dissatisfied. 77% feel safe in their home. 10% are dissatisfied.

When thinking about the fire and building safety of their home, around a tenth of respondents felt they have all the information they need or do not need any further information. 54% were unable to suggest what information they would want however other respondents would like information on the fire protocol and safety measures in place, including any fire hazards, or would like information on how safe the building is. Respondents would also like more information on how regularly the building is checked, and any changes to fire protocol or the building.

Respondents would most like to find information about fire and building safety in their block (44%) or through their door - in the House Talk magazine (40%) or a letter (38%). Respondents would also be interested in finding information online through Portsmouth City Council web pages (29%) or on a website designed specifically for tenants and leaseholders (27%).

A follow-up building safety survey, was carried out in each building, found in Appendix 1.

This building safety survey was available in both hardcopy and electronic format and covered:

- Which safety messages were already understood through our existing strategy
- What information residents would like to know about their specific building.
- How they would like to be communicated with in the future.
- How often or when they would like to be communicated with.

Following the responses from yourselves as residents we are creating for each of our high-rise buildings a document titled "Information about your building". This sets out:

- Relevant information about your building.
- How you want to be communicated with, decided as a block.
- How to report different concerns.
- Sign points to this overall resident engagement strategy.

This document will be provided to all residents aged 16 years and over within our high-rise buildings, to ensure that they are clear in how we intend to keep them informed about the safety of the building, including any building safety risks.

The key aims of our consultation and subsequent communication is to:

- Identify the building safety information you as residents wish to be provided with and how this information should be provided.
- Establish our base level of engagement so that we can improve the way we engage with residents in relation to the safety of their home.
- Engage staff with regards to residents' rights to have a say in relation to their homes.

- Ensure you as residents are empowered to play an effective role in ensuring their building is, and continues to be, safe.
- Set out the ways you as residents can get involved and the benefits of participating in engagement on building safety.
- Clarify our responsibilities and residents' responsibilities to ensure homes remain safe.

The two main strands to our strategy

There are two main strands to how we will engage with residents around building safety:

- Information, understanding and involvement.
- Resident and landlords' responsibilities

4.0 Information, Understanding and Involvement

4.1 The Information we will provide.

We will proactively provide you with the information you need to help you understand the measures that are in place to keep you safe in the building, and what you can do to make sure your actions do not put anyone at risk. Leaseholders will receive the same information using the same methods as tenants.

We will make sure the information provided is relevant and in a format that can be understood by residents. We aim to provide this information in different formats on request, for example, for residents who have a physical or visual impairment, have other disabilities or who do not speak English. For vulnerable residents we can share building safety information with their relatives if they request us to.

Building Safety information will be provided when residents move in, and annually after that. At the start of every tenancy or lease we will provide the safety information within the sign-up pack or welcome pack. Thereafter we will use a range of ways to communicate and engage with residents.

Examples of the way in which we can communicate with residents may include but is not limited to:

- At sign up- in-person
- Tenant Update Visits
- Website
- Notice boards/Digital Notice Boards
- Text Message
- Email
- Letter / Leaflets / Newsletters
- Pop up sessions / meetings to talk about building safety
- Video

As standard practice we will provide:

- Information about your building.
- The measures we have in place to mitigate potential fire and building safety risks within your building, e.g., fire precautions, fire protection measures in place, e.g., sprinklers, fire extinguishers.
- How assets in the building are managed, e.g., frequency of lift maintenance.
- Information of your responsibilities as resident, for example how to reduce the risk of fire in individual dwellings. e.g., by not storing flammable materials.
- Procedures to follow where a fire occurs in the building.
- A process for reporting building safety concerns, including fire safety and structural safety.

You can request further and more detailed information about the safety measures in your building if you wish and such information may include (but is not limited to):

- Current and historical fire risk assessments.
- Outcome of building safety inspection checks where available.
- The fire strategy for the building.
- Structural assessments, where available.
- Information on planned maintenance and repairs schedules.
- Information on planned and historical changes to the building.
- Compliance reports

HNBS (Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services) carry out building safety compliance activities and compile reports on compliance. Below is an example of the types of compliance information you might want sight of and the recommended time frames for compliance activity.

Service	Frequency
Gas Safety	Annual Inspection
Electrical Safety (EICR)	Every 5 Years
Communal fire alert system	Weekly Test
Automatic Opening Vents	Weekly Test
Dry Risers	6 monthly and annual pressure test
Sprinklers	Annual Inspection
Emergency Lighting	Monthly
Fire Risk Assessments	Annually
Fire Fighting Equipment	Monthly
Communal Fire Doors	Quarterly Inspection
Property Front Doors	Annual Inspection
Premises Information Box / Secure Information Box	Monthly
Legionella Risk Assessments	Up to 5 years, depending on risk
Water Hygiene e.g. Water Outlet Temperature	Monthly

Table 2 - Compliance Activities

We will not release draft reports, which are likely to be subject to change but will aim to release information as quickly as possible and subject to the legal framework. We will follow the legal framework through FOI (Freedom of Information) and DPA to deal with requests for information about building safety.

4.1.1 Building Safety Issues

Where we identify a serious issue with a building affecting the safety of all residents, we will update residents regularly about any interim safety measures we have put in place, remedial works and further investigations that are required.

4.1.2 Works to Your Building

We will provide you with information about works planned to be undertaken to your home, including who will be undertaking the work, any timelines and key PCC contact information, so that they have a chance to talk to us about the works in advance, and throughout the project. Residents will be kept regularly updated and given points of contact to report any issues as they arise.

Following works to buildings we will invite residents to feedback on their experience, with a view to continual learning and improvement.

The strategy for communicating about works will be determined on a case-by-case basis, utilising the preferred communication methods for each block as well as the complexity of the works. The form used when considering the communication strategy for work is set out in Appendix 2.

4.2 What we will ask you about

We will work in partnership with residents to ensure that you are involved in decisions about your building's safety. Leaseholders will receive the same opportunity as PCC tenants.

We will ensure that where residents preferred options are possible, we will include them in decision making. Decisions we will ask for opinions on may include:

- Who may be disrupted by the works?
- When would be the best time to undertake works within your property?
- How could disruption be kept to a minimum?

The strategy for any consultation on choices will be determined on a case-by-case basis, utilising the preferred communication methods for each block as well as the complexity of the decision. For example, if work is needed to repair a faulty fire door, asking residents about the work may not be necessary. However, we may ask those that are disrupted by the work when would be the best time to do the repair, and how else disruption could be kept to a minimum. The form used when considering the communication strategy for work is set out in Appendix 2.

If any resident feels their concerns have not been addressed, they can follow our formal complaints process to escalate the issue, as detailed in section 9.2 below.

4.3 Wider decision-making and scrutiny.

We encourage all residents, tenants, and leaseholders, to get involved in making decisions relating to our general policies and working practices, which includes consideration of our overall approach to the safety of their buildings and scrutiny of performance. If residents would like to get involved in more strategic building safety matters, join a residents panel, or attend resident consortium meetings, they can contact the Resident Engagement team who will welcome your input.

Resident Engagement can be contacted directly at housing.engagement@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

4.4 Our commitments

We will:

- Continue to consult with residents to better understand their communication requirements and preferences, including what information they want to receive, in what way and how often. This information will be used to tailor our approach to our communications with our residents. This will be done at maximum 2-year intervals.
- Use all feedback mechanisms including Customer Complaints and satisfaction surveys to listen to the views of the residents, and make sure that we act and improve our services accordingly.
- Provide easy to understand, transparent and accessible information.
- Provide residents with safety information, including the fire procedure for the building.
- Promote and enforce compliance with our stance on maintaining clear communal areas.
- Better understand individual support needs and to deliver involvement opportunities that are open and accessible for everyone.
- Communicate all important updates and information with all residents and leaseholders, including notifying of any changes or delays to planned works.
- Keep Councillors informed of relevant matters concerning high rise buildings within their wards and respond to Councillor's enquiries promptly and in detail in line with our corporate approach.
- Empower and support any Building Safety Residents Forum that is set up in the future, should residents show an interest, with any specific training to better equip and prepare them to consult and engage on matters relating to safety in their homes.

- Make sure that when undertaking major works in high-rise buildings that all relevant health and safety aspects are given the highest priority and that residents are aware of any safety issues that relate to the work concerned.

5.0 Responsibilities

Building safety is something that all residents and landlords must work on together. Everyone in the building can have a positive impact on the safety of their household and neighbours, and it is all our responsibility to do what we can to keep the building and its occupants safe. That includes letting us know of any safety concerns residents may have, understanding building safety messaging and taking responsibility for the safety of each home.

5.1 What we do to keep you safe

We are committed to undertaking building safety action so that people will be, and will feel, safe in their homes.

We currently:

- Have strategic groups to review the safety of all our high-rise buildings.
- Have a Building Safety Team, with a named Building Safety Manager for our high-rises.
- Review our Fire Risk Assessments for all our blocks and manage any actions identified.
- Work with Hampshire Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (HIOWFRS) to ensure they are onboard with the works, plans etc to our high-rise buildings.
- Allow HIOWFRS to carry out training days within our blocks and familiarisation visits
- Have commissioned further detailed intrusive fire surveys by fire engineers across all our high-rise buildings to inform our long-term strategy.
- carried out training days with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Have offered to create a building safety resident forum consisting of high-rise block champions and other involved residents to work with HNB to raise and action their concerns, issues, and feedback in relation to the safety of their building, however, there has been no demand for this from residents at this time. We will continue to promote the opportunity.
- Provide you with fire safety information and how to keep safe in your property.
- Undertake different building safety inspections and compliance activities.

We will:

- Fully comply with building safety and fire safety legislation
- Seek to meet obligations in advance of statutory requirements where possible and always promote a culture of safety
- Continue to produce, review and update Building Safety Cases for each of our tall buildings.
- Produce and review Resident Engagement Strategies for all high-risk buildings at least every 2 years.
- Carry out annual high-rise tenancy update visits during which building safety is discussed with you.
- Continue to produce and review Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans for residents who may not be able to evacuate safely without assistance.
- Strive for 100% compliance with electrical safety.

- Strive for 100% compliance with hard wired smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms.
- Strive for 100% gas safety certification.
- Keep all fire risk assessments for multi-occupancy blocks up to date and publicly available.
- Maintain building safety policies and procedures rigorously.
- Monitor and report on compliance with fire, gas, water, electric, asbestos and lifts, with periodic audit
- Prioritise any customer contact or complaints which may have a building safety implication.

5.2 Residents' part to play.

5.2.1 Your Responsibilities

The Building Safety Act sets out statutory duties on residents and flat owners to cooperate and residents and flat owners have legal responsibilities to not:

- Do anything that creates a significant risk to your building's structural safety.
- Do anything that creates a significant risk of causing or spreading fire in your building.
- Damage or remove any of your building's fire safety measures, such as smoke detectors, fire alarms, fire doors, and fire extinguishers.

We will ensure that residents are empowered to play an effective role in making sure that their building is, and remains, safe. You are expected to identify and report hazards that may impact on the safety of the building and meeting your responsibilities to ensure your own safety and that of your neighbours.

You are as a resident expected to give access to your home for us to inspect and carry out different types of safety inspections (such as fitting fire alarms) or undertake fire and structural safety-related maintenance in accordance with your tenancy and leasehold agreements. We will consider taking legal action where tenants and leaseholders do not provide access and seek to recover the costs of such legal action directly from the resident and leaseholder.

Individual properties should be looked after and kept clear of clutter, with repairs raised in good time. Residents should be mindful of any actions that increase the risk of fire, for example ensuring that electrical items are switched off when not in use decreases the risk of overheating, and by not bringing banned items into the block, such as gas bottles or petrol.

We have fire safety guidance for each high-rise, with specific details for what you need to do in the event of a fire. You need to ensure you understand this information, so you are aware of what to do in the event of an emergency. This guidance is available communal hallways in every building and provided to you on an annual basis.

Residents should think about the needs of their household and any members of their family who may be vulnerable (such as young children or someone with a disability). Where you consider there to be a vulnerable person or someone who would not be able to evacuate, please do let us know.

It is important that you do not damage or remove any fire safety measures that have been installed in the building or your home as they are there for your safety. This includes your

property front door and any fire doors within your home. It is also important that the escape routes within your property and communal areas are free from any obstructions.

Residents are encouraged to consider the wellbeing of their neighbours in the building and recognise that their actions may put the lives of others at risk. For example, you should ensure they do not prop open any communal fire doors and they do not store items in the communal hallway which may block an escape route in the event of an emergency. Due to the risk posed when evacuating in the event of a fire or other emergency, we have a zero-tolerance policy for residents leaving any possessions, including mobility scooters, in communal areas. We will need residents' help to achieve this.

Residents must seek permission if they wish to make any changes to your door or within your property.

If you or anyone in your family smokes, you should do so in a safe place and fully extinguish their cigarettes afterwards.

Barbecues and patio heaters should never be used inside buildings or on balconies.

5.2.2 Contravention Notices

Where a resident is not complying with their duty to cooperate and is not responding to attempts to engage, we have the option to issue a contravention notice. The notice must comply with specific requirements; for example, it must specify the alleged contravention, any steps that should be taken to remedy the contravention and a reasonable timeframe to complete them, and how to avoid further contraventions and the action that may be taken if not complied with.

If a resident does not comply with a contravention notice, it can be escalated to the courts to determine whether it should be enforced. We expect that in most cases where issues are identified, we will be able to resolve the issues by speaking to you as residents directly. Our first action will always be to work with residents to resolve the issue in a partnership.

5.2.3 Working together to support vulnerable residents.

Within our sheltered schemes we follow specialised housing guidance and undertake people-centred risk assessments to evaluate the needs of individual residents where necessary. These are also done where a vulnerable resident is established in general needs, where any household member is unable to self-evacuate. We need residents to work with us to achieve this. This means we can evaluate your situations and/or disabilities, minimise risks and put in place specific measures accordingly (an example of this is to use visual fire alarms for residents who are hearing impaired), and create personal evacuation plans.

Within all our high-rise buildings we will identify any specific vulnerabilities for residents using a combination of data held on internal systems and questionnaires completed by each household. This information is held on site in a premise's information box which the fire brigade has access to in case of an emergency. We cannot keep track of who is moving in or out of residents' homes or new vulnerabilities, that affect a person's ability to self-rescue to a place of safety, that may develop over time without your help. For this reason, it is residents' responsibility to inform us of their household composition, and if they, or a member of their household, has vulnerabilities that may affect their ability to evacuate.

Where residents see one of their neighbours acting in a way that suggests they have not understood or remembered the building safety information they can remind them of it. An example of this could be neighbours who are storing items in the communal hallway, or neighbours who may be considered vulnerable. If residents are not comfortable discussing this with their neighbours, they should report it as a building safety concern to us.

6.0 Reporting issues of concern

As a resident if you have a concern about building safety, whether that is concern about the building, the condition of fire safety equipment, items in communal areas or concern about another resident can contact us through multiple contact points:

- To report a repair: Repairs Support Team on 023 9284 1311
- To report issues within the communal area: Estate Services on 023 9268 8444
- To report a concern related to Building Safety: BuildingSafety@portsmouthcc.gov.uk
- To report an issue with a neighbour: Your Housing Officer or Sheltered Scheme Manager
- To report an issue to us out of hours: 023 9282 4244

In addition to raising concerns, you are also able to request a block walkabout with key representatives from the service so that you can highlight any issues that you are concerned about or ask any questions you may have about the safety of the building.

Residents can raise an issue for consideration by the Fire Safety Group and High-Rise Group who meet on a quarterly basis, who, if there are significant concerns, will arrange to visit a block to provide reassurance and an opportunity for residents to raise any concerns they may have around safety. Any issues you wish to raise should be sent to the Building Safety Manager.

Any resident who is not happy with the outcome of communication with us through our various contact points and wishes to escalate the issue is entitled to submit a complaint as detailed in section 9.2.

7.0 Monitoring the effectiveness of our strategy

We will assess and review the methods we use to encourage involvement in building safety decisions regularly, recording the results of our review and re-visiting our engagement strategy over time.

We will:

- Monitor the overall satisfaction that we keep residents safe in their home.
- Record how many responses we get when we ask about a building safety decision.
- Record how many people engage with us at meetings and visits.
- Use surveys and focus groups to understand if our approach is working.
- Monitor the number of incidents responded to by our Estates Services Team e.g., non-compliance with clear communal areas / mobility scooters / fire door removal etc.
- Monitor the number of issues flagged to the Building Safety Team around building safety.
- Monitor the number of complaints received about building safety and the number upheld.

8.0 Reviewing the strategy

This overall strategy will be reviewed:

- at least every 2 years
- after every consultation of the strategy
- after a mandatory occurrence report
- after the completion of significant material alterations to a building

This strategy will be consulted on at the point any changes are made to it. We will consult all:

- residents over the age of 16 and anyone who owns a residential unit.
- accountable persons for the building

Our consultation period is a minimum of 4 weeks.

9.0 What to do if you are not happy?

9.1 This Strategy

We will review and consider any opinions we receive from residents and owners of residential units about our strategy; however, we will not change it if we think it is not appropriate to do so.

Residents and owners of residential units can make a complaint about the strategy to us and if dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint, can escalate the complaint to the Building Safety Regulator. Details of how to escalate your complaint and the contact details for the Regulator will be clearly explained in any response.

9.2 Complaints

Where a resident is not happy with how we have dealt with a concern, a complaint should be raised and will be dealt with in line with the Building Safety complaints procedure. This mirrors the Housing Neighbourhood and Building Services Complaints process however in addition:

- any immediate safety concerns will be flagged to the Building Safety Manager
- The Fire Safety Group / High-Rise Group may be consulted with in providing a response at Stage One
- The HNBS (Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services) Safety Buildings Group may be consulted with in providing a response at Stage Two

Appendix 1 - Building Safety Survey

Portsmouth City Council - Building Safety Engagement Strategy Consultation

Block name:

We are consulting with residents in order to create a resident engagement strategy for your building. We want to ensure that we keep you informed and consult you on the things that matter to you relating to the safety of your building. We want to make sure that you are confident that you will be listened to if you have any concerns and understand from you how and if you want to get more involved in building safety matters.

Name:
Flat no:
Date:

Information sharing

What information would you want to be provided with in relation to your building?	Please tick
Information on the building - how it is built, number of properties etc.	
Explanation of the landlord's responsibilities for the block	
Explanation of my responsibilities as a resident in the block	
Details of the fire evacuation procedure	
Dates of safety inspections for my block	
Servicing certificates for my block e.g. lift checks / water checks etc.	
Safety compliance information e.g. number of electrical checks / gas safety checks outstanding in the block	
The Fire Risk Assessment for the building	Full assessment or summary document (with full report available on request)
The Building Safety Case for the building	Full assessment or summary document (with full report available on request)
Information on works being carried out in the building	
Information of who is carrying out works to the building	
Details of who to raise building safety concerns to	
Other (please state)	

When and how should we let you know information about building safety?	Please tick
At the point that you sign up for a property	

At a new tenancy visit (about a month after you have moved into your property)	
At a yearly tenancy visit	
Through the PCC website	
Through posters and newsletters on noticeboards in the block	
Through letters / newsletters posted through my door	
Through Housetalk magazine	
In-person sessions in my block about my block	
In-person meetings centrally for all tall building residents	
At an on-line meeting	
Through information videos online	
Other (please suggest)	
How often do you feel we need to communicate with you on building safety issues?	
6-monthly	Please tick
Yearly	
When something changes within the block	
When something happens that affects you directly	
Never	
Would you require our communication to be in an accessible format?	
Translation - Language (please specify)	Please tick
Braille	
Recording	
Large Font	
Other (please specify)	

Consultation

We:	
should consult with you where there is a choice/options around works so that you are given the chance to give your view	Agree / Disagree
should take the majority view where a decision affects multiple residents	Agree / Disagree
should capture your feedback on works that are undertaken by our contractors, during and after works	Agree / Disagree
Should take action on the back of your experiences. Your feedback should positively impact future decision making	Agree / Disagree
Do you have any other comments / suggestions about how we should include residents in decision-making?	

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Capturing residents' voice

We currently review all requests for repairs and block concerns and complaints to see if there is an issue / theme in particular buildings/areas so that we can take appropriate action. Are you satisfied with this approach?	Please circle Yes/No
If we were to create a high-rise resident forum, would you be interested in being a member of the forum?	Please circle Yes/No
Would you want to come along to any of our block inspections?	Please circle Yes/No
Would you want to know the dates of our building safety meetings so that you can raise any concerns for the agenda?	Please circle Yes/No
Do you have any other comments / suggestions about how we should listen to residents? (please complete below)	

Your current knowledge

Do you know your responsibilities for building safety?	Please circle Yes/No
Do you know what to do in an event of a fire?	Please circle Yes/No
Do you know why fire doors are important?	Please circle Yes/No
Do you know what items are hazardous and should not be stored within your block / property?	Please circle Yes/No
Do you know how to report repairs or any concerns about the building?	Please circle Yes/No

Do you have any other comments about our approach to building safety / how residents should get involved?

Tenant Satisfaction Measures

Would you be happy for us to contact you again to ask you a few questions about tenants' satisfaction?	Please circle Yes/No
Are you interested in getting more involved in giving feedback about our wider housing and local neighbourhood services? If yes, we will contact you to explain more.	Please circle Yes/No

Please bring along to the event or return to the area housing office by

Appendix 2 - Resident Engagement Project form

Project -	
REO -	
Project officer -	
Brief explanation of works	
What elements of the project / works can residents influence?	
How many residents are affected?	
Who is in the block? / Are there any EDI specific needs?	
How are you going to engage?	
Key Dates inc stakeholder meeting	
No of attendees	
Progress form	
Dates	Notes
Total number of residents who engaged?	
What worked well with this engagement strategy?	
Is there anything you would change?	
Stakeholder perspective including residents - What did they like / changes?	
What difference did resident engagement make to the project?	
Share success - brief story for media, inc. photos and consent	

Lettings Policy

Summary	This policy outlines how we as a Local Authority Housing let our social, affordable, and supported homes in accordance with our regulatory and statutory responsibilities as a Registered Provider. And reflecting the nomination agreements in place with statutory authorities.
Effective date	February 2024
Review	We will review this Policy as needed but no less than every 5 years or when there has been an update to legislative, regulatory, best practice or operational changes
Version	1.0

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1. Scope

The governments proposed new tenancy standard which will take effect from the 1st April 2024 states that:

"Registered providers must allocate and let their homes in a fair and transparent way that takes the needs of tenants and prospective tenants into account.

Registered providers must support tenants to maintain their tenancy. Where a registered provider ends a tenancy, they must offer affected tenants advice and assistance.

Registered providers must offer tenancies or terms of occupation which are compatible with the purpose of the accommodation, the needs of individual households, the sustainability of the community, and the efficient use of their housing stock"

This policy sets out our approach and standards of practice with regards to offering and ending tenancies. It has been written in response to the updated requirement above and to provide clarity for staff, tenants, and nominees of our properties.

We will consult with our tenants in rented and supported accommodation and other stakeholders where we make significant changes to this policy.

Any reference in this policy to, 'we', 'our' or 'us' refers to Portsmouth City Council Local Authority Housing.

2. Purpose

We offer quality and appropriate housing solutions to our existing and prospective tenants.

We will do this by:

- Understanding the communities where we have our homes.
- Letting our homes in a fair and transparent way
- Making the best use of available stock
- Letting adapted homes to those with the appropriate housing need where possible.
- Letting our homes in accordance with our Lettable Standard
- Identifying and helping customers who are vulnerable or require additional support
- Working closely with our local authority partners, supporting them to meet their strategic housing objectives
- Working proactively to promote customer mobility within our own stock
- Minimising the amount of time that our properties are empty
- Providing tenants with appropriate advice and assistance
- Keeping a record of all letting and sales as required

Where we agree to local lettings plans/agreements, we will allocate homes in line

with these.

3. What to expect from us

- We are committed to providing good quality, affordable homes to people in communities where they want to live.
- We will provide homes to applicants nominated by our local authority partners, or direct applications to us, working within agreed frameworks.
- We may, where the nominating authority is unable to nominate a party to us, let homes directly to applicants using our own lettings criteria, as detailed in our letting's procedure in agreement with the relevant nominating authority.
- Working with the nominating authority, we will ensure that we offer appropriate housing that meets the applicants' needs and offer support to help customers sustain their tenancies.
- We will encourage and support customers to move home through mutual exchange in accordance with our mutual exchange policy by providing access to home swapper and advice. This will include the implications for the tenancy, rent and service charges
- We will offer support to customers who need to downsize or move to alternative accommodation where nomination agreements allow.
- We support tenants to maintain their tenancy and prevent unnecessary evictions.
- We offer timely advice and assistance about Housing Options before a tenancy ends.
- Only offering homes to applicants who comply with immigration and housing law
- We prevent and tackle tenancy fraud, ensuring we check identification at tenancy sign up and we carry out regular Tenancy Update Visits, where identification is also verified.

4. Eligibility criteria for our rented homes

To be eligible for one of our rented homes you should:

- Be able to pay the rent, including being able and willing to pay rent in advance, and have evidence of your income (including earnings and benefits) and savings
- Pass a Right to Rent check (unless you have been nominated by the local authority who will have checked your immigration status). The Right to Rent check confirms that your immigration status allows us to consider you for housing.
- Meet the household criteria for the size and type of home
- Not have access to, or an interest in, any other home you could live in
- You should be unable to purchase a home suitable for your needs without assistance
- You should only own a property where you have been legally determined as homeless due to being unable to access this property or where this property is found to be unreasonable to occupy e.g. in the case of violence.
- Have the required support in place to be able to manage your home or tenancy this is particularly relevant where you have previously failed to sustain a tenancy or occupation agreement

- Not pose an unmanageable risk to our employees or residents as determined by a multi-agency meeting to include the relevant social care authority and housing authority.

5. Our Tenure Offer

As a Local Authority and Registered Provider, our primary offer for general needs properties including our sheltered properties is a lifetime Secure Tenancy for all permanent offers of accommodation. In some circumstances we may offer five year fixed term tenancies, which is in line with the Localism Act 2011.

We shall meet all applicable statutory and legal requirements in relation to the form and use of tenancy agreements.

Where appropriate to sustain tenancy license agreements, occupation agreements and non-protected tenancies may be offered. This is particularly relevant for the Portsmouth Rough Sleeping Pathway.

Non-Secure tenancy agreements under part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 will be used for temporary accommodation properties.

6. Our Charges

We are committed to making all our homes as affordable as possible. All our secure tenancies are let at social or affordable rent levels, and always within the Local Housing Allowance applicable rates. The only exception to this is specialist supported accommodation.

In addition to rent, there will be a Service Charge applied to cover the costs of services provided.

All charges are expected to be paid at least weekly, and in advance.

7. Allocation of Empty Properties

We will advertise our empty homes through our local authority partners' choice-based lettings websites where they operate one or apply for a nomination from their housing register / waiting list in line with the relevant nomination agreement. We will comply with the local authorities' criteria, allocations policy, local lettings plan/covenants and any section 106 agreements.

We may advertise our empty homes on our own website or in other places, particularly if they are hard to let and we have the agreement with the nominating authority.

We may allocate homes direct to existing tenants/applicants in accordance with our lettings procedure and where nomination agreements allow. We will let our homes

in accordance with any Town & Country Planning requirements and Local Lettings arrangements.

We will work to understand the needs of prospective tenants and their households to ensure that the property meets their need before approving a letting. We will also seek to understand the housing needs of individuals who may have a connection with the household and their home to ensure they receive any appropriate housing advice.

8. Armed Forces Covenant

All the local authorities we work with have specific provision in their allocation policies (as per statute) regarding Armed Forces personnel. We will take into consideration any exceptional circumstances when we are assessing suitability for the nominee or their families where they have an Armed Forces connection.

9. Property Size

We understand that living in the right size home to meet your needs is important and we also appreciate that the housing needs of our tenants can change across the lifetime of their tenancy. We will endeavour to meet these needs by supporting tenants to live in the right size home. We recognise that at times our homes may be under or over occupied and we will work to support our tenants where these impacts them negatively.

10. Priority Moves

If you need to move in an emergency, such as you are facing immediate violence or threats to your personal safety, we will consider a request in accordance with our Priority Moves Policy and the Nomination Agreement for the relevant local authority.

11. Domestic Abuse

We are committed to supporting victims and survivors of domestic abuse and understand the impact this can have on their housing. For more detail on how we will provide this support please see our Domestic Abuse policy

12. Decant Procedure

If a tenant has to move from their home following an incident which means that their home is not safe, they will be offered alternative, temporary accommodation until repairs to their home can be completed. This will be in accordance with our Decant policy.

Where we have identified that major works are required, or a property is to be disposed of or demolished tenants will be consulted and working with our local authority partners we will support your future housing need.

13. Specialist Accommodation

Some of our properties are designated for particular needs such as tenants who are over 55 years old or those who have additional support needs. For our supported accommodation we accept referrals from the relevant support panel. On occasion we may accept nominations that sit outside this age group where it would not impact negatively on the existing residents.

14. Underage Applicants

We may offer to anyone under the age of eighteen years old equitable tenancy rights, a third party will be required to hold the tenancy in trust until the child turns 18. We will then offer them a secure tenancy provided that we believe the person will be able to sustain tenancy.

Where there are concerns that you will not meet the eligibility criteria above, we will work with other agencies to find the best solution to support you to sustain tenancy.

15. Reasons for refusal

We may refuse an application or nomination if the conditions of our eligibility criteria are not met, or we have insufficient information to make a decision. We will explain the reasons for the refusal in discussion with the nominating authority.

If you have received a decision that you do not agree with, you can ask for your situation to be reviewed using an appeal process. You have 21 days from the date of your decision letter to submit an appeal.

16. What have we done to make sure this Policy is fair?

We completed an Integrated Impact Assessment to consider the positive and negative impacts this Policy may have on people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. This Policy should have direct and positive equality and diversity impacts.

17. Regulation and legislation

We recognise the vast amount of legislation, and we will continue to monitor relevant legal guidance. The list below reflects some of the existing legal framework and relevant publications:

- Housing Act 1980, 1985, 1986, 1988 and 1996
- Immigration Act 2016

- Localism Act 2011
- Housing and Regeneration Act 2008
- Protection from Eviction Act 1977
- Landlord & Tenant Act 1954

18. Related documents

This policy must be read in conjunction with:

- Tenancy Agreement
- [Housing policies and privacy notices - Portsmouth City Council](#)
- LAH (Local Authority Housing) Landlord Safeguarding Policy - Adults and Children's
- Tenancy Strategy
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- PCC Homelessness Strategy
- LAH Banding Scheme
- Decant Policy
- Priority Moves Policy
- Allocation policies of local authorities that hold nomination rights to our properties

19. How to feedback

Compliments:

Complaints:

Housing Ombudsman:

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LAHLS (Local Authority Housing Landlord Service) Safeguarding Policy

Summary	<p>Our approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people, and adults at risk. It applies to all aspects of our work and to everyone working for LAH Landlord Services.</p> <p>We take safeguarding very seriously. We are committed to providing the right advice, support, and training to staff to enable us to work in partnership with other specialist agencies in accordance with statutory requirements and local information sharing agreements.</p> <p>We all have a role in enabling children and adults to live a life free from abuse or neglect. This cannot be achieved by any single agency. Every organisation and person who comes into contact with a child or adult has a responsibility and a role to play to help keep them safe and have awareness of their responsibilities in line with our policy and processes.</p>
Effective date	
Review	We will review this Policy annually or when there has been an update to legislative, regulatory, best practice or operational changes.
Version	1.0

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1. Introduction

The principle of safeguarding is the same for both children under 18 and adults at risk (sometimes referred to as vulnerable adults): - that everyone has a duty to protect children and adults at risk from harm. We all have a role in enabling children and adults to live a life free from abuse or neglect. This cannot be achieved by any single agency. Every organisation and person who comes into contact with a child or adult has a responsibility and a role to play to help keep them safe.

As a social housing provider working with children, young people, and families, we have specific statutory duties under Section 11 of the Childrens Act 2004 to promote the welfare of children and young people, and ensure they are protected from harm. We also have statutory responsibilities for safeguarding adults, for example from the Human Rights Act (1998); the Mental Capacity Act (2005), and the Care Act (2014).

This policy applies to all staff and contractors who work within Portsmouth City Council's Local Authority Housing Landlord Service (LAHLS).

Any reference in this policy to 'we', 'our' or 'us' refers to Portsmouth City Council.

We are committed to the safeguarding of its licensees; tenants; leaseholders; shared owners; and their household members, both over and under the age of 18; as well as its staff members and contractors (from herein these will be referred to as "individuals").

2. Purpose

We are committed to ensuring that:

- All individuals, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief and sexual orientation or identity have the right to protection from harassment, harm, or abuse
- All members of LAHLS, including individuals, staff, and contractors working on our behalf, are responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of others and will be briefed and receive training as appropriate, on safeguarding policy and procedures
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- Responsibility for the protection of children, young people, and adults at risk is shared because people are safeguarded only when all individuals and relevant agencies accept responsibility and cooperate with one another
- Any individual who is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, is identified, and appropriate action taken to see that individuals are kept safe
- The environment will be one in which all people feel valued and respected, and are encouraged and supported to raise any concerns they have about their own safety and welfare and the safety and welfare of others
- An environment is promoted in which everyone feels valued and able to communicate their wishes and feelings successfully
- Disclosures about abuse or neglect and allegations against persons in a position of trust made by individuals and employees alike will always be taken seriously and reported in line with procedures and with due regard to the privacy of the individuals and their families
- All staff and people working on our behalf should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their dealings with individuals. Intimate

relationships between staff and individuals will be regarded as a grave breach of trust

- Safeguarding procedures provide a clear framework for raising concerns or worries about a young person or vulnerable adult and should be read and understood by all staff
- Forced marriages. This policy includes children, young people and adults who are being forced to marry, or those who fear they may be forced to marry.

3. The six safeguarding principles

- **Empowerment** People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
- **Prevention** It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- **Proportionality** The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **Protection** Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- **Partnership** Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting, and reporting neglect and abuse.
- **Accountability** Accountability and transparency in safeguarding practice.

4. Cross Authority and partnership working

We work across Portsmouth and with the neighbouring social care teams of Hampshire, Southampton, and Portsmouth to ensure a consistency of approach and ensure that individuals are protected, LAHLS is a member of both the Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Portsmouth Safeguarding Adults Board.

The Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Partnership (PSCP)

The PCSP brings together all the main organisations who work with children and families in Portsmouth, with the aim of ensuring that they work together effectively to keep children safe. Contact information can be found at [Home - Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board \(portsmouthscp.org.uk\)](http://portsmouthscp.org.uk)

The [Hampshire, IOW, Portsmouth, and Southampton \(HIPS\) procedures](#) provides overarching guidance and procedures on safeguarding issues which have been agreed by all four LSCPs, and which have been developed and adopted by PSCP, and in turn LAHLS.

A manual has been developed to provide a set of chapters which comply with [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#). The content is intended to be accessible to a wide range of staff from organisations that have responsibilities to identify children with unmet needs and/or at risk of abuse, and to keep them safe.

Where a local approach has been developed regarding a safeguarding issue this is supported by local procedures which supplement those used across the region. These are highlighted on each of the relevant safeguarding issue pages and are referred to by LAHLS when working with children and young people. Policies and procedures are frequently updated to ensure that they meet emerging requirements and challenges.

The Portsmouth Safeguarding Adults Board

The Portsmouth Safeguarding Adults Board is a multi-agency strategic partnership that oversees and leads adult safeguarding in Portsmouth. Contact information can be found at [Portsmouth Safeguarding Adults Board \(portsmouthsab.uk\)](http://portsmouthsab.uk).

Adult safeguarding multi-agency policy, process and guidance has been produced with contributions from partner agencies of the four Local Safeguarding Adults Boards (4LSABs) in Southampton, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, and Portsmouth. The content applies to adults over the age of 18, across the geographical areas covered by the 4LSABs and is fully endorsed and supported by each of the Boards. 4LSAB policies can be found on the PSAB website at [Policies & Procedures \(portsmouthsab.uk\)](http://portsmouthsab.uk)

The guidance supports partnership working and good practice in adult safeguarding across the whole of the 4LSAB areas, setting out the overarching values and principles LAHLS should be working to, the approaches to be taken to adult safeguarding and the process that explains how agencies and individuals should work together to respond to concerns of abuse and neglect of adults with care and support needs and be able to put the policy, process and guidance into practice.

5. Recruitment of staff

We work in accordance with PCC's Recruitment and Selection policy, ensuring that references are sought in advance of any offer of employment. All newly appointed staff take part in a formal induction process, with a probation period to ensure competence in their role. Please see Portsmouth City Council's Induction Policy and Probation Policy for further information. All staff must sign our code of conduct.

We have regard to PCC additional criteria for positions working with children or adults at risk, abiding by statutory duties as set out by government legislation in respect of references and DBS checks for staff, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works in a setting which has close access to children and adults at risk e.g., staff working within our older person housing schemes and play and youth settings.

We will also take steps to ensure that we have control over whom comes into settings so that no unauthorised person, including visitors, has unsupervised access (physical and electronically) to any children or adults at risk.

6. Role and responsibilities

All adults working with individuals have a responsibility to safeguard and promote their welfare. It is far better to report a potential issue or concern and for it to be unfounded than not to report something that could potentially lead to the death of a child or vulnerable adult.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Senior Team has duties in the scrutiny and oversight of safeguarding matters. They have appointed the Head of Local Authority Housing, Mark Fitch, as the

Designated Lead for Safeguarding for LAHLS, in respect of the housing management function.

Mark Fitch: Mark.fitch@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Deputy Safeguarding Leads are the postholders of the following roles:

- Sheltered and Supported Housing Manager

DSL responsibilities include:

- supporting the senior team in developing and establishing the approach to safeguarding
- playing a lead role in maintaining and reviewing the plan for safeguarding
- coordinating the distribution of policies, procedures, and safeguarding resources
- advising on training needs and development
- providing safeguarding advice and support to staff and contractors
- managing safeguarding concerns, allegations or incidents reported to the organisation
- Managing referrals to key safeguarding agencies (e.g. social services or police) of any incidents or allegations of abuse and harm.
- Undertaking the annual PSCP Compact Audit undertaking resulting actions

The Head of Community Safety chairs a Safeguarding Group that meets quarterly and is made up of cross departmental managers/leads.

Managers

All departmental managers are responsible for ensuring that safeguarding matters are reported to the relevant DSL and that safeguarding is effectively managed within their area of responsibility.

Within the Buildings Service, the Building Repairs managers undertake the function of being the point of contact for any surveyor or repairs contractor concerns and escalate to the relevant manager for action.

All managers must take responsibility for any concerns that come to their attention in their teams. They must never ignore, underplay, or pass on overall responsibility to another member of staff, contractor, or peer.

All managers have a key role in helping develop understanding, knowledge, and confidence to ensure procedures are followed effectively, professionally, and safely.

No member of staff or person working on our behalf raising a concern or indeed, any manager must shoulder this burden on their own.

Staff

All staff will be briefed in and informed of their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse. We will support staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their

concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or their deputy.

Staff will be provided with relevant information, on a need-to-know basis, about individual children and adults at risk to keep them vigilant to, or able to support around, any specific needs, for example where we are supporting individuals as part of a multi-agency framework in partnership with Childrens Social Care or Adult's Social Care, or if there is concern about criminal activity.

Anyone who feels that there is a real and immediate health risk to an individual, can refer directly to the relevant local authority social services team or the police, and will receive the relevant training to enable them to do so.

Individuals

LAHLS's Safeguarding policy will be communicated through the LAHLS website and online platforms for individuals, contractors, and visitors to the website to see.

Anybody can highlight their concerns about a child or individual they believe to be at risk.

Contractors and people working on our behalf

Contractors and service providers for frontline services on our behalf need to make sure their staff:

- Are suitable to provide frontline services
- Comply with contractual requirements
- Are aware of who to contact with any safeguarding concerns.

Contractors must also:

- Notify us of all safeguarding concerns
- Fully co-operate with any investigation into received allegations
- Have adequate systems in place to take appropriate disciplinary action.

The training and resources provided by PSCP and PASAB are available to our main contractors.

7. Whistle Blowing

Portsmouth City Council's Whistle Blowing policy and sets out the way contractors, individuals and staff may raise any concerns they have, including safeguarding, and details how those concerns will be dealt with.

8. Propriety and Behaviour

The Children Act 2004, through the Stay Safe outcome of the Every Child Matters Agenda, places a duty upon organisations to promote the wellbeing of children and young people. This includes the need to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of children and young people in these organisations are competent, confident, and safe to do so. All adults have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people and adults at risk, with whom they work or come into contact with. It is

therefore expected that they will adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of the general public and of their colleagues.

Please refer to the PCC Code of conduct for further information.

Staff and those who work on our behalf, working with our residents, may have contact with children, young people and adults at risk. They are responsible for their own actions and behaviours and should avoid any contact which could lead to someone questioning their motives and intentions or allegations being made.

It is acknowledged that people may have concerns about the possibility of an allegation being made against them and for that reason it is important that they familiarise themselves with behaviours that may be considered as constituting misconduct or gross misconduct, and those which would be considered illegal. Further information can be found in the PCC Code of conduct.

Circumstances where misunderstandings may arise:

- Dress and appearance
- Gifts, rewards, and favouritism
- Communication with individuals (including the use of technology and /or social media platforms)
- Social contact
- Physical contact
- Sexual contact
- Children, young people, and adults at risk in distress

9. Powers and positions of trust

All LAHLS staff and people working on our behalf, are considered to be in a position of trust regarding licensees, tenants, leaseholders, shared owners, and their household members, because of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role. This means that staff should not use their:

- position to gain access to information for their own or other's advantage.
- position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce, or undermine anyone
- status and standing to form or promote relationships which are of a sexual nature or may become so

This means that staff, and people working on our behalf, should:

- ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which may be misinterpreted by others
- report or record any incident where their behaviour may be misinterpreted with a senior member of staff at the earliest opportunity

LAHLS advises all staff to avoid the use of personal social media platforms as a communication format with residents. LAHLS has specific, identifiable social media

accounts to enable communication.

10. Safeguarding Procedures

All members of LAHLS, are responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of others and must undertake to:

- Participate in any briefings and training provided
- Read the relevant documentation
- Follow published procedures

11. Training and Information giving

To ensure individuals are protected all appropriate staff members are required to read and participate in briefings on safeguarding policies and procedures. Staff members will:

- engage in briefings as part of their induction and other activities with PCC, for example, engagement with webinars, completing e-learning and attending training courses
- have access to relevant policies and procedures via PCC's website plus the shared learning provided by PSCP and PSAB
- be required to keep up date with these as part of their on-going development

All staff who will have direct contact with young people and adults at risk will receive periodic safeguarding briefings and will be required to confirm through the annual declaration form that they have for example:

- updated their knowledge, for example, using government briefings and other relevant documentation
- participated in briefings, for example, attended webinars and other relevant activities

This will be picked up as part of annual appraisals.

Staff working within the Housing, Neighbourhood and Buildings service who come in to contact with our residents are required to carry out the following training in relation to children & young people's safeguarding, as a minimum:

DSL and Deputies

Early Help - Using the FSP and Child Protection Modules
(1 day each via PSCP)



Refresh (at least every 3 years)

Relevant PSCP masterclasses such as:

Masterclasses currently available via PSCP:

Contacting MASH (getting the right help)

Decision Making (Portsmouth thresholds)
Safeguarding (national and local picture)
Escalation (having the right conversation)
Compact (developing practice in your organisation)
Exploitation (consider your language - victim blaming)
Exploitation - The National Referral Mechanism
Cyber Choices
Consent
LIVE Masterclasses for DSLs and Managers on embedding the Family Support Plan (FSP) into Policy and Practice (How we do Early Help in Portsmouth)

ALL other staff

Basic Safeguarding Awareness*
(3 hours via PSCP)



*Refresh (at least every 3 years)

Attend training relevant to role, e.g., PSCP training

PSCP training currently available:

ACEs (adverse childhood experiences) (3 hours)
CERAF Toolkit - Multi Agency (1.5 hours)
Preventing Online CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation) - ThinkUknow (2 x 3 hours)
Understanding Childhood Neglect (1 day)
Harmful Cultural Practices (1.5 hours)
Bruising Protocol (2 hours)
Safeguarding Children with Disabilities (2 x parts)

As a minimum all LAHLS staff who come in to contact with our residents must complete the following training in relation to the safeguarding of adults.

All staff (including Volunteers)

Safeguarding Adults Awareness - once (half day course)
Safeguarding Adults Annual Refresher - every year (one day course)



DSLs and Deputies

The above plus build awareness of the following:
Developing Safeguarding Practice
Safeguarding in a strength-based way
Best practice for safeguarding adults planning and review meetings
Safeguarding adults detailed
Adult Safeguarding Concerns

Responding to Domestic Abuse
Friends against scams
Modern Day Slavery Act
Mental Capacity Act Refresher
4LSAB Fire Safety Risk Assessment

Other training is then identified based on the role being performed by a staff member. Officers with responsibility for supporting individuals, for example in a Housing Officer role, or sheltered housing role, will receive wide and varied training to enable them to provide early help.

12. Early Help and Prevention

Critical to Safeguarding is that the system works proactively and does not just wait to respond when people reach a crisis point.

Activities aimed at promoting general wellbeing and maintaining independence as a means of eliminating or reducing individual's vulnerability to potential exploitation, abuse, or neglect, that will be undertaken by LAHLS includes (list not exhaustive):

- Providing universal access to good quality information.
- Supporting households around their finances, including the promotion of and referral to tackling poverty initiatives and energy schemes.
- Identifying vulnerability factors and potential risks as part of a needs assessment and addressing these as part of a support planning process.
- Referring to appropriate support agencies best placed to address identified needs, supporting the initial contact and formation of a positive relationship, where needed.
- Providing people with information about sources of independent information, advice, and advocacy.
- Supporting safer neighbourhoods.
- Actively addressing hate crime or anti-social behaviour.
- Promoting healthy and active lifestyles.
- Reducing loneliness or isolation, such as via promoting befriending schemes or community activities.
- Encouraging early discussions in families/groups about potential future changes.
- Having conversations about care arrangements if a family member becomes ill or disabled.
- Identifying unpaid carers (including young carers) and signposting to appropriate support.
- Promoting a range of 'Keeping Safe' initiatives e.g. Mail and Telephone Preference Services, Safer Places, Buy with Confidence, Making Money Matter, No Cold Calling Zones, Mate Crime Awareness, SCAM Awareness initiatives, Neighbourhood Watch, Dementia Friendly Communities.
- Are vigilant to radicalisation across both children and adults, as current research has highlighted that radicalisers are increasingly targeting people with a learning disability or other vulnerabilities.
- Are vigilant in responding to reports of concern for welfare and no access visits

- Ensuring that the principles of wellbeing and adult safeguarding are directly linked into commissioning, contract, and procurement activity.
- Assuring ourselves, through contracting arrangements, that any commissioned provider is capable and competent in responding to allegations of abuse or neglect, including having robust processes in place to investigate the actions of members of staff.
- Use of the 4LSAB Multi-Agency Risk Management Framework, where appropriate ([4LSAB MARM \(Multi-Agency Risk Management\) Framework June 2020 \(portsmouthsab.uk\)](https://portsmouthsab.uk))
- Use of the PSCP FSP (Family Support Plan), where appropriate.

13. Reporting Procedures

Members of staff or contractors with a safeguarding concern for any other person should report it to the LAHLS Designated Safeguarding Lead for their service area and complete a Safeguarding Report form to the relevant local authority / police.

Where an individual has disclosed that they have experienced abuse or neglect or where it is believed that a person is in need, is suffering from, or is at risk of significant harm the relevant procedures outlined by HIPS / 4LSAB must be followed. Any criminal offences should be reported immediately to the Police. Referrals to relevant external agencies such as police and social services teams, should be made by the person who has witnessed abuse, suspects abuse is taking place, or who has received a report of abuse whilst carrying out their job role, supported by their DSL line manager, normally within 24 hours of an incident being reported.

All safeguarding concerns should be recorded by staff on a secure database or log of observations, which will include as a minimum, name, and address of the person at risk, name of the reporter, what the concern was, what actions were taken and the reasons for the decision.

LAHLS recognises that it does not have the responsibility or authority to investigate cases of suspected abuse. However, it will co-operate with and share information with relevant external agencies in any enquiries regarding safeguarding matters, including representation at case conferences, core groups and multi-agency planning meetings as required.

14. Disclosure of Information

All safeguarding records are subject to Freedom of Information Act (2000) and the Data Protection Act 2018. If there is any doubt as to the rights of any party to access information, we may seek legal advice prior to releasing any information.

Information will be shared with other agencies in accordance with statutory requirements and local information sharing agreements. If a child, young person, or adult is deemed to be at risk or any other person is deemed to be at risk, referrals can still be made despite not having the consent of the person involved.

Children and Young People at Risk

Provided it is safe to do so, LAHLS will always talk to the family at risk about their concerns before making a safeguarding referral, involving the family in decisions about them and taking their views and wishes into account. If the family do not give their consent, the Multi Agency Safeguarding Team may not be able to act in response to a referral.

The exception is when we believe that contacting the parent/carer could place a child or another adult at risk of harm. In these exceptional circumstances, or if consent is refused or cannot be obtained, we will contact the multi-agency safeguarding hub for advice.

Adults at Risk

Provided it is safe to do so, we will always talk to the adult at risk about our concerns before making a safeguarding referral, involving the adult in decisions about them and taking their views and wishes into account. If there is no consent given, the Adult Safeguarding Team may not be able to act in response to a referral.

However, there are some situations where we must make a referral even if we are unable to get the adult's consent. For example:

- If there is a risk to other people (including children or other adults at risk).
- If a crime has been committed, or action is needed to prevent a crime being committed.
- If seeking their consent would put them at further risk.
- The adult lacks mental capacity to understand the risks to them, and it is in their best interests to take action.
- If we believe the person is refusing support because they are being influenced or coerced by someone else.
- There has been abuse or neglect by a person in a position of trust, such as a carer or health professional.

15. Refusal of consent

If a person does not give consent to make a referral, we will still consider what other actions can be taken to reduce the risk that has been identified.

Assurances of absolute confidentiality should never be given in reports of abuse. All staff and people working on our behalf should make it clear to any child, young person, or vulnerable adult disclosing information that they cannot guarantee confidentiality, but they will only pass the information on to the people that can help them.

If we do make a decision to report concerns to the Children or Adult Safeguarding Team, we will explain to the relevant individuals why we have made this decision and what action we are going to take.

16. Allegations against staff and adults in a position of trust

All staff and people working on our behalf should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues or individuals.

Where an allegation has been made against a member of staff or someone working on our behalf which calls into question their ability to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, and their suitability to work with these individuals which is likely to result in a breakdown of public confidence, these will be investigated.

If a person makes an allegation against a member of staff, someone working on our behalf, or another individual at LAHLS the DSL must be informed immediately, and a safeguarding report completed. If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff in a work-based provision not directly linked to LAHLS, the DSL or their deputy must be informed, and it must be reported to the Police and the DSL in the work-based provision.

The member of staff concerned should have no further contact with the individual concerned and must not be informed of the allegation prior to referral. Any person who comes into contact with children, young people and adults at risk have a legal and moral duty to safeguard and promote their welfare. This duty requires individual staff to ensure the safety of a young person or vulnerable adult involved in any activity or interaction for which that person is responsible.

17. The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works or volunteers with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may harm a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child, behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

The LADO role applies to workers who are paid, unpaid, volunteers, casual, agency or anyone self-employed and they capture concerns, allegations or offences emanating from outside work.

There is a similar internal process in place for issues involving adults at risk.

18. Conducting an investigation

Guidelines set out within the PCC disciplinary and grievance procedures (for staff) will be adhered to for internal investigation purposes.

19. Regulation and legislation

We recognise the vast amount of legislation regarding the safeguarding of children

and adults at risk and will continue to monitor relevant legal guidance. The list below reflects some of the existing legal framework and relevant publications:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children, July 2018
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- The Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004 Child Safeguarding
- Education Act 2002
- Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People, 2015
- Information Sharing Guidance for Practitioners, 2015
- The Modern Slavery Act 2015
- The Care Act 2014 and further statutory guidance
- Equalities Act 2010
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLs 2007)
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Disclosure and Barring Service
- Family Law Act 1996
- Sexual offences Act 2003
- Female Genital Mutilation Act
- Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Act 2004
- Homelessness Act 2002
- General Data Protection Regulation 2016
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Care Standards Act 2000
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Prevent Duty Guidance 2023

20. Related documents

- [The charter for social housing residents: social housing white paper - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)
- Portsmouth City Council Code of Conduct
- Portsmouth City Council Gift and Hospitality Policy
- Tenancy Agreement / Leasehold agreement
- PCC Landlord Policies
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- Play, Youth and Community Safeguarding Policy

21. How to report a concern for a child

If you are concerned about a child in Portsmouth or Hampshire, it is important that you talk to someone about this. Do not ignore your concerns or delay taking action.

If you consider a child is at immediate risk of harm phone the police on 999.

Portsmouth Children Services

Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm

Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm

phone 023 9268 8793 email mash@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

At all other times, contact the out-of-hours service, phone 0300 555 1373

Hampshire Children Services

Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm

Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm, phone 0300 555 1384

At all other times, contact the out-of-hours service, phone 0300 555 1373

You can also contact the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000 (free service, lines open 24 hours a day). They will listen to your concerns, offer advice and support, and can take action on your behalf if a child is in danger. For further information or to report your concerns online visit the [NSPCC website Keeping Children Safe](#) page.

22. How to report a concern for an adult

If you see, hear, or suspect an adult at risk is being abused or neglected in any way, you must tell someone about it.

In an emergency, or if you suspect you or someone else is in immediate danger, phone 999.

Portsmouth Adult Social Care

Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm

Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm,

phone 023 9268 0810 Email: AdultSafeguarding@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

At all other times, contact the out-of-hours service, phone 0300 555 1373

Hampshire Adult Social Care

Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm

Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm, phone 0300 555 1386

At all other times, contact the out-of-hours service, phone 0300 555 1373

23. How to feedback

Compliments:

Complaints:

Housing Ombudsman:

DRAFT

www.portsmouth.gov.uk

Domestic Abuse Policy

Summary	<p>Domestic abuse is a serious crime that often takes place in the home. It impacts on the safety of individuals, households, and communities.</p> <p>We take reports of domestic abuse or sexual violence seriously and believe everyone should feel safe in their home and local community regardless of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership or any other protected characteristics.</p> <p>We are committed to providing the right advice and support, to minimise the risk of further incidents and to help our residents stay safe in their home where appropriate, by encouraging early reporting and a rapid response to include signposting to appropriate specialist agencies.</p> <p>Appendix 1 - Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment (DASH) Risk Assessment</p>
Effective date	
Review	We will review this Policy every 3 years or earlier if there has been an update to legislative, regulatory, best practice or operational changes.
Version	1.0

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1. Scope

This policy applies to all reports of domestic abuse (DA) that:

- involve Portsmouth City Council tenants or members of their household

Any reference in this policy to 'we', 'our' or 'us' refers to Portsmouth City Council. Local Authority Housing.

2. Purpose

Domestic abuse is a serious crime that often takes place in the home. It impacts on the safety of individuals, households, and communities. We want all our residents to feel safe in their homes and local community.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Improve the safety of our residents affected by domestic abuse.
- Support and empower victims / survivors to report and engage with us to minimise the risk of further incidents by encouraging early reporting and a rapid response.

We will:

- provide residents with appropriate confidential supports, and referrals to other specialist agencies where appropriate and giving wellbeing support and advice, in line with our regulatory and legal requirements.
- support tenants to sustain tenancies and feel safe in their home
- work in partnership with specialist agencies where appropriate
- take action against perpetrators of domestic abuse in line with our tenancy agreement and responsibilities as a social housing provider

3. Definitions

We use the cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse, which says that domestic abuse is defined as :

The behaviour of a person ("A") towards another person ("B") is "domestic abuse" if:

- A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and
- The behaviour is abusive.

Behaviour is "abusive" if it consists of any of the following:

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Violent or threatening behaviour

- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Economic abuse
- Psychological, emotional, or other abuse

And it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

“Economic abuse” means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B’s ability to

- Acquire, use, or maintain money or other property, or
- Obtain goods or services.

For the purposes of this Part A’s behaviour may be behaviour “towards” B despite the fact that it consists of conduct directed at another person (for example, B’s child).

A child who sees or hears or experiences the effects of domestic abuse and is related to the person being abused or the perpetrator, is also to be regarded as a victim of domestic abuse.

‘Personally connected’ means that the two people are:

- they are, or have been, married or civil partners to each other
- they have agreed to marry one another or have entered into a civil partnership agreement (even if it didn’t go ahead)
- they are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other
- they are or have been parents or guardians to the same child
- they are relatives

Victim and survivor – these terms are used to describe people directly affected by domestic abuse, including those who have witnessed it. We will follow the lead of the person seeking support, since the journey of the victim to survivor is unique to each person.

Domestic abuse can also occur through the actions of immediate and extended family members through unlawful acts including, but not limited to:

- Forced marriage
- Honour-based abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM).

The full legal definition can be found [Domestic Abuse Act 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

4. What you can expect from us

We recognise that access to safe accommodation plays an important part in reducing the risk to victims / survivors and their families, but housing is not the solution on its own. We are part of a framework of specialist agencies working in partnership and using their individual powers to help keep you safe and prevent

domestic abuse.

Whilst we encourage all victims / survivors of domestic abuse to report incidents to the Police, we will provide appropriate supports and will be led by the victim / survivor even if you don't want to involve the Police.

We will use the Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment (DASH) risk assessment and the Domestic Abuse Referral Pathway to assess each individual victim / survivor's specific support needs. This will also help in determining any appropriate actions, based on knowledge of the circumstances in each case, linking with the [Introduction to domestic abuse in portsmouth \(saferportsmouth.org.uk\)](https://www.saferportsmouth.org.uk)

- High Risk – DASH score 14+ or professional judgment
- Medium Risk - DASH score 10 - 13
- Standard Risk - DASH score 0-9

If it is assessed as high risk, we have a duty to refer to Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and do not need the victim / survivor's consent.

We will assess the circumstance and take appropriate action in domestic abuse situations. This is to help keep tenants safe and may include victim / survivor contact and keeping you informed, case management, additional security requests, tenancy changes and alternative accommodation requests, if required and within our ability as your landlord. We will seek your consent before we take any action ***unless there is a safeguarding concern and there may be a need to share the information with other specialist agencies.***

If feel more comfortable, you can contact [Stop Domestic Abuse](#) directly to receive supports and advice.

We can offer advice, refer you to specialist agencies, and help make your home secure where appropriate so that you can stay safe.

We are aware of the damaging effect on children and young people of witnessing and growing up in a family affected by domestic abuse. We realise that young people themselves can be victims of domestic abuse. We will refer to our Safeguarding policy and work with specialist agencies to help keep children and young people safe.

If you are reporting domestic abuse on behalf of someone and wish for your details to remain confidential, these would not be disclosed.

5. If you don't feel safe in your home

Domestic Abuse can be reported to the Housing Office by a resident, third parties or by a member of staff observing or experiencing it.

In situations where someone or a property is in danger, a serious disruption to the public is likely or when a crime is taking place, the police should be called on 999 before contacting us or call 101 for non-emergency enquiries.

We will look at security measures to allow the victim / survivors to remain in their homes wherever possible and we will discuss the tenancy options. We will make repairs where needed and will not usually charge tenants where the need for these repairs have been caused by the perpetrator.

Emergency housing

Anyone who has left home following domestic abuse are treated as homeless. If they apply out of office hours then their immediate, “overnight” problem may be resolved using B&B or a guest room in a sheltered housing scheme that evening, via the Out of Hours service on 02392 824244.

The following day, contact will need to be made to Housing Needs and advice to seek support and advise on the next steps beyond the emergency “overnight” problem, in line with the Accommodation Policy.

Emergency housing may be a hostel, this can provide space for the victim / survivor, an opportunity to contact other specialist agencies and allows time for long term housing needs to be assessed, in line with the Allocations Policy.

6. What action do we take to prevent domestic abuse?

We will ensure our employees receive appropriate supports and training on domestic abuse.

We make new tenants aware of key policies and the implications of joint tenancies.

7. Your voice

- We will respect the experiences of victims / survivors and use their feedback to improve and shape our services
- We will be sensitive to the situation of the victim / survivor and recognise that asking for feedback may not always be appropriate or safe.

8. What have we done to make sure this Policy is fair?

We completed an Integrated Impact Assessment to consider the positive and negative impacts this Policy may have on people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. This Policy should have direct and positive equality and diversity impacts.

9. Support

- Stop Domestic Abuse Phone number: 0330 0533 630
Supports Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton areas
[Stop Domestic Abuse](#)

- Stop Domestic Abuse - Up2U: My Choice operates throughout Portsmouth, Havant, Fareham, Gosport and East Hants
- Stop Domestic Abuse should be contacted directly for discreet and confidential support and advice to meet support needs.
- Housing Needs & Advice can help with homelessness applications if the individual needs to flee their home due to their safety. The individual can also call the police if they feel they are at immediate risk and need support immediately.
- Women's Aid, Safe Lives and Refuge offer online information to help support victims of Domestic Abuse.
- Find out more about domestic abuse on the Safer Portsmouth website [Domestic Abuse - Safer Portsmouth](#) and [Domestic and sexual abuse - Portsmouth City Council](#)
- [HIVE Portsmouth](#)]

10. Regulation and legislation

We recognise the vast amount of legislation regarding Domestic abuse and we will continue to monitor relevant legal guidance. The list below reflects some of the existing legal framework and relevant publications:

- [Domestic Abuse Act 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- Family Law Act 1996 Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Domestic Abuse Crime and Victims Act Housing Act 1996
- Domestic Abuse Crime and Victims Act 2004
- Crime and Security Act 2010
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Care Act 2014
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Clare's Law 2017 - also known as Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS) Homelessness Reduction Act General Data Protection Regulation (2018)
- The Secure Tenancies (Victims of Domestic Abuse) Act 2018
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Family Law Act 1996
- Civil Partnership Act 2004

11. Related documents

This policy must be read in conjunction with:

- Tenancy Agreement
- [Housing policies and privacy notices - Portsmouth City Council](#)
- LAH Landlord Safeguarding Policy - Adults and Children's
- Lettings Policy

12. How to feedback

Compliments:

Complaints:

Housing Ombudsman:

Domestic Abuse Policy Appendix 1 - Domestic Abuse Stalking & Harassment (DASH) Risk Assessment

Risk Indicator Checklist for use by professionals to assess risk when domestic abuse, 'honour' based violence and/or stalking are disclosed

Please explain that the purpose of asking these questions is for the safety and protection of the individual concerned. Tick the box if the factor is present. Please use the comment box at the end of the form to expand on any answer. It is assumed that your main source of information is the victim. If this is not the case , please indicate in the right hand column	YES	NO	DON' T KNOW	For YES answers please give details and state source of info if not the victim (e.g. police officer)
1. Has the current incident resulted in injury? Please state what and whether this is the first injury. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>When did the incident occur?</i> • <i>What injuries have been sustained?</i> • <i>How does this compare to previous injuries?</i> • <i>Do they need medical attention?</i> • <i>Has the incident been reported to the police?</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Are you very frightened? Comment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What/Who are you frightened of?</i> • <i>Who are you fearful for?</i> • <i>What do you think the perp might do?</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. What are you afraid of? Is it further injury or violence? Please give an indication of what you think [name of abuser(s)] might do and to whom, including children. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Do you feel isolated from family/friends? i.e. does [name of abuser(s)] try to stop you from seeing Friends/family/doctor or others? Comment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dependence on perp through lack of financial resources; social or geographical separation from friends</i> • <i>No support networks</i> • <i>Kept away from support networks</i> • <i>Concerned about upholding family honour?</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Are you feeling depressed or having suicidal thoughts? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Has there been a previous suicide attempt?</i> • <i>Is there sleep disruption?</i> • <i>How definite are your plans?</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you spoken to your GP about it? • Is there a history of drug or alcohol abuse? • Is there a history of previous psychiatric treatment? 				
<p>Please explain that the purpose of asking these questions is for the safety and protection of the individual concerned. Tick the box if the factor is present. Please use the comment box at the end of the form to expand on any answer. It is assumed that your main source of information is the victim. If this is not the case, please indicate in the right hand column</p>	YES	NO	DON' T KNOW	State source of info if not the victim (e.g. police officer)
<p>6. Have you separated or tried to separate from [name of abuser(s)] within the past year?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When did you separate? • Are you currently leaving or planning on leaving? • Does the perp threaten what they may do if you leave? • Are you prevented from leaving due to threats? • Does your dependence on perp for physical care prevent you from leaving? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>7. Is there conflict over child contact?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many children do you have? DOB, names • Is the perp biological father to all of your children? • Does the perp have parental responsibility? • Does the perp know where the children go to school? • Has the perp threatened to kidnap them/go to Social Care or Courts and claim that you are a bad parent? • Are there any threats of children being sent overseas? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>8. Does [name of abuser(s)] constantly text, call, contact, follow, stalk or harass you? Please expand to identify what and whether you believe that this is done deliberately to intimidate you? Consider the context and behaviour of what is being done.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the perp vandalise/destroy your property? • ... turn up unannounced/follow you? • ... text/email/call continuously? • ...threaten suicide/homicide/sexual violence? • ...send letters/notes/gifts? • ...making contact around anniversaries? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>9. Are you pregnant or have you recently had a baby (within the last 18 months)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the EDD? • Does the perp know about the pregnancy? Is the baby their child? • Does the perp target any attacks or abuse towards your stomach? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>10. Is the abuse happening more often?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was this the most severe incident? • How many have there been in the last 12 months? • Are they increasing? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

<p>11. Is the abuse getting worse?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was this the most severe? • Are the incidents getting worse? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Please explain that the purpose of asking these questions is for the safety and protection of the individual concerned. Tick the box if the factor is present. Please use the comment box at the end of the form to expand on any answer. It is assumed that your main source of information is the victim. If this is <u>not the case</u>, please indicate in the right hand column</p>	YES	NO	DON' T KNOW	<p>State source of info if not the victim (e.g. police officer)</p>
<p>12. Does [name of abuser(s)] try to control everything you do and/or are they excessively jealous? <i>For example: in terms of relationships; who you see; being 'policed' at home; telling you what to wear. Consider 'honour'-based violence (HBV) and specify behaviour.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you made to account for your time and whereabouts? • Are you isolated from friends/family? • Does the perp accuse you from infidelity? • Are you prevented from taking medication? • Are there threats that the children will be taken away if you report this? • Is there extreme jealousy? • Does the perp use your religion/sexual orientation as a way of control? 				
<p>13. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever used weapons or objects to hurt you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider ashtrays, children's toys, phones, remote control, glass, plate, lighter, etc. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>14. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever threatened to kill you or someone else and you believed them? If yes, tick who:</p> <p>You <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Children <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other (please specify) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What threats does the perp make? • Who else have the perp told about their plans to kill you/other? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Tick the box if the factor is present. Please use the comment box at the end of the form to expand on any answer.</p>	YES	NO	DON' T KNOW	<p>State source of info</p>

<p>15. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever attempted to strangle / choke / suffocate / drown you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What led to being strangled/choked/suffocated/drowned?</i> • <i>How did this happen? Was anything used to assist, e.g. shoe laces?</i> • <i>How often does the perp do this?</i> • <i>Did you lose consciousness/stop breathing?</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Please explain that the purpose of asking these questions is for the safety and protection of the individual concerned. Tick the box if the factor is present. Please use the comment box at the end of the form to expand on any answer. It is assumed that your main source of information is the victim. If this is <u>not the case</u>, please indicate in the right hand column</p>	YES	NO	DON' T KNOW	<p>State source of info if not the victim (e.g. police officer)</p>
<p>16. Does [name of abuser(s)] do or say things of a sexual nature that make you feel bad or that physically hurt you or someone else? If someone else, specify who.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Intimidation/pressure to have sex including using weapons</i> • <i>Use of sexual insults</i> • <i>Unwanted sexual touching, including the use of objects</i> • <i>Inflicting pain during sex</i> • <i>Exposing children or you to pornographic material</i> • <i>Exploiting you through us of pictures/videos taken</i> • <i>Forcing you to have sex with other people</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>17. Is there any other person who has threatened you or who you are afraid of? If yes, please specify whom and why. Consider extended family if HBV.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Consider known associates</i> • <i>Family-Honour Based Violence</i> • <i>Gang members</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>18. Do you know if [name of abuser(s)] has hurt anyone else? Consider HBV. Please specify whom, including the children, siblings or elderly relatives:</p> <p>Children <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Another family member <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Someone from a previous relationship <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other (please specify) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Are the victims children? Their details needed</i> • <i>How and when were they harmed?</i> • <i>Current whereabouts of the other victims?</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>19. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever mistreated an animal or the family pet?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>20. Are there any financial issues? <i>For example, are you dependent on [name of abuser(s)] for</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

<p><i>money/have they recently lost their job/other financial issues?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Can you claim benefits? Do you jointly claim benefits?</i> • <i>Do you jointly claim benefits?</i> • <i>Does the perp restrict/withhold or deny money?</i> • <i>Forced to take out any loans that you are now responsible for?</i> 				
<p>Please explain that the purpose of asking these questions is for the safety and protection of the individual concerned. Tick the box if the factor is present. Please use the comment box at the end of the form to expand on any answer. It is assumed that your main source of information is the victim. If this is not the case, please indicate in the right hand column</p>	YES	NO	DON' T KNOW	<p>State source of info if not the victim (e.g. police officer)</p>
<p>21. Has [name of abuser(s)] had problems in the past year with drugs (prescription or other), alcohol or mental health leading to problems in leading a normal life? If yes, please specify which and give relevant details if known.</p> <p>Drugs <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Alcohol <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Mental health <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How often does the perp use alcohol/drugs?</i> • <i>Do they have an addiction?</i> • <i>Are the drugs illegal or on prescription?</i> • <i>Are there any diagnosed mental health concerns?</i> • <i>Are they receiving support?</i> • <i>Is this a trigger in the change of behaviour</i> 				
<p>22. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever threatened or attempted suicide?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>When was this?</i> • <i>Was it at point of separation/threats of leaving?</i> • <i>Was it a threat or attempt?</i> 				
<p>23. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever broken bail/an injunction and/or formal agreement for when they can see you and/or the children? You may wish to consider this in relation to an ex-partner of the perpetrator if relevant.</p> <p>Bail conditions <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Non Molestation/Occupation Order <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Child contact arrangements <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Forced Marriage Protection Order <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How many times have they broken a condition?</i> • <i>Have there been reported?</i> <p><i>Was it in relation to the survivor?</i></p>				
<p>24. Do you know if [name of abuser(s)] has ever been in trouble with the police or has a criminal history? If yes, please specify:</p> <p>Domestic abuse <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Sexual violence <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other violence <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

- 1. Be safe in your home -

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>When was this?</i>• <i>Was there a custodial sentence?</i>• <i>How many convictions have there been?</i>				
Total 'yes' responses				

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For consideration by professional

<p>Is there any other relevant information (from victim or professional) which may increase risk levels? Consider victim's situation in relation to disability, substance misuse, mental health issues, cultural / language barriers, 'honour'-based systems, geographic isolation and minimisation. Are they willing to engage with your service? Describe.</p>	
<p>Consider abuser's occupation / interests. Could this give them unique access to weapons? Describe.</p>	
<p>What are the victim's greatest priorities to address their safety?</p>	

<p>Do you believe that there are reasonable grounds for referring this case to Marac?</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>If yes, have you made a referral?</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Signed</p>	<p>Date</p>	
<p>Do you believe that there are risks facing the children in the family?</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>If yes, please confirm if you have made a referral to safeguard the children?</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Date referral made</p>
<p>Signed</p>	<p>Date</p>	
<p>Name</p>		

<p>Practitioner's notes</p>

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Resident Engagement Our approach and plan

2024-2027

DRAFT

Dear Residents,

There have been many positive changes to our services over the last fifteen years. Complementing our long-standing traditional resident engagement model, our whole approach centres around placing resident's voices at the heart of what we do. We find ways to listen to our residents and we design our services in response to what we hear. We always strive to understand and respond to what our residents need, want and expect from us over time.

We pride ourselves on being local, with staff that are visible and accessible in the heart of our communities. We believe in providing more than a home and aim to ensure your communal surrounding areas are safe, clean and tidy. Through our Housing Community Services - our Play and Youth Services, Community Centres and Participation Centre we have built positive relationships with our local communities which continue to strengthen.

No one team is responsible for engaging with residents. Across our services we listen to the voices and experiences of thousands of tenants at the point that they contact us to ask a question, report an issue, ask for advice and assistance, give us feedback, make a complaint, or chase up an outstanding query, and we learn what really matters. We have engagement with residents at every level every day – and staff who have developed an understanding and commitment to 'why' things are done and have a great sense of ownership. Our engaged workforce are proud to represent the council.

Within this document we reflect changes that have been made to the Resident Engagement Service. Our Resident Engagement Team works hard to create opportunities for residents to get involved and have their say, whether this is in relation to service design and delivery, holding us to account for the services we provide, or developing personal skills and involvement in local communities. This document has been written to reflect our approach and what residents can expect.

It clearly shows our commitment to working closely with you, our tenants and leaseholders and believe it will enable us to achieve our vision for your homes and communities.

Our approach has been developed in partnership with the Resident Engagement Team, residents, housing, neighbourhood and buildings staff and by elected members of the City Council's cabinet. There are many ways in which you can have a greater say in:

- The Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services and the way they are delivered.
- Improving the areas in which you live.

Our three year plan sets out how we intend to develop our approach and how you can get involved.

It will be regularly monitored by both staff and residents to make sure it is achieving its goals. It is important to us that our approach is flexible - participation is forever changing, and we want to be ready to evolve with it and be continuously improving the way we work with the tenants and leaseholders of Portsmouth City Council. Thank you to all the hard working and dedicated residents, staff and elected members who helped us in creating this document.

SIGNTAURES

This document has been designed to provide an easy point of reference for tenants and leaseholders of Portsmouth City Council. It relates to all Council tenants and leaseholders, which will be referred to as residents.

Our Pledge To You, Our Residents

Our Residents' Pledge sets out our core values and our commitments to you.

Working for Portsmouth City Council our core values are:

- respect – we treat everyone with respect, considering the feelings, wellbeing, safety, and rights of others
- integrity – we are accountable, can be trusted and take responsibility for our actions
- collaboration – we work together as a team and with our colleagues, residents, partners, and communities to achieve more
- inclusive – we recognise diversity, are open, fair and provide equal opportunity to all
- people-focussed – we put people first and make sure our customers are at the heart of everything we do

Everything we do is guided by our values. They set who we are as people, what we stand for and how we act.

Our Commitments to you:

Quality - You can expect your home and any communal areas to be good quality, well maintained, safe and well managed.

Service Design - We will design our services around your needs, listening to understand what it is that you want from us, spending time in the work, and learning when things go wrong so that we continually improve.

Relationships and communication – We will treat you with respect in all of our communications and interactions. You will receive clear, accessible and timely information from us on the issues that matter to you.

Voice and Influence – your views and experiences will be sought and valued, and this information will be used to inform decisions.

Accountability - We will work in partnership with you, providing you with opportunities to independently scrutinise and hold us to account for the decisions that affect our residents.

When things go wrong - You will have simple and accessible routes for raising issues, making complaints and seeking redress.

Background

What is this document?

This document explains the commitment from Portsmouth City Council to listen to the voices of residents and to design its services against what is learnt. It sets out our plans for the next three years and shows the partnership working between Portsmouth City Council Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services and its residents. The area of work it covers is any participation/ involvement work involved with the management of the estates and homes in which our residents live.

Reasons for this document

We are committed to being transparent about the way that we listen to residents and also to improving the way we listen to residents' views, consult and involve residents. Residents' voices must be at the heart of decisions about their services and the future of their homes. If services are to improve, they must reflect residents' needs and priorities and residents' views should influence and shape the planning and delivery of those services.

All of our resident's voices matter and we need to build confidence in residents that we listen and respond, particularly for people and communities who may face greater barriers to participating through more formal mechanisms - whether that is due to language, neurodiversity or disability, anxiety or cultural differences. We want to find out why people don't get involved and work out ways to overcome those barriers.

This document shows residents what steps we have in place to positively promote, encourage, and support participation. It includes new measures designed to give all residents a full opportunity to become involved. It has detailed information on the opportunities available, levels of involvement and benefits to residents to help them decide whether and how they might be involved. The document also sets out our priorities for the next three years.

It shows:

- A strong commitment to understanding the needs and experiences of residents through listening at the point of demand and designing and re-framing services in response to this
- A positive commitment from housing, neighbourhood and buildings staff and residents to work in partnership to improve services to residents
- The Housing, Neighbourhood and Buildings service is open and accountable to residents and will give full feedback to residents to explain our actions
- We will ensure housing staff and councillors are trained and informed of the expectations and benefits of designing services based on what we hear at the point of demand, and through more formal resident engagement mechanisms
- What standards we will strive to deliver and those that we will expect from involved residents
- We understand the importance of involving residents in the management of their homes
- How resident's views will be listened to and what opportunities there are to be involved in decisions on housing matters which relate to them

- What residents want to achieve, together with us to improve local services and quality of life
- What support and resources are available for residents to help and encourage their involvement
- How it will be continually reviewed and updated to make sure we are keeping up with any changes that occur

Good quality resident engagement is integral to improving our housing services and delivering decent homes in areas residents want to live and stay in. This document is part of a comprehensive long-term strategy for designing services around our residents. It works alongside the whole Housing, Neighbourhood and Buildings Service and feeds into the councils wider Housing Strategy.

How will our approach benefit you, our residents?

There are many ways that the approach that we take in listening to residents and designing services to meet their needs, and the more formal mechanisms of resident involvement in the management of their homes, can benefit both the residents themselves and also the Council. Many residents are seeing improvements to services or estates due to our combined approach. Some may show over a number of years, and some may be more "quick fixes" but whatever the result through this document:

- You will understand our overall approach to ensuring that residents voices matter and are at the heart of all that we do
- You will get honest, clear and easy to read information on our responsibilities for resident engagement
- You will be fully aware of what opportunities are available to you to get involved and understand the benefits and responsibilities of that involvement on you
- You will understand the different levels of involvement and commitment
- You can understand the role you can have in making important decisions on housing issues and understand how these can lead to improved housing services
- You can get support, advice and training to enable you to take part effectively

How was the document produced?

Reflections on our approach were drawn together and a planning group of residents was formed. The options available were considered alongside the approach taken and lessons learnt from residents. The group was made up of residents with varying levels of involvement experience and knowledge which provided a wide range of views.

Contents page

Chapter 1 - Our priorities for the next 3 years

Chapter 2 - Our overall approach: listening to residents' voices and designing services based on what we hear

Chapter 3 - Support for engagement activity

Chapter 4 - Opportunities

Chapter 5 – Resident Associations and Informal Resident Groups

Chapter 6 - Resident training and employment support

Chapter 7 - Information

Chapter 8 - Meetings

Chapter 9 - Complaint, Comments, Compliments

Chapter 10 - Monitoring and reviewing

Further documents are available from the Resident Engagement Team / online

1 - Hiring of community rooms

2 - Community funding

3 - Resident Consortium Constitution

4 - Estate Walkabout procedure

5 - Tenant Satisfaction Measures

6 - Resident Association Constitution

7 - Resident Association Code of Conduct

8 - Resident Association Aims and Objectives

9 - Privacy notice

Chapter 1 - Our priorities for the next 3 years

Your feedback

Across winter 22/23 we ran a residents survey asking you what we could improve on.

The majority of respondents are satisfied with the council as their landlord (67% quite or very satisfied). Respondents who are not 'very satisfied' with the council as their landlord would like to see better communication with tenants by the council.

The majority of respondents feel that the council give them information on things that matter to them (69%), whilst 31% do not feel this way. 40% of respondents are satisfied that the council listens to their views and acts upon them, whilst 40% are neither satisfied nor unsatisfied, and 20% are unsatisfied.

The majority of respondents have never attended a residents' meeting and had not provided the council with feedback in the last 12 months. Over half of respondents felt they are not likely to attend a residents' meeting in the future (53%), whilst 29% are not sure. The highest proportion of respondents are unlikely to attend a residents' meeting as they are not interested in attending (43%). Other barriers to attending include personal barriers like anxiety and old age or being unable to travel to meetings.

From this feedback, and through working with representatives on our residents group, we have formed our priorities for the next three years.

1) Improve the way we communicate with you, our residents, providing greater transparency about the services we provide.

How will we achieve this?

- We will aim to give you the right access to information that you want and need at the right time
- We will be clearer on our approach to how we listen to you - explaining the way we work and setting out our Resident engagement framework through our resident engagement approach document.
- We will review our policies and procedures and ensure that they are accessible for you.
- We will promote how you can raise a complaint, what you can expect and what support is available to you throughout the process.
- We will involve you in creating and developing of our publications to ensure they are clear, easy to understand and meet the your needs.
- We will communicate with you where we have made changes as a result of capturing residents voices and feedback about our services.

- We will review our digital offer including our website and social media to enable effective communication with you, with consideration of the creation of a customer portal for those who would wish to access us in this way.
- 2) Engage with more residents, providing you with the opportunity to share feedback in ways that suit your needs.**

How will we achieve this?

- We will promote the opportunities to get involved through raising the profile of the resident engagement team
- We will review the timings and accessibility of Resident Consortium meetings and other engagement activity
- We will strengthen confidence that resident voices matter through communicating the difference that capturing resident voices at the point of demand and resident feedback and involvement has made to services and the areas you live in
- We will create new channels to capture feedback following resident interactions with services we provide
- We will develop our social media presence to enable effective two-way communication with you
- We will conduct estate walkabouts seeking your feedback about neighbourhoods and local areas and use that feedback to help shape future priorities.

3) Ensure that residents are better able to scrutinise our performance and hold us to account.

How will we achieve this?

- We will present information captured by service areas relating to demand capture, performance, and cost measures to residents through a newly formed scrutiny panel
- Senior managers will be available to answer questions that residents have
- We will share learning from complaints received by the service and actions taken as a result
- We will publish our tenant satisfaction measures annually
- We will publish an annual report for residents

4) Get to know our communities better and empower you to make positive changes to address local issues

How will we achieve this?

- We will get to know our communities better and understand their priorities for their local area
- We will work in partnership with our communities to make a positive contribution to the areas they live
- Following a strengths-based approach we will seek to support residents to make changes - linking the people in the community with the resources they need to make change and building their confidence to do so
- We will promote and celebrate achievements of our residents

Chapter 2 - Our overall approach: listening to residents' voices and designing services based on what we hear

The Government's Social Housing Charter tells Social Housing Landlords to place residents' voices at the heart of everything that they do. At Portsmouth, understanding our customers' needs and expectations and designing services to meet these needs has been an approach we have taken for many years.

Over fifteen years ago we pledged to become an organisation that places our customers experience as the driver for more effective, targeted efficient services. Since then, we have reviewed many of our work streams, considering what really does matter to the people that live in the homes that we manage for them.

We have followed the experiences of hundreds of tenants and leaseholders and thought about the true purpose of why we are here. The answers are usually quite simple – to provide “the right repair at the right time”; “advice and support when needed”; and to keep home environments “safe, clean and tidy”.

For each work area we have created simple steps for our workforce to follow. They are asked to listen, understand, evaluate and then take the appropriate next steps. When things go wrong they are asked to put them right and to share their experience wider so that we can always improve and aim to get things right for our tenants and leaseholders first time.

They listen to residents' circumstances and follow-up on agreed actions. They are keen to feed ideas upwards, based on what they hear and see every day; and managers take action to design out any obstacles that cause delays, waste, or prevent us achieving what matters to customers; seeking to continuously improve the service, based on learning.

Listening to what residents ask from us helps us be clear about why our services exist. By being clear about what we are here for, from a resident's point of view, we can then understand what work we should focus on and try to change things that are getting in the way of getting things done for residents. It also helps us to be clear on what information we need to help us to understand if what we are doing is effective - whether we are performing well and whether services are good value for money.

When we want to understand what is happening in a service area we spend time listening and understanding resident contact - listening to phonecalls, attending home visits and appointments, reading emails, analysing requests for a service logged in databases etc., and we write down what we hear in our residents' words. We do this for a long enough time to make sure that we understand all of the things that come into the service.

By understanding what residents are contacting us about we then consider what we are here to do from a resident's point of view and define the "purpose of the service". What we don't do is define a service based on what is set down in legislation, based on targets or budgets, or what central or local government is currently focused on. We are here to provide a service to our residents and must be led by what it is that they are asking from us, within the remit of the service area. What residents want from us changes over time therefore we revisit purpose and analyse demand from time to time to make sure we are delivering what we need to.

The purpose of a service from a resident's point of view is usually simple and can be summed up in a few words. A list of purposes defined for HNB-delivered services is here:

Housing Rent: To pay rent and receive help when needed

Housing Advice: Provide support and advice when needed to enable people to solve problems and cope to stay in their tenancy

Sheltered Housing: To provide accommodation and support where needed

Voids: Provide a suitable home when needed

Maintenance: Right repair, right time

Planned Maintenance: Maintain and improve our properties

Estate Services: Help keep the local area safe, clean and tidy, and provide advice and support when needed

Waste: To enable recycling and collect waste on due collection day

Anti Social Behaviour: to help stop ASB (Anti-Social Behaviour) that affects residents or their local area

Out Of Hours: To provide suitable help out of office hours

Once we have defined the purpose of a service we return to understanding customer contact. We divide contact into that which is value - things that the service is here to do and that the customer is satisfied to contact the service about, for example "I want something fixing" and contact that is failure - things that residents are contacting us about which aren't within the scope of what we do, or because something has gone wrong for them due to the service not

doing something well, for example "somebody was due to come out to do something and they haven't come".

Having divided up what is value demand and failure demand we then spend time listening again and counting how many times each type of demand comes into the service so that we can understand how well the service is doing and whether there are things that need to be improved. If a service is receiving 95% of calls about something that it is there to do the service is likely doing well e.g. "this has broken can you fix it" or "I need help with something". If a service is receiving lots of calls in response to us not doing something well e.g., "I asked for this to happen, and it hasn't been done" or " someone has tried to deal with this six times and it isn't sorted yet" then there are improvements that need to be made.

In order to understand how efficient the service is and where something is going wrong we need to understand each stage of what happens for a resident, from the moment they ask for something, to the time that the situation has been sorted. We do this by mapping each stage of a resident's journey through a process and then thinking about what we are doing at each stage. We think about whether what we are doing at each stage is necessary to get the best outcome for the resident or if it needs to change. For example, Person A needs to fill in a form to request something for a resident and this form is then passed to Person B. Person B places it in a pile until they have time to deal with it. Two weeks later Person B puts the information in to a computer and sends it through to where it needs to go to. Alternatively, Person A puts information directly into a computer and sends it through to where it needs to go. There is no handoff and no delays caused to the resident.

Studying demand in this way helps us to ask the right questions - Are we able to do the number of things that we need to do? Do staff members have the skills and knowledge to do the different types of things that are asked from them? Are we doing things that are unnecessary? Learning from when we get things wrong or are not doing things as efficiently as possible helps us to understand where we could be spending our time and money doing things better.

Across housing, neighbourhood and buildings we have many different services. Some processes are easy to understand, map and simplify, others are more complicated. In people based services what residents need/want from a service varies depending on who they are and what is happening for them at that moment in time. We need to respond to this. This means truly understanding the individual's circumstances, and what matters to them, at the point in time that they make contact us and making sure that the service that they receive is adjusted to their individual circumstances.

Leaders and managers need to fully understand residents' experiences of the services provided to them. They can't learn this just from looking at information, or hearing about what is happening from other people. They need to see it for themselves. Our managers spend time "in the work" with front line teams. Here they can see and hear what matters to residents, understand what gets in the way of good service and identify improvements to be made.

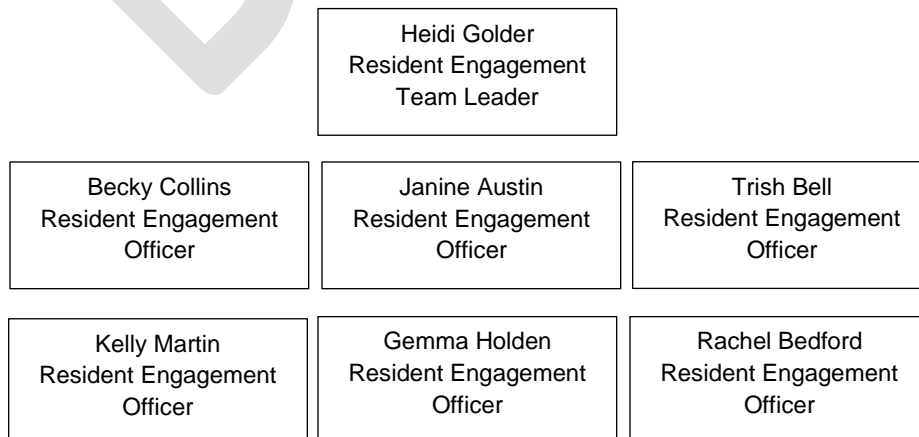
Chapter 3 - Our Resident Engagement Team and support for engagement activity

Support resources for participation and involvement

We support residents in a number of ways. The support has been tailored to ensure that:

- Residents have the resources and information required to set up, maintain and progress residents groups
- Individual residents are encouraged to get involved as fully as they wish
- Residents are offered training to put them in a stronger position to advocate for themselves and others
- Residents are offered employment support

The Resident Engagement Team Structure of Team



Amanda Godfrey
Independent Chair

Stuart Parker
Independent Chair

Castiel Martin
Resident Engagement
Assistant

There are 6 officers in the Resident Engagement Team, an engagement assistant and two independent chairs who chair our resident consortium meetings. The day to day running of the team is managed by the Resident Engagement Team Leader.

The team aims to involve residents in the management of their homes and the improvement of their areas by establishing and supporting local groups, offering focus groups requested by residents, offering employment support and by providing a varied programme of activities and events, all of which are accessible and relevant.

The resident engagement team:

- Support the Residents Consortium in holding regular meetings
- Support resident led scrutiny of housing, neighbourhood and building services
- Support resident involvement in assisting in the recruitment to key roles across the service
- Provide support and advice to Residents Associations and informal residents groups.
- Help individual residents by ensuring they receive accurate and timely information on involvement opportunities
- Give advice on the availability of funding and grant opportunities
- Carry out resident surveys including an annual tenant satisfaction survey
- Advise HNB (Housing, Neighbourhoods and Building) teams on effective ways to engage with residents and support them to do so - this includes developing effective surveys, considering the wording of letters and leaflet and poster design. Advice and support is given about the most effective method of capturing feedback e.g., through door knocking, phone, email, post, text, social media, website etc.
- Produce publications such as the resident's magazine "House Talk" and the annual report
- Provide training for residents to upskill them so that they are better able to hold us to account.
- Offer employment support
- Provide training which is both relevant and accessible for residents' ward councillors and staff on the principles and benefits of Resident Engagement
- Work in the community, attending area offices, community rooms, local coffee mornings. events, food banks, community centres, resident groups and Job centres to listen, share information and encourage engagement and participation

- Work with residents to create a timetable of resident-led activity, such as special interest groups, arts and craft, seasonal activities, cooking etc.
- Recognise and celebrate positive community activity and the residents that make things happen.

Other Staff

Engaging with residents is not just down to a small team. Staff across the Housing, Neighbourhood and Buildings service, councillors and executive members are offered training in shaping services around the customers voice and the benefits of participation and the opportunities available for residents.

This ensures everyone understand the importance of listening to residents, and the benefits of our resident participation so that listening and working with residents is an integral part of the Service.

The Resident Engagement Team work closely with:

- Area offices
- Estate Services
- Building Services
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Team
- Play and Youth and Community Centres
- Departments across the wider City Council, including the communications team and project teams, supporting engagement with residents with partner engagement teams on issues that matter to our residents – city regeneration, health and transport services etc.
- Agencies and institutions that operate within the communities that we serve

Resources

Resident Participation Centre

Residents and resident groups are able to use the Resident Participation Centre in Leigh Park. The centre has a small meeting room, kitchen, IT suite and garden area. The centre can be used to hold meetings, training or leisure activities that benefit the communities in which we work.

Community Rooms

The council provides community rooms in some blocks for resident associations and individuals to use for meetings and social events. They are free of charge for residents to use who live in the block.

They can also be used by residents of the block and for private functions like children's birthday parties (a small fee may be charged for this). (Terms available on request from RE Team)

Community Centres

We have four community centres - Somerstown Hub, Charles Dickens Activity Centre, Cosham Community Centre, and Paulsgrove Community Centre. These centres offer a variety of community spaces and resources which can be used by residents. Hire fees apply for the use of non-communal areas.

Hub Café

Our Hub Café is based at the Somerstown Hub and is a large, bright community space.

Adventure Playgrounds and Youth Clubs

Our six adventure playgrounds (Somerstown, Portsea, Landport, Buckland, Stamshaw and Paulsgrove) and four youth clubs (Somerstown, Portsea, Landport/Buckland and Paulsgrove) provide spaces for children, young people, and their families to come together. Community events are also held from these venues.

Landport Community Garden

Our community garden is a space where residents can come together to learn, grow, and get advice from our community gardener.

Financial Support

We have a small amount of funding for resident's projects to support the community to come together. You can speak to your Resident Engagement Officer about what you want to do, and they can look to see what support is available.

Projects that have been successful in the past include:

- Arts and Crafts equipment and jigsaws for resident groups
- Equipment and toys for a children's fun club
- Gardening equipment for a gardening group
- Tea and coffee club within a community centre

Travel

To enable residents to attend formal meetings, training, and events we organise and pay for taxis and public transport.

Refreshments

Refreshments are provided at all meetings, with lunch provided where appropriate.

Equipment loan

We may be able to support community events with resources, such as tables and chairs, gazebos, sports, and games equipment etc., if it is well looked after and returned on time.

Officer time and support

Officers are experienced in the roles of committees and are able to support and advise resident associations and resident groups when requested. They will also take minutes and help arrange venues and meetings if requested by committee members to do so.

Translation Services

We offer a translator at Resident Consortium or resident association meetings, providing sufficient notice is given.

Chapter 4 - Involvement Opportunities

Involvement Opportunities

The Resident Engagement Team aims to give all of our residents every opportunity possible to get involved and influence decisions affecting their homes and areas they live in.

It is widely considered that participation of residents can be successful in improving housing services and bringing communities together. However, we aim to not only support the more traditional methods but to also compliment these by introducing new ways for residents to get involved.

We have a menu of different ways to get involved, with differing levels of involvement and commitment needed, in the hope that it will be easier for more residents to take part. By increasing the numbers involved we hope to get a broader and more representative set of views in the decision-making process.

Ways

There are many different ways for residents to be involved with the work of the Councils housing service.

Information

This is where we tell you about a decision that has been made and how it will affect you. We can provide information to you in a range of different ways. We may tell you in a leaflet, a letter, an email, via the website or social media. Alternatively, we may present information at a housing meeting or knock on your door.

Participation

This is where residents, councillors and officers work in partnership to improve or change a service, discuss and agree details of a new policy or consider plans for a proposed scheme of work. Residents may also work with staff on decision making for matters such as budgetary controls including rent setting, or the recruitment of key roles within the service.

Consultation

There are many ways in which you can be consulted or asked your views on an issue or proposal. Remember proposals can be changed as a result of what people have to say.

For example, you can:

- Complete a survey to give your view on what needs to be prioritised
- Be invited to give your views on a new improvement scheme
- Be invited to an open meeting to discuss policy changes

We use many methods of consulting with residents. These are carried out on a needs basis and we have a bespoke engagement and consultation strategy for each project that we work on, with consideration given to the residents that will be consulted and the most appropriate methods. These include:

- Surveys
- Door knocking
- Focus groups
- Public meetings
- Public events
- Letter / leaflet drop with requests for feedback - includes telephone, email, sometimes QR codes
- Poster display

In using a range of methods for a project we hope that every resident feels able to give feedback, should they wish to. We are able to support residents in a number of ways where needed to overcome barriers, e.g. through literacy support / translation support etc.

Levels of commitment

We recognise that there are many barriers for residents in getting involved. Residents may have different levels of knowledge and understanding, different levels of time that they can commit and interests in differing areas. We believe that any resident should be able to get involved at any level they are comfortable with.

No commitment

Our approach to listening to residents at the point a demand hits the service means that even if you are not formally involved in engagement activity your voice will be heard when we consider our service design and in the service that you receive.

Very low level

You are on our database and from time to time we will ask for your views about a specific issue. You are happy to complete out annual tenant satisfaction survey. You attend resident events from time to time and offer feedback.

Low level

You are happy to respond to surveys
You may attend a focus group such as the House Talk magazine planning meeting, communications group etc.
You are part of a local social club or resident association

Medium level

You may be a committee member of a Residents Association or lead a social activity in your locality
You regularly attend Resident Consortium meetings
You are a member of a scrutiny panel

High level

You regularly attend Resident Consortium meetings
You represent the Residents Consortium at Housing and Homelessness Committee
You may sit on the Recruitment Panel for key roles within the service

Whatever your chosen commitment level we will give you all the support and training you need to be as involved as you feel comfortable with.

Residents Consortium

This is a formally constituted forum for residents. Membership to the Consortium is automatic as long as you remain a tenant or leaseholder of the Council.

The Consortium:

- is organised and minuted by a member of the Resident Engagement Team
- generally hold monthly meetings

- is chaired by an independent chairperson
- sets their own agendas

The Consortium is one way in which the Council can have two-way information exchanges with residents on housing matters. Residents also have the opportunity to tell others what is happening in their area. The Consortium is part of the consultation process for all key decision making including:

- Rent setting
- Repairs
- Estates

Resident Consortium representation at Housing and Homelessness Decision meetings

As a local authority landlord, the city council constitution sets out how we operate, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people.

Three Resident Consortium members are voted in annually to act as Consortium representatives at the Housing and Homelessness decision meetings, during which reports are presented for information or decision. The representatives receive briefing packs in advance and make representations on behalf of the consortium for consideration by the Cabinet Member. Representations are also made on behalf of residents by elected councillors. Briefing packs are published on the city council website in advance of any meeting.

All residents are able to attend this meeting and other cabinet meetings, and sit in the public gallery. If residents wish to make a deputation then they must inform the Local Democracy Officer before 12pm the day before the meeting. These meetings are all live streamed and recorded.

Resident Focus Groups

Focus Groups are organised for residents interested in a specific housing subject. They are held on an ad hoc basis, set up by the Resident Engagement Team, in partnership with the service area. Focus group members can call for a meeting and can request specific information to be presented to the group.

They are currently in the following subjects:

- **Rents** - meet to go through spending on a line by line basis annually. Consulted with in relation to rent setting and saving areas.
- **Repairs and Maintenance** - ad hoc meetings on updates and changes in the repairs service
- **Estate walkabout** - locality based inspections and discussions on priorities

- **Communications** - ad hoc meetings during which residents feedback on how we can improve our communication.
- **Tenant Satisfaction Measures** - planning for the residents survey and giving consideration of the findings annually
- **House Talk** - an editorial meeting three times per year for our resident magazine. Residents can propose content and submit articles.
- **Housing Standards** - reviews our performance against the housing standards and considers if we are meeting what we have set out in our residents charter.
- **Staff recruitment Panel** - members of the Residents Consortium who join the recruiting panel for key roles.
- **High rise living building safety** - for residents who live in our housing blocks over 7 storeys high

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Chapter 5 Resident Associations and Informal Resident Groups

We are keen to help and encourage any individual or resident group that wishes to be involved. When residents express an interest in participating for the first time, we ensure they get all the relevant information on opportunities available to them and help them work out the best option of involvement for them. Any level of involvement from a resident is important and is treated as such.

Support for new groups

Officers work hard to help and support residents who are keen to set up a new group and to assist them through the initial stages of developing the group.

If a resident/s approaches us about setting up a new group, we:

- Speak to the resident/s and explain the process of setting up a group as if others are requesting a group
- Write to residents in the area to gauge interest

If enough residents want a group we:

- Help with first meeting and venue
- Provide publicity for the meeting and attend if requested
- Provide support for any stationery required for initial start up, this can include production of agendas, minutes, and organising any necessary training
- Provide general advice and support as needed

Resident Associations (RAs)

We are fully committed to the existing Resident Association structure. With both the support of our staff and the RAs ability to do things for themselves they bring resources into their area and organise activities and events that benefit the community.

To achieve these aims certain standards need to be set to ensure groups know how to operate and meet the criteria for formal recognition by the Council.

What resident associations have to meet to be recognised by the Council?

Resident Associations wishing to be formally recognised by the Council will need to show the Resident Engagement Team they are democratic, accountable and properly run by having read, agreed and signed the following (available on request from the Resident Engagement Team):

1. Constitution
2. Code of Conduct
3. Groups Aims and Objectives

They also need to:

1. Have at least three committee members - Chair, Secretary and Treasurer,
2. Hold a minimum of four open meetings a year
3. Keep accurate and timely accounts to be certified by the council each year
4. Take minutes at each meeting and send a copy to the resident engagement team for checking
5. Hold an AGM once a year - this can be 3 yearly as agreed by the group
6. Show they are democratic and accountable

Benefits of formal recognition

Once recognised by the council, resident associations benefit in a number of ways:

- Access to grants and other funding
- Attendance by housing staff at association meetings when requested
- Auditing of association accounts

Annual Monitoring - or 3 years as agreed by the group

Every year the Resident Engagement Officers will help the resident association's (in their area of responsibility) to complete the relevant registration forms.

This ensures that associations:

- Remain formally recognised and supported by the council
- Have a chance to point out any areas of concern they may have in their area

Stopping the Support

Should a residents association fail to meet the necessary criteria required from them by the Resident Engagement Team then formal support will be removed.

We are keen to avoid this happening and will give associations all the help and advice they may need. However, if the association are still not able to meet those standards then the group will be derecognised.

Informal Groups

Sometimes residents don't wish to form a constituted residents group, they may prefer to meet regularly but without a formal committee. This can be on a purely social setting or to discuss a specific issue happening at the time. We will help residents set these up if requested as we are keen to promote community spirit.

Areas with no Residents Association

We will actively seek the views of residents living in an area not yet represented by a resident association. This will be done in a range of ways including organising an open meeting inviting everyone living in the area and going out to the community and gathering views. Feedback will then be provided to the residents.

Individuals

We always want to see new faces on our groups and attending events. Any resident can join us on a number of different activities. We invite individual residents to get involved in any of the activities set out in this Charter, but there is also the opportunity to attend networking events and to support the team as a volunteer at community events.

Encouraging representation from different community groups and individuals

We are keen that residents that voice their opinions, work alongside us, hold us to account and are active in our communities are representative of all of our residents, and that everyone feels confident that their voice will be heard. We recognise that our Residents Associations and Resident Consortium are typically made up of more mature, white British people. We are keen to promote the opportunities that are available to all of our residents, understand the barriers to people getting involved and encourage all of our residents, whatever their ethnic origin, level of disability, age or sexuality to participate and feel comfortable and valued doing so.

Mixed tenure areas

Many of our participation and consultation opportunities are open to anyone who lives on our multi tenure estates, not just our tenants and leaseholders. This can help build cohesive communities and avoid "them and us" attitudes.

We think that every resident living in an area should be able to give their views and help to improve their area. Although people may have a different landlord or own their own home there are still issues that are priorities to everyone such as the environment, crime and the welfare of the community.

For this reason we hold open access local events and work in partnership with many external agencies and other social landlords.

Chapter 6 - Resident Training and Employment Support

Resident training

Many residents are keen to be involved but may not have much experience or knowledge to carry their role out to their full capability. We aim to encourage residents to attend training relevant to their role to ensure that groups are well-run and residents are able to give their views confidently and better represent and serve their community.

Training can be provided in a range of subject matters and may be provided in-house or by external providers. All courses are free and travel expenses will be covered.

South Coast Training

The South Coast Training Group consists of 9 housing providers who organise conferences that bring a whole range of tenants together for quality training delivered by professional trainers.

The day-long events take place twice a year and are usually held in the Novotel Hotel in Southampton. Around 80 tenants spaces are available with spaces allocated to each of the different housing organisations.

Tenants received training on a variety of subjects from welfare reform and tackling anti-social behaviour to Housing Law, mental health, and public speaking.

There is the opportunity to learning both information and skills that enable them to get involved more and make a difference where they live.

One important benefit of South Coast Training is the opportunity it provides for residents to meet with people from other towns and organisations, to compare issues and share ideas. The atmosphere is open, relaxed and friendly.

Lunch, refreshments and transport are provided free of charge on the day.

Other training

Some of our internal staff training courses are available to residents who show an interest. Training courses are amended from time to time but may include:

Equality and Diversity
Financial Rules & Anti-fraud, bribery and corruption
Health & Safety / Fire Safety
GDPR

Cyber Security Awareness
Managing Difficult conversations
Making Every Contact Count - MECC (Making Every Contact Count)
Mental Health First Aid for adults - MHFA (Mental Health First Aid)
Mediation skills
Safeguarding

Training can be provided a number of ways:

- E-learning
- Attending training sessions, provided sufficient numbers of delegates can be found
- One to one with staff on certain subjects

All of the courses are free, with travel expenses paid for.

Four Million Homes

The Governments Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities offer a website with resources for social housing residents, including guidance on social housing resident rights and the services landlords are required to provide. There is information on a wide range of issues including repairs and maintenance and anti-social behaviour. Free webinars and training events are offered throughout the year. <https://www.fourmillionhomes.org/>

Employment Support

The resident engagement team offer help to any resident, or member of their household who is looking for work. Resident support can include help with:

- Job searches
- CV writing
- Photo ID
- Training courses
- Work clothes
- Travel expenses
- Signposting to job clubs

Chapter 7 - Information

Information

What can be expected?

To ensure we reach as many residents as possible, the Resident Engagement Team shares information with residents in a variety of ways.

All the information the team provides can also be provided in large print, Braille or in another language. We also avoid using jargon, racist, sexist or other biased language and write in plain English wherever possible. We work with teams across the Service promoting clear and concise communication methods and translating often complex information so it can be easily understood.

Resident volunteers and our communications panel are consulted on any participation information leaflets before they are printed, to check they are understandable and written in clear English. Other department information is also consulted on in advance, where we are able to do so.

The different ways we share information:

House Talk

House Talk is a resident's magazine produced 3 times a year. It is a useful way to share information on new housing information and local news with all residents of Portsmouth City Council. House Talk is directly mailed to every resident. Content of the magazine is decided by the editorial panel, which is made up of staff and residents who meet to decide which articles will go in. House Talk is reviewed regularly to ensure it meets residents' needs and provides good value for money.

Resident Engagement Pledge and Service document

This document is produced with residents and has information to all residents on their opportunities to participate. It will be reviewed by both Housing staff and residents and recommendations for change to the charter will be actioned where possible.

Information and consultation events / gazebo days

Local events are organised to provide residents with local information, information on the Housing, Neighbourhood and Buildings Service and information on opportunities to get involved. Local organisations are invited to attend with information on their service so that we get the most out of the events.

Meetings

Meetings can be organised to consult with residents on specific issues as they arise, or they can be organised in advance to enable exchange of information and views. For example, issues affecting a block or local area will be discussed at meetings in an appropriate communal space, issues such as proposed rent increases and policy changes may be discussed at special meetings, focus group meetings or Resident Consortium meetings which are held monthly. The information can then be fed back to other residents by the attendees at the meeting.

Officers will organise, minute and distribute relevant papers prior to meetings. They can also make presentations on request and will attend Resident Association committee meetings as required.

Website

Portsmouth City Council has an accessible website which is regularly updated. There is a specific section for Resident Engagement, and it is here that residents can find details of documents, meetings and other events.

Email

Email is an important way of sharing information, and we use this method of information sharing on a regular basis. It is a quick and reliable way to stay in contact with residents. Residents email addresses are collected on our database when they indicate they would like to be involved.

Texting

Text messaging can be a cheap, quick and easy way for residents to contact us and for us to keep them up to date with information.

Publications

We produce a variety of publications and information which will be made available to residents, including our annual report.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures

We will collect and publish data for tenant satisfaction measures annually.

Personal Information

Any personal information that we gather is stored securely and reviewed. We have a service Privacy Notice, published on the Portsmouth City Council website, and available on request.

Chapter 8 - Meetings

Meeting

Meetings need to be effective, or they are a waste of people's valuable time. This is regardless of whether they are organised by the Council, Residents Associations or individual residents. They are an excellent opportunity for all to participate, share their views and contribute to the decision-making process.

For effective meetings the following points should be followed;

Before:

- We will offer the use of meeting rooms, free of charge
- Booked venues should be accessible, comfortable and convenient
- Meetings should be publicised effectively and in good time
- All those that should be there should be invited
- All groups of society should be welcomed and encouraged to join
- Try to make sure that meetings don't clash
- Have an agenda relevant to the aims and objectives of the meeting
- Encourage people joining to read papers in advance of meetings and prepare questions / comments.
- Make sure the meeting will meet everybody's needs e.g., caters for people who are hearing impaired, need a translator, aren't in conflict with religious beliefs (e.g., alcohol served)

During:

- Have a confident chair person who is able to control the meeting
- Provide an agenda
- Welcome and introductions put new members and guests at ease
- Advise attendees of the code of conduct
- Think about what you say and the way that you say it
- Try not to let individuals dominate the conversation
- Encourage participation from everyone present and listen respectfully
- Try to ensure that aims and discussions are relevant to the group and community, as opposed to about an individual's personal circumstances
- Ensure clear decisions are made when necessary and everyone knows what was agreed
- Take minutes with clear outcomes and actions
- Provide refreshments where appropriate
- Establish when the next meeting should be, what you hope to achieve from it and who should attend

After:

- Circulate the minutes of the meeting
- Follow up any actions
- Provide feedback and updates to those that attended and others that request it
- Review how the meeting went

Conduct

Residents Associations, and the Resident Consortium constitution both have key sections explaining the standards expected in meetings. Residents Associations also have a Code of Conduct that the committee have to sign to show they understand the importance of effective meetings.

In addition, the Resident Consortium has agreed, publicised meeting dates for the whole year and the minutes are distributed by the resident engagement team to Resident Associations, attendees, area housing offices, Councillors and to individual residents who request a copy.

Chapter 9 - Comments, Compliments, Complaints

Comments, Compliments, Complaints

Comments

We would like to hear from you if you have a suggestion of how we can improve the resident engagement service. You may write to us, email us, call us or tell any member of staff.

Compliments

If you are happy with any part of the service you receive please tell us. You may write to us, email us, call us or tell any member of staff. We will record your views and pass them on to the people involved.

Complaints

We aim to provide the best possible service to residents. However, if we get it wrong, we want to know about it and will try to put it right as soon as possible.

Our aim

We take complaints very seriously. While we try to provide a good service, we know that things sometimes go wrong. We have developed a complaints procedure in response to this.

We aim to sort out complaints quickly and fairly and we will try to sort out any mistakes or misunderstandings straight away. Sometimes it may take longer, but we will tell you how long it will take.

What we learnt from complaints

We keep records of all complaints we receive and monitor them regularly. This helps us to:

- Identify areas of service we need to take changes and improvements
- Make sure we are dealing with the complaint effectively and consistently

Tell us what you think

You can submit compliment, complaint or suggestion

Contact your local housing office

Email us at corporatecomplaints@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Fill in a complaints form online at www.portsmouth.gov.uk

Disputes

Consortium Disputes

The Consortium terms of reference includes details of the procedure to try to resolve disputes within the Consortium.

- Every attempt will be made to resolve disputes within the Consortium as they occur
- Mediation will be offered by the Resident Engagement Team Leader
- If unresolved there will be a referral for arbitration by the Cabinet member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness

Resolving Disputes amongst groups

Resident Associations that are formally recognised by the Council have a standard constitution. This also includes a process for resolving disputes within groups.

It states:

- In the event of a dispute within the Association the first place for negotiation must be at the next general meeting.
- If the dispute is not resolved then the Resident Engagement Team can be asked to arbitrate.
- If the dispute cannot be resolved then the Resident Engagement Team has authority to dissolve the Association.

Any member of the Association has the right to ask the Resident Engagement Team to intervene in matters where they feel the committee is acting against the terms of the Constitution.

Residents Associations also have to adhere to a Code of Conduct and Terms of Reference. These, along with the constitution are available on request from the Resident Engagement Team.

Chapter 10 - Monitoring and Reviewing Resident Engagement Activity and our 3 year plan

Monitoring and Reviewing

A review group made up of landlord representatives and residents will meet to monitor the achievements and the effectiveness of resident engagement activity and whether the terms set out here are met. This will enable the group to see what has worked and what hasn't. The review group will build on their findings by:

- Consulting other residents
- Sharing experiences and good practice across neighbourhoods and tenures
- Challenging the existing system and making recommendations for better outcomes

The review group will then use this information to update the document if necessary.

Changes will be made providing:

- All partners are in agreement
- All amendments are reported to all residents through House Talk
- The newly agreed action plans are publicised

Performance and Accountability

We will take the following into account when reviewing the work of the Resident Engagement team and wider services:

We will look to review the **levels of engagement** through our current communications with tenants

- The number of people who engage with telephone surveys
- The number of people who respond to questionnaires
- The number of people who attend meetings and events
- The number of people who access HouseTalk online

We will consider the **effectiveness** of specific activities in light of the following:

- The number of customers who participated
- The resources required to obtain feedback
- The quality of the feedback obtained
- Whether the engagement activity successfully engaged a range of customers from different groups (including hard to reach groups)
- Whether the engagement activity resulted in positive change
- whether residents feel listened to and that their opinions and feedback make a difference

We will be fully accountable for any findings that the review group discover and will try to correct any failings.

Evaluation-impact assessment

The review group will work on ways to promote resident engagement and participation to a wider audience and widen its impact.

You can give us your views by:

- Email
- Post
- Phone
- Text

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Agenda Item 5



Title of meeting: Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness

Date of meeting: 22nd February 2024

Subject: Portsmouth City Council's Tenancy Strategy 2024 - 2029

Cabinet Member: Cllr Darren Sanders

Report by: James Hill - Director for Housing, Neighbourhood and Buildings Services

Author: Jo Bennett - Assistant Director - Housing Need & Supply
Shane Galvin - Head of Housing Need, Advice and Support

Wards affected: All

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

1.1 To present the Tenancy Strategy which details Portsmouth City Council's approach to tenancies for all registered providers of social housing across the city including the local authority as a registered provider.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Cabinet member for housing and tackling homelessness approves the council's Tenancy Strategy 2024 - 2029 (Appendix 1), to be effective from 1st April 2024.

2.2 The Cabinet member for housing and tackling homelessness notes that this publication of the Tenancy Strategy does not constitute a major change to the existing Tenancy Strategy. The changes to this strategy remove reference to the local authority as a registered provider allowing for the publication of the Local Authority Housing Lettings policy.

2.3 The Cabinet member for housing and tackling homelessness notes that there are no changes to this strategy which impact registered providers within the city and accordingly the strategy is not being consulted on. Copies of the republished strategy will be shared with registered providers explaining the change.

3. Background



3.1 The current tenancy strategy expires in 2024 and required updating, at this time the strategy is being refreshed to remove reference to local authority housing as a registered provider to make way for the local authority housing Lettings Policy. This is with an aim to clarifying the separate roles of the statutory local housing authority and the local authority landlord function.

4. Reasons for recommendations

4.1 To ensure that the council's tenancy strategy is up to date and provides the correct guidance to registered providers operating within the city.

5. Integrated impact assessment

5.1 A full integrated impact assessment for this strategy has been completed and is attached at Appendix 2.

6. Legal implications

6.1 The Localism Act 2011 details that every local housing authority in England has a duty to prepare and publish a tenancy strategy. This updated strategy covers the Portsmouth local authority area and sets out matters relating to registered providers (RP's), who provide social or affordable rents within our area, including Portsmouth City Council.

7. Director of Finance's comments

7.1 A decision to approve the council's Tenancy Strategy 2024 - 2029 does not have any financial implications for the Housing Revenue Account or General Fund budgets.

.....
Signed by: **James Hill, Director of Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services**

Appendices:

Appendix A - Tenancy Strategy 2024 - 2029

Appendix B - Integrated Impact Assessment

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location



The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

.....
Signed by:

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Portsmouth City Council Tenancy Strategy 2024 - 2029

January 2024

Introduction

- 1.1 Under the Localism Act 2011 every local housing authority in England has a duty to prepare and publish a tenancy strategy. This is the tenancy strategy provided by Portsmouth City Council (“the city council”) to cover the Portsmouth local authority area. The strategy must set out the matters which Registered Providers (RPs), who provide social or affordable housing within their area, must have regard to in formulating policies relating to:
- the kind of tenancies they grant
 - the circumstances in which they will grant a tenancy of a particular kind
 - where they grant tenancies for a specific term, the lengths of the terms, and
 - the circumstances in which they will grant a further tenancy when an existing tenancy comes to an end.
- 1.2 The strategy is intended to provide guidance to the local authority as a registered provider.
- 1.3 It is important to note that RPs need only to have regard to the tenancy strategy in developing their tenancy policies and are not legally obliged to follow it. However, the city council requests that RPs in Portsmouth review their tenancy policies in line with this strategy in order to ensure that wherever possible their policies work to complement, and do not contradict, this strategy.
- 1.4 RPs operating in Portsmouth include non-profit making and charitable housing associations registered with Homes England and the Regulator for Social Housing. This includes the council as a landlord of social housing.
- 1.5 The term ‘affordable housing’ in the context of this strategy covers properties let at either a social or affordable rent.

Overview

- 2.1 Section 150 of the Localism Act 2011 places a duty on every local housing authority to publish a tenancy strategy. All registered providers of social housing should then have regard to this tenancy strategy in framing their own tenancy policies.
- 2.2 The tenancy strategy must summarise the policies relating to tenancies or explain where they may be found.

- 2.3 The Act states that a local housing authority must have regard to its tenancy strategy in exercising its own housing management functions.
- 2.4 A local housing authority must keep its tenancy strategy under review and may modify or replace it from time to time.

Strategy preparation

- 3.1 Before adopting a tenancy strategy, or making a modification to it reflecting a major change of policy, the authority must:
 - 3.1.1 send a copy of the draft strategy, or proposed modification, to every private registered provider of social housing for its district.
 - 3.1.2 give the private registered provider a reasonable opportunity to comment on those proposals.
 - 3.1.3 consult such other persons as the Secretary of State may by regulations prescribe. The authority must, in preparing or modifying a tenancy strategy, have regard to its current allocation scheme under section 166A of the Housing Act 1996, & (b) its current homelessness strategy under section 1 of the Homelessness Act 2002.

Background

- 4.1 There are many RPs, including the council, who provide affordable housing in Portsmouth. Most RPs offer nomination rights to tenancies to the council via Letting Agreements, and homes are allocated and let via the city council's central Housing Register, in line with its Allocations Policy.

Flexible tenancies

- 5.1 Some RPs are now able to offer fixed term tenancies (also known as Flexible Tenancies). Flexible tenancies must be for a minimum period of 2 years. However in practice, most RPs who have opted for flexible tenancies have decided to offer a 5-year fixed term period.
- 5.2 The key driver for the introduction of fixed term tenancies is to enable RP's to make better use of the housing stock enabling housing need to be reviewed when a fixed term tenancy period is drawing to an end.
- 5.3 Where flexible tenancies are to be offered the following minimum standards are recommended:
 - 5.3.1 Any fixed term should be for a minimum of 5 years in accordance with Homes England and the Regulator for Social Housing guidance.
 - 5.3.2 Tenancy policies should recognise the benefit of a period of stability for those with young families and children in education.
 - 5.3.3 Flexible tenancies for family sized properties with adaptations are encouraged so that best use can be made of properties in low supply.

- 5.3.4 If a flexible tenancy is not being renewed on the basis of under-occupation it is expected that RPs offer a smaller alternative within their own stock, or through partnership working with other providers and allow the tenant to remain housed until an alternative is found.
- 5.3.5 Flexible tenancies must not be used as a substitute for dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour or ending failing tenancies in a timely way, although these may be relevant considerations when deciding whether a tenancy should be renewed.
- 5.3.6 The criteria for not renewing a tenancy must be clearly published in accordance with the requirements of the legislation.
- 5.3.7 The city council expects to be notified of all decisions not to renew a tenancy to enable housing advice to be provided for those households affected.

Affordable rents

- 6.1 The 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review introduced 'affordable rent' as a new form of social housing and the main type of new housing supply for the future. The new regime enabled RPs to let a property at an 'affordable rent' (inclusive of service charges, where applicable) of up to 80% of the gross open market rent (OMR) in the area for a comparable property taking account its size, location and the services being provided. Homes let under the existing regime of target rents are typically let at between 50-60% of open market rental value (OMR). In addition, where an RP had an approved development programme, an affordable rent could be set on a proportion of its existing relets; the additional revenue raised was used to help fund, in part, the development of new affordable homes. (This excludes the city council who are unable to convert existing properties from a social rent to affordable rent when void).
- 6.2 The city council prefer and encourage RPs to deliver homes at Social Rent/Target Rent levels, and as a minimum that all tenancies be within Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates. It will take rent levels into consideration when nominating applicants from the central Housing Register via the Portsmouth Allocations Scheme.
- 6.3 The city council believes that affordable housing products, of all different types, should be available for those who would have traditionally been housed in social rented properties. It does not therefore expect RPs to require deposits, or to exclude applicants on the basis of onerous referencing.
- 6.4 The city council expects RPs to offer advice to their tenants who are likely to be affected by changes to circumstance, taking into consideration any changes to legislation, benefit changes etc.
- 6.5 The city council expects RPs to provide information on the number of conversions from Social Rent to Affordable Rent on an annual basis, and where relevant, progress towards any set targets for this.

Consultation

- 7.1 The city council will circulate this version of the Tenancy Strategy to RPs when it is reviewed or modified.
- 7.2 If significant amendments to the strategy are made then a formal consultation will be required.

Review and Publication

- 8.1 The city council will monitor how the strategy is working in practice and review and update it as required. In particular there is a need to understand:
 - 8.1.1 The number of social rent and affordable rent homes created, including the number of conversions by RPs.
 - 8.1.2 How many fixed term tenancies have been offered, renewed, not renewed and the reasons for these.
 - 8.1.3 The outcomes for those people whose tenancies are not renewed, including in particular any cases of homelessness.
- 8.2 RPs are asked to provide yearly updates on the above in order that the city council can review this strategy using this and other relevant information. The city council will also provide regular opportunities to meet with RPs to discuss issues relating to this policy and its implementation.
- 8.3 A copy of the strategy will be published by the city council and made available for inspection on request at any of the council's Area Housing Offices, Civic Offices or direct request to the Cabinet Member for Housing. Members of the public may also make a request for a hard copy of this strategy.
- 8.4 Each Registered Provider will publish their relevant Tenancy Policy on their respective website.

Glossary of terms

Affordable housing: Includes social rented housing, affordable rented housing and low cost home ownership such as shared ownership.

Affordable Rent: Rents offered by RPs of social housing at up to 80% of the rent that would be charged if the property were let in the open market.

Fixed term tenancy: A flexible tenancy with a fixed start and finish date, usually for 5 years.

Homes England: The national housing and regeneration agency for England, responsible for allocating funding for new affordable housing.

Homelessness duty: A local authority owes the “main homelessness duty” when the authority is satisfied that a homeless household is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and falls within a specified priority need group. Where this duty is owed, the authority must ensure that suitable accommodation is available to the household.

Local Housing Allowance: The current published maximum level of housing benefit payable for particular types of property, based on bedroom size and location.

Market rent: The rental income level that a property would most probably command on the open market if rented privately.

Regulator of Social Housing: The new central Regulator for all Social Housing Providers, including Housing Associations and Local Authorities.

Social rent: Rent levels for Social Housing for which guideline target rents are determined through a National Rent Regime aimed at helping ensure that all Social Rent levels are brought into line and are comparable. Social Rents are usually significantly lower than market rent levels.

Target Rents: A rent calculated by applying a formula from National Government first introduced in 2002 to bring consistency to social rent levels charged across all providers.

Tenancy policy: A RP’s policy that defines how the provider will make decisions about the types of tenancy they will provide to tenants.

Produced by:

Housing Needs, Advice & Support
Portsmouth City Council
Guildhall Square
Portsmouth
PO1 2AZ
023 9283 4989
www.portsmouth.gov.uk

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Form name	Integrated Impact Assessment
Reference	IA580873730
Date	30/01/2024



Policy details

Request date	30/01/2024 10:40
Directorate	PCC Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services
Service	Housing, Needs, Advice & Support
Title of policy, service, function	Updated Tenancy Strategy 2024 - 2029
Type of policy, service, function	Existing
What is the aim of your policy, service, function, project or strategy?	<p>The strategy sets out the matters which Registered Providers (RPs), who provide social or affordable housing within the Portsmouth local authority area, must have regard to in formulating policies relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the kind of tenancies they grant • the circumstances in which they will grant a tenancy of a particular kind • where they grant tenancies for a specific term, the lengths of the terms, and • the circumstances in which they will grant a further tenancy when an existing tenancy comes to an end.
Has any consultation been undertaken for this proposal?	no

Equality & diversity - will it have any positive/negative impacts on the protected characteristics?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
--	-------------------------------------

Crime - Will it make our city safer?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
--	-------------------------------------

Housing - will it provide good quality homes?

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?	<p>The 2024 - 2029 strategy has been updated inline with the Localism Act 2011, which sets out the matters which Registered Providers (RPs), who provide social or affordable housing within their area, must have regard to in formulating policies relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the kind of tenancies they grant • the circumstances in which they will grant a tenancy of a particular kind • where they grant tenancies for a specific term, the lengths of the terms, and • the circumstances in which they will grant a further tenancy when an existing tenancy comes to an end. <p>Part of the strategy covers review & publication on how other registered providers within the city boundary work with the principals set out in this strategy.</p>
How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?	<p>Working alongside our RP colleagues, Portsmouth City Council will seek the information detailed within the review & Publication section and feed this back to the Head of Housing Needs, Advice & Support.</p>

Health - will this help promote healthy, safe and independent living?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
--	-------------------------------------

Income deprivation and poverty - will it consider income deprivation and reduce poverty?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
--	-------------------------------------

Carbon emissions - will it reduce carbon emissions?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---	-------------------------------------

Energy use - will it reduce energy use?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---	-------------------------------------

Climate change mitigation and flooding - will it proactively mitigate against a changing climate and flooding?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---	-------------------------------------

Natural environment - will it ensure public spaces are greener, more sustainable and well-maintained?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---	-------------------------------------

Air quality - will it improve air quality?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---	-------------------------------------

Transport - will it make transport more sustainable and safer for the whole community?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
--	-------------------------------------

Waste management - will it increase recycling and reduce the production of waste?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
--	-------------------------------------

Culture and heritage - will it promote, protect and enhance our culture and heritage?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
--	-------------------------------------

Employment and opportunities - will it promote the development of a skilled workforce?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
--	-------------------------------------

Economy - will it encourage businesses to invest in the city, support sustainable growth and regeneration?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
--	-------------------------------------

Social value

Please explain how your policy, service, function, project or strategy delivers Social Value	The strategy details the type of tenancies Registered Providers including Portsmouth City Council can issue in line with their own lettings, Allocation & Homelessness Strategies.
---	--

Involvement

Who was involved in the Integrated impact assessment?	Alison Smart Shane Galvin
Name of the person completing this form	Alison Smart
Date of completion	2024-01-30

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Agenda Item 6



Portsmouth
CITY COUNCIL

Title of meeting:	Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness
Date of meeting:	22 nd February 2024
Subject:	Damp and Mould Policy
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Sanders – Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness
Report by:	James Hill - Director of Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services
Report Authors:	Steve Groves - Head of Building Maintenance, Mark Fitch - Head of Local Authority Housing
Wards affected:	All
Key decision:	Yes
Full Council decision:	No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update members of a review of the Council's Housing Services processes for managing damp and mould in council housing and to seek approval to implement a new damp and mould policy.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Cabinet member for housing and tackling homelessness approves the new damp and mould policy (Appendix A – Damp and Mould Policy, version 1.1) and asks Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services to implement the new policy with immediate effect
- 2.2 The Cabinet member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness approves the implementation plan set out in section 5.
- 2.3 The Cabinet member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness requests an information only report to be brought back mid-year to update on the progress of the work.

3. Background

- 3.1 The tragic death of toddler Awaab Ishak demonstrates the very serious harm that can come from living with untreated damp and mould. Damp and mould predominantly affect the airways and lungs. The respiratory effects of damp and mould can cause serious illness.
- 3.2 The Council responded to the Regulator of Social Housing enquiries in November 2022 regarding the management of damp and mould in the council owned housing stock, confirming our approach for assessing the extent of damp and mould issues. The government also issued guidance on the management of damp and mould as noted in 3.5.
- 3.3 Alongside Regulator of Social Housing Regulator enquiries and the governments review, Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services (HNB) initiated several actions to review the management of damp and mould in the council owned housing stock. A damp and mould safety group was set up that meets regularly to oversee the work and implement changes. It has coordinated a review of the HNB damp and mould processes which has resulted in the proposed damp and mould policy that is recommended to be implemented.
- 3.4 The damp and mould safety group has also updated the existing damp and mould leaflets and Council website information regarding advice to residents as well as arranging for a damp and mould video to be produced that can provide advice to residents and used for training staff. The group is also reviewing measures that can be used to evaluate not only the response to damp and mould, but to also enable HNB to proactively inform its plans for addressing issues.
- 3.5 Landlords must ensure that the accommodation they provide is free from serious hazards, including damp and mould, and that homes are fit for habitation. They must treat cases of damp and mould with the utmost seriousness and act promptly to protect their tenants' health. The government issued guidance on understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home published 7 September 2023, this has been considered when drafting the policy and guidance.
- 3.6 Damp and mould causes covers three possible problems with distinct causes.
- i. Penetrating Damp - Water penetrating the external structure of the building or internal leaks causing damp, rot and damage to internal surfaces and structure.
 - ii. Rising Damp - The movement of moisture from the ground rising through the structure of the building through capillary action.
 - iii. Condensation - This occurs when humid air comes into contact with a cold surface. The conditions that may increase the risk of condensation are lack of ventilation within the property and/or inadequate heating and/or inadequate insulation.

Mould is a natural organic compound that develops in damp conditions and will only grow on damp surfaces. There is strong research evidence to suggest that health conditions can be exacerbated by damp and mould in housing.

Damp and Mould Policy

- 3.7 The damp and mould policy outlines our responsibilities including to undertake a property inspection within fourteen days of the repair being reported. Legislation regarding damp and mould continues to evolve and the government is continuing to review and consult on proposals to introduce a variety of target timescales to address issues identified. The damp and mould safety group will continue to review and update the policy as government legislation evolves as appropriate.
- 3.8 At the property inspection we will investigate and diagnose the cause of damp and deliver effective solutions dealing with the cause of the damp and not just the symptoms where appropriate by undertaking reasonable improvement works required to assist in the management and control of condensation dampness. The policy also includes a hierarchy of remedial action to assist in the management of an appropriate response to the issue.
- 3.9 We will also promote and provide general advice and guidance on how to minimise damp and condensation, particularly when there are no apparent causes relating to design or construction of the building fabric. This will include resident support if other factors are identified that are contributing to the damp and mould conditions that are influencing health and wellbeing of the occupants.
- 3.10 The policy states that we will follow up each completed damp and mould repair within six months of any damp and mould repair work being carried out to assess if any work and/or advice has been effective.
- 3.11 Residents also have responsibilities stated within the policy that include to immediately report any evidence of rising and penetrating damp and faulty equipment that will affect the management of humidity and moisture in the home, as well as allowing access enable remedial works and servicing of appliances.
- 3.12 Residents are provided with advice (Appendix C – Condensation and Mould - Advice for Portsmouth City Council Tenants) to help reduce the conditions that lead to condensation by maintaining proper ventilation, heating their home, tips to reduce moisture levels in their home to prevent condensation and how to contact us about damp and mould in their home. The information is also available on the Council website and has periodically been published in Housetalk, most recently in the Winter 2023 edition damp and mould article page 22. (Appendix D - Housetalk Winter 2023 Edition)
- 3.13 The policy highlights that we will record all instances of damp and mould on the repairs and maintenance database using appropriate keywords and

appointments. The damp and mould safety group will continue to have oversight of the process by reviewing performance measures and feedback from complaints to monitor that we are responding to damp and mould instances appropriately in accordance with the policy.

- 3.14 We will periodically evaluate repairs and stock data to identify property archetypes that are more prone to damp and mould to inform its asset management strategy. This proactive approach will either inform future planned programmes or identify properties to be targeted that require regular stock condition surveys.
- 3.15 There will be reviews of stock data that will include properties that have a lower energy performance certificate (EPC) rating, blocks of flats where damp has been reported to multiple properties or where certain archetypes of properties are more prone to historical or repeated damp and mould issues.
- 3.16 This approach will identify properties to be targeted that require regular stock condition surveys. This enables us to plan to proactively inspect properties and engage with residents where it has been identified that the properties are more prone to damp and mould issues.
- 3.17 The evaluations will also inform our asset management strategy and future planned programmes as appropriate that address any building construction causes of damp and mould.
- 3.18 We will also utilise all opportunities when inside residents' homes to identify damp and mould issues, such as repairs and stock condition inspections by surveyors, tenancy update visits by housing officers and contractor visits. These property visits will ensure damp and mould issues are reported as appropriate and investigated.

4. Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1 As part of a review of the processes and development of the policy and its guidance, all HNB services have been represented as part of the damp and mould safety group including the building repairs team, local authority housing teams and private sector housing management, the energy team including those involved in Switched on Portsmouth and the housing assessment and advice team.
- 4.2 The Assistant Director of Public Health has been consulted regarding the policy and provided feedback including offering support with training for staff on the health impacts of damp homes and advice on respiratory symptoms that residents should be aware of.

- 4.3 The resident consortium has been consulted about the damp and mould policy at a meeting on 5 October 2023. The resident repairs and maintenance sub-group were also provided with the draft policy and a briefing document.
- 4.4 Internal Audit undertook an audit in November 2023 which focused on the HNBs management of damp and mould in residential properties. Internal Audit identified some exceptions including no policy with standardised process or templates enabling standardised recording of information and actions. Internal Audit acknowledged that the service was already addressing the issues to further align processes with the industry and government guidance, which is continually being developed. The approval of the policy will address the issues identified by Internal Audit.
- 4.5 The Housing and Social Care Scrutiny Panel is reviewing the "Response of the Local Authority and Landlords in the city to the issue of damp and mould in social housing and private rented housing". On 13 July 2023 the panel heard residents' perspectives and were provided with HNB information regarding its approach to damp and mould.
- 4.6 Initial feedback is for HNB to continue widely promoting and raising awareness regarding damp and mould as well to proactively review energy performance data so that properties can be targeted to prevent damp and mould. The scrutiny report has not been completed at the time of the writing of this report, however the initial feedback has been incorporated into the policy and this report, it will be further reviewed when the final scrutiny panel report is published.
- 5. Implementation Plan**
- 5.1 If approved, the policy will start to be implemented immediately, the policy will continue to be communicated to residents through articles in Housetalk, social media and the Council website will be updated.
- 5.2 The draft policy and guidance has been shared with the Repairs team surveyors who have already been using the guidance and templates this winter season, keywords and appointments have been set up to record damp and mould instances.
- 5.3 Damp and mould measures and dashboards (Appendix E - Damp & Mould PowerBI Dashboard) are being established and will be published quarterly as part of the HNB reporting. Up to 25 January 2024 there have been 403 instances of damp and mould have been recorded on the R&M database since August 2023, with 307 attributed to condensation, 77 to external water penetration, 16 to internal water penetration and 3 to rising damp. The Repairs team surveyors have attended 83.7% within fourteen days in Q3 and 97.7% in Q4 to date, with an average of 9.3 days from first contact to first surveyor appointment.

- 5.4 Initial analysis indicates that the older acquired (pre-war non-council-built properties) and concrete ring beam properties are more prone to damp and mould reported as the proportion of housing stock for each construction type. Further analysis of the data together with evaluation of energy performance certificates (EPCs) will further inform actions that can be undertaken by HNB to proactively manage damp and mould, by targeting properties to prevent damp and mould occurring.
- 5.5 The damp and mould safety group will continue to have oversight of the process. The group will review performance measures and feedback from complaints to monitor that we are responding to damp and mould instances appropriately in accordance with the policy. It will also periodically evaluate repairs and stock data to identify property types that are more prone to damp and mould to inform either future planned programmes or targeted regular stock condition surveys.
- 5.6 Final amendments to the video that provides advice on damp and mould to HNB residents is being finalised and will be shared with the resident consortium for feedback prior to publishing on the Council website. The plan is that the video will also be amended as appropriate to provide appropriate advice to other stakeholders such as HNB staff, other Council staff that visit properties and private sector residents.
- 5.7 Periodically further articles will be published in Housetalk providing advice to residents of how and when to report damp and mould as well as advice to reduce condensation.
- 5.8 The leaflets (Appendix C – Condensation and Mould - Advice for Portsmouth City Council Tenants) will continue to be made widely available to residents by all staff and stakeholders that visit or interact with our residents such as surveyors, housing officers, estate services officers, Councillors and community leaders. It will be ensured that the leaflets are accessible and translated as appropriate.
- 5.9 Posters with condensation and mould information such as advice of how to reduce condensation and report damp and mould will also be made available in notice boards in our housing offices and at targeted specific blocks of flats.
- 5.10 All surveyors will be trained and competent in the diagnosis of damp, condensation and mould issues. Staff visiting residents in their homes (service provider operatives and housing officers) will be trained to be aware and identify damp and mould issues. They will be provided with knowledge to provide residents with advice to minimise condensation as well as directing residents to sources of information and support on managing energy costs. Public Health have stated that they will provide additional training for staff on the health impacts of damp and mould and respiratory symptoms.

- 5.11 There are likely to be further legislative changes including requirements to address hazards, powers for Ombudsman and new Decent Homes standards. The damp and mould safety group will continue to review new guidance and any changes to legislation that require processes or measures to be updated.

6. Reasons for recommendations

- 6.1 It is recommended that the damp and mould policy is implemented and will ensure that HNB are complying with current government guidance and addresses exceptions raised in the Internal Audit report dated 6 November 2023.

7. Integrated impact assessment

An Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed and submitted and is shown in Appendix B.

8. Legal implications

- 8.1 The Council's obligations as landlord to repair and maintain Council properties are set out in the tenancy agreement. In addition, section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 sets out statutory obligations on a landlord to make repairs to the structure and exterior of a property, as well as to installations such as boilers, pipes and electrics. The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 as amended by the Housing (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 also requires a property to be fit for human habitation at the beginning of the tenancy and for the duration of the tenancy. A property might be unfit if there are risks to health and safety. To address this duty, the Council needs to have a planned maintenance programme with periodic inspections and an effective responsive repairs service.
- 8.2 The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 (when in force) will require landlords to fix reported health and safety hazards within specified timescales and will strengthen the powers of the Regulator in respect of inspections and powers to issue unlimited fines.
- 8.3 The Decent Homes Standard is currently a non-statutory standard which must be met by registered providers of social housing. Consultation has been taking place to extend the standard to cover the private rented sector and more recently a review has been launched to look at changes to the standard and at proposals to place a statutory duty on landlords to meet the standard.
- 8.4 In making the recommendations set out in this report the Council will reduce risks of legal challenge or enforcement by the Regulator in the future as well as ensure it is in a good position to implement the anticipated legislative changes when these are in force.
- 8.5 It is within the Cabinet Member's powers as set out in the Council's constitution to make the recommendations proposed.



9. Director of Finance's comments

9.1 There are no financial implications that result directly from the approval of the recommendations in this report. Adopting the policy and implementation plan does not directly change the cost of the related activity. The Housing Revenue Account has both revenue and capital budgets that can be used to deal with the issues identified.

.....
Signed by:

James Hill

Director of Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services

Appendices:

Appendix A – Damp and Mould Policy (version 1.1)

Appendix B - Integrated Impact Assessment

Appendix C - Damp and Mould Leaflet

Appendix D - Housetalk Winter 2023 Edition

Appendix E - Damp & Mould PowerBI Dashboard

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Guidance Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home Published 7 September 2023	Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

.....
Signed by:



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Document control information

Version:	1.1
Status:	Draft / Consultation / Approved
Owner:	Head of Building Maintenance
Author:	Steve Groves
Approval:	Director of Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services Assistant Director of Building Services Cabinet Member for Housing
Consultation:	Resident Consortium
Audience:	Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services staff Service Provider and Contractor staff Residents
Approved:	26 February 2024
Last Reviewed:	
Next Review:	As a result of changes in legislation or repairs and maintenance policy or TBC
Master location (restricted):	Building Maintenance - Documents/ Controlled/ Service management/ Strategy Policy & scope/ Repairs & Maintenance Policies
Published location:	R&M database Extract folder within Policies, Guides and Documents section

Document review and change log		
Version	Approved date	Reason for Issue
1.1	26 Feb 2024	Initial consolidation and rewrite of R&M policies

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1. Purpose and scope

This policy was approved as part of a review of Portsmouth City Council housing repairs and maintenance policy documents.

The policy applies to the repairs and maintenance service provided to the council's tenants and leaseholders. It defines rules to be applied but stops short of giving detailed procedural guidance as this may change.

In addition, reference should be made to the relevant tenancy agreement or lease document.

2. Document context

This document should be read in conjunction with:

- The relevant policy guideline document which outlines further detail when implementing a policy.
- The Repairs and Maintenance Scope of Service which outlines the purpose and value steps for each of the repairs and maintenance service lines. The document also summarises our principles of work, definitions of waste, decision making using PLANⁱ and our capability measures.
- The Asset Management Strategy which sets out a framework for the council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) properties to make future decisions about its assets over the next 30 years.
- Where relevant there are links to legislation related to the policies as necessary, however be aware that some changes to the legislation published may be outstanding and legal advice should be sought where appropriate.

ⁱ PLAN - Proportionate, Legal, Accountable and Necessary

3. Arbitration and escalation

Front-line staff requiring help interpreting and implementing the policy should seek advice from their line manager in the first instance.

Where a decision requires arbitration or further escalation the following table outlines the escalation pathway.

Escalation	Job Title
First	Building service team manager ⁱⁱ
Second	Head of Building Maintenance
Third	Assistant Director of Building Services

In addition, a tenant or leaseholder can make a formal complaint using the council's complaints policy. In the first instance they should contact the person or section dealing with their problem and ask to register a complaint.

ⁱⁱ Building Repairs Manager or Building & Compliance Manager or Building Safety Manager or Building Projects Manager

4. Damp and Mould

4.1. Purpose

This policy outlines the council's approach to the management of damp and mould to ensure all our properties are well maintained and free of damp and mould that could risk the health and safety of customers living in homes or buildings as well as its obligations with regard to the [Housing Act 2004](#), [Social Housing \(Regulation\) Act 2023](#) and their successors.

4.2. Scope

The policy covers all council Housing Revenue Account (HRA) dwellings including communal areas, sheltered schemes and houses in multiple occupation.

4.3. Damp and Mould Causes

The general term 'damp' covers three possible problems with distinct causes.

4.3.1 Penetrating Damp

Water penetrating the external structure of the building or internal leaks causing damp, rot and damage to internal surfaces and structure.

4.3.2 Rising Damp

The movement of moisture from the ground rising through the structure of the building through capillary action

4.3.3 Condensation

Condensation occurs when humid air comes into contact with a cold surface, it then condenses producing water droplets.

The conditions that may increase the risk of condensation are:

- Lack of ventilation within the property.
- Inadequate heating
- Inadequate insulation.
- High humidity

4.4. Mould

This is a natural organic compound that develops in damp conditions and will only grow on damp surfaces. This is often noticeable and present in situations

where condensation damp is present. There is strong research evidence to suggest that health conditions can be exacerbated by damp and mould in housing.

4.5. Our Responsibilities

4.5.1 Property inspection

We will undertake a property inspection when a repair is reported relating to suspected damp, mould and condensation within fourteen days of the repair being reported.

At the property inspection we will investigate and diagnose the cause of damp and deliver effective solutions dealing with the cause of the damp and not just the symptoms where appropriate by undertaking reasonable improvement works required to assist in the management and control of condensation dampness.

4.5.2 Resident advice to minimise condensation.

We will also promote and provide general advice and guidance on how to minimise damp and condensation, particularly when there are no apparent causes relating to design or construction.

Advice provided will include directing residents to sources of information and support on energy savings if they have difficulty in heating their home.

The advice will be available at all housing offices, at sign up of new tenancies, publicised on the website, social media and within Housetalk magazine. It will be periodically reviewed by the damp and mould working group with the resident consortium.

4.5.3 Resident support

Where internal conditions within a home such as overcrowding and excessive hoarding of personal belongings, are contributing to the damp and mould conditions and influencing health and wellbeing of the occupants or are preventing inspections or repairs works being carried out, we will provide support and assistance to review the customer's options.

4.5.4 Damp and Mould follow up.

We will follow up each completed damp and mould repair within six months of any damp and mould repair work being carried out to assess if any work undertaken and/or advice provided has been effective.

4.5.5 Training

All surveyors are trained and competent in the diagnosis of damp, condensation and mould issues.

All staff visiting residents in their homes (service provider operatives and housing officers) will be trained to be aware and identify damp and mould issues as well as provide residents with advice to minimise condensation and directing residents to sources of information and support on energy.

4.5.6 Evaluation of Repairs & Maintenance Data

We will record all instances of damp and mould on the repairs and maintenance database using appropriate keywords and appointments.

The damp and mould safety group will continue to have oversight of the process and will review performance measures and feedback from complaints to monitor that we are responding to damp and mould instances appropriately in accordance with the policy.

4.5.7 Proactive Approach

The buildings service will periodically evaluate repairs and stock data to identify property archetypes that are more prone to damp and mould to inform its asset management strategy. This proactive approach will either inform future planned programmes or identify properties to be targeted that require regular stock condition surveys.

Reviews of stock data will include properties that have a lower energy performance certificate (EPC) rating, blocks of flats where damp has been reported to multiple properties or where certain archetypes of properties are more prone to historical or repeated damp and mould issues.

We will also utilise all opportunities when inside residents' homes to identify damp and mould issues such as repairs and stock condition inspections by surveyors, tenancy update visits by housing officers and contractor visits to ensure damp and mould issues are reported as appropriate and investigated.

We will plan to proactively inspect properties and engage with residents where it has been identified that the properties are more prone to damp and mould issues.

As part of the asset management strategy, we will include developing planned programmes as appropriate that address any building construction causes of damp and mould.

4.6. Hierarchy of remedial action

The actions below have been grouped into tiers to assist with correct diagnosis and specification of remedial actions. These have been ranked in order to assist the management of a proportionate response to the issue.

Tier 1	<p><u>Surveyor Remit (as appropriate)</u></p> <p>Survey to diagnose cause of damp and mould including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Checking temperature and humidity• Checking external building fabric and cavities• Checking effectiveness of extractor fans, window trickle ventilation• Checking radiator sizes• Undertake calcium carbide test.• Arrange water pressure test. <p>Undertake to clean mould or arrange service provider if excessive.</p> <p>Arrange for repairs as appropriate including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repairs to building fabric (clear cavities, roof repairs, water service repairs etc)• Install trickle vents to UPVC windows.• Install loft Insulation.• Install new or upgraded extractor fan. <p>Advice to resident to minimise condensation (using ventilation and heating)</p>
Tier 2	<p><u>Surveyor Remit (as appropriate)</u></p> <p>Arrange for repairs as appropriate including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Passive wall vent• Radiator installation or relocation• Thermal board external wall <p>Thermal imaging camera survey</p>
Tier 3	<p><u>Building Repairs Manager Remit (as appropriate)</u></p> <p>Arrange for installation of data loggers to monitor temperature and humidity.</p> <p>Arrange for housing management support.</p> <p>Arrange for installation of positive input fan.</p>
Tier 4	<p><u>Head of Building Maintenance Remit (as appropriate)</u></p>

	<p>Escalate to senior management to investigate rehouse option.</p> <p>Inform Head of Building Projects properties identified that would benefit from larger scale improvements as part of a planned maintenance scheme.</p>
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4.7. Customer Responsibilities

To immediately report any evidence of rising and penetrating damp and faulty equipment that will affect the management of humidity and moisture in the home (faulty extract fan, unable to open windows, heating system failure etc.)

Customers must allow access for inspections and for the carrying out of all remedial works and servicing of appliances (gas boilers and ventilation systems).

Customers can help reduce the conditions that lead to condensation dampness by:

- Keeping the presence of moisture to a minimum e.g., covering pans when cooking, drying laundry outside (where possible), where it is safe to do so, keeping the kitchen or bathroom door closed when cooking or bathing.
- Adequately heating rooms (The World Health Organisation recommends 18°C.)
- Keeping the house well-ventilated e.g., opening windows during cooking / bathing, turning on and ensuring that the extractor fan or ventilation system installed in their home is regularly cleaned and working, keeping trickle vents in windows open, and allowing air to circulate around furniture.

Form name	Integrated Impact Assessment
Reference	IA585992149
Date	12/02/2024



Policy details

Request date	12/02/2024 10:55
Directorate	PCC Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services
Service	Building Services
Title of policy, service, function	Damp and Mould Policy
Type of policy, service, function	New
What is the aim of your policy, service, function, project or strategy?	The aim of the policy is to to set out how damp and mould will be managed in HRA properties.
Has any consultation been undertaken for this proposal?	yes
What were the outcomes of the consultations?	<p>The policy has been consulted with HNB service teams and the Assistant Director of Public Health. Internal Audit also undertook a review into damp and mould and recommendations were included in their final report dated November 2023.</p> <p>The resident consortium were consulted at a meeting on 5 October 2023 and the repairs and maintenance sub-group were also consulted.</p> <p>The Housing and Social Care Scrutiny Panel reviewed the residents' perspectives and were provided with HNB information regarding its approach to damp and mould on 13 July 2023.</p>
Has anything changed because of the consultation?	yes

Please provide details	The policy was updated to include feedback from services regarding the process and how the policy and information will be implemented and communicated to residents. The Assistant Director of Public Health and internal Audit were supportive of the policy.
Did this inform your proposal?	yes
Please provide details	The policy was updated to include feedback from services regarding the process and how the policy and information will be implemented and communicated to residents. The Assistant Director of Public Health and internal Audit were supportive of the policy.

Equality & diversity - will it have any positive/negative impacts on the protected characteristics?

With the above in mind and following data analysis, who is the policy, service, function, project or strategy going to benefit or have a detrimental effect on and how?	The policy will benefit all residents living within HRA properties as the policy seeks to ensure the management damp and mould is reported and managed effectively.
Will any of those groups be affected in a different way to others because of your policy, project, service, function, or strategy?	No

<p>If you are directly or indirectly discriminating, how are you going to mitigate the negative impact?</p>	<p>Surveyors will visit every reported incident of damp and mould to investigate and diagnose the cause of damp delivering effective solutions on an individual case by case basis.</p> <p>We will periodically evaluate repairs and stock data to identify property archetypes that are more prone to damp and mould to inform its asset management strategy. This approach will identify properties to be targeted that require regular stock condition surveys. This enables us to plan to proactively inspect properties and engage with residents where it has been identified that the properties are more prone to damp and mould issues..</p>
<p>Who have you consulted with or are planning to consult with and what was/will be your consultation methodology?</p>	<p>Consultation has been undertaken with the residents consortium including the repairs and maintenance sub-group by attending meetings and distributing the draft policy and seeking feedback. The Assistant Director of Public Health and Building Services teams have also been consulted and provided feedback on the draft policy that was distributed.</p> <p>Residents will continue to be kept informed regarding damp and mould policy through articles on the website and social media as well as articles in the resident magazine, Housetalk.</p> <p>Leaflets and a damp and mould video are also available on the Council website, posters will also be made available in blocks that are more prone to damp and mould. .</p>
<p>How are you going to review the policy, service, project or strategy, how often and who will be responsible?</p>	<p>The damp and mould safety group will continue to have oversight of the process. The group will review performance measures and feedback from complaints to monitor that we are responding to damp and mould instances appropriately in accordance with the policy. It will also periodically evaluate repairs and stock data to identify property types that are more prone to damp and mould to inform either future planned programmes or targeted regular stock condition surveys.</p> <p>The damp and mould safety group will continue to review new guidance and any changes to legislation that require processes or measures to be updated.</p>

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Housing - will it provide good quality homes?

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?	The proposed changes to the Fire Safety policy will ensure that PCC continue to provide Council homes that are of good quality and building defects are addressed.
How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?	We will periodically evaluate repairs and stock data to identify property archetypes that are more prone to damp and mould to inform its asset management strategy. This proactive approach will either inform future planned programmes or identify properties to be targeted that require regular stock condition surveys.

Health - will this help promote healthy, safe and independent living?

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?	Damp and mould predominantly affect the airways and lungs. The respiratory effects of damp and mould can cause serious illness. The damp and mould policy seeks to address any damp and mould issues identified in our Council housing and as a consequence will reduce the occurrence of health impact on Council residents.
How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?	The damp and mould safety group will continue to have oversight of the process by reviewing performance measures and feedback from complaints to monitor that we are responding to damp and mould instances appropriately in accordance with the policy.

Income deprivation and poverty - will it consider income deprivation and reduce poverty?

<p>Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?</p>	<p>The damp and mould policy outlines our responsibilities to provide advice including directing residents to sources of information and support on energy savings if they have difficulty in heating their home.</p>
<p>How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?</p>	<p>The damp and mould safety group will periodically link in with the energy team who measure the referrals they have received and support provided to residents.</p>

Carbon emissions - will it reduce carbon emissions?

<p>Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?</p>	<p>The damp and mould policy highlights there will be evaluation of energy performance certificates (EPCs) that will further inform actions that can be undertaken by Building services teams to proactively manage damp and mould, by targeting properties to prevent damp and mould occurring.</p> <p>Surveyors will diagnose the cause of damp and mould and could undertake measures that could include improved insulation or more efficient heating systems.</p>
<p>How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?</p>	<p>The damp and mould safety group will periodically evaluate repairs and stock data to identify property types that are more prone to damp and mould to inform either future planned programmes or targeted regular stock condition surveys. These could include planned schemes that include improved insulation or more efficient heating systems.</p>

Energy use - will it reduce energy use?

<p>Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?</p>	<p>The damp and mould policy highlights there will be evaluation of energy performance certificates (EPCs) that will further inform actions that can be undertaken by Building services teams to proactively manage damp and mould, by targeting properties to prevent damp and mould occurring.</p> <p>Surveyors will diagnose the cause of damp and mould and could undertake measures that could include improved insulation or more efficient heating systems that could reduce electric and gas consumption.</p>
<p>How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?</p>	<p>The damp and mould safety group will periodically evaluate repairs and stock data to identify property types that are more prone to damp and mould to inform either future planned programmes or targeted regular stock condition surveys. These could include planned schemes that include improved insulation or more efficient heating systems that could reduce electric and gas consumption.</p>

Climate change mitigation and flooding - will it proactively mitigate against a changing climate and flooding?

<p>This section is not applicable to my policy</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
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Natural environment - will it ensure public spaces are greener, more sustainable and well-maintained?

<p>This section is not applicable to my policy</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
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Air quality - will it improve air quality?

<p>This section is not applicable to my policy</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
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Transport - will it make transport more sustainable and safer for the whole community?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Waste management - will it increase recycling and reduce the production of waste?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Culture and heritage - will it promote, protect and enhance our culture and heritage?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Employment and opportunities - will it promote the development of a skilled workforce?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Economy - will it encourage businesses to invest in the city, support sustainable growth and regeneration?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Involvement

Who was involved in the Integrated impact assessment?	Steve Groves - Head of Building Maintenance
Name of the person completing this form	Steve Groves
Date of completion	2024-02-12



CONDENSATION AND MOULD

**ADVICE FOR
PORTSMOUTH CITY
COUNCIL TENANTS**



Homes in the UK can suffer from condensation and mould, especially in the winter. Daily tasks such as cooking, showering and drying clothes result in moisture being released into the air, which can lead to condensation and black mould growth. Mould toxicity can negatively impact both your physical and mental wellbeing.

DAMP

There are two types of damp that can lead to the growth of black mould within a home. Rising damp is caused by ground water moving up through the wall or floor. This can be caused by a lack of effective damp proof course. Penetrating damp is caused by leaking water. This is usually caused by a structural problem in the building such as faulty guttering, or it can be caused by internal leaks, like pipes under the sink. This type of damp may expand across walls or a ceiling horizontally.



BLACK MOULD

Black mould is caused by a build-up of moisture. Left untreated this can spread from walls onto furniture, curtains and clothing. Black mould produces allergens, irritants, and sometimes toxic substances. Inhaling or touching mould spores may cause an allergic reaction such as sneezing, a runny nose, red eyes and a skin rash.



CONDENSATION

Condensation is caused by moist air coming into contact with cold surfaces such as walls, windows and mirrors. It can also build up in places where there is little air movement, in or behind wardrobes and cupboards. Condensation can cause dampness and mould within your home which can create a distinctive musty smell.



HOW TO REDUCE CONDE BLACK MOULD GROWTH

MAINTAIN PROPER VENTILATION



Use extractor fans and trickle vents in your windows. These don't lose much heat so keep them uncovered.



Open windows for short periods in the morning to release moisture from your home.



If you're drying clothes indoors, make sure there are open windows to allow moisture to escape.



Allow soft furnishings, such as sofas, room to breathe by pulling them away from the wall and not overfilling your wardrobe.

CONDENSATION AND PREVENT IT IN YOUR HOME

HEAT YOUR HOME



Condensation is less likely to form if the temperature of your home is above 15°C.



However, it's recommended that rooms are kept at between 18-21°C to keep you warm and healthy.



Don't turn thermostatic radiator valves off, always keep them on a minimum frost setting.

SWITCHED ON

PORTSMOUTH

If you're struggling to afford your heating, help is available. Visit our website at: switchedonportsmouth.co.uk for energy saving advice or call our freephone number **0800 260 5907** to receive free energy and financial advice, as well as onward referrals into larger schemes.

TRY TO KEEP YOUR MOISTURE LEVELS DOWN

Most daily tasks will release moisture into the air.

Activity	Litres of water vapour
Breathing – active adult	0.85 litres per day per person
Breathing – sleeping adult	0.3 litres per day per person
Cooking	Up to 3 litres per day
Washing clothes	0.5 litres per load
Drying clothes	5 litres per load
Showers and baths	1.5 litres per person
Washing dishes	Up to 1 litre per day
Un-flued gas heater	Up to 1 litre per hour of use

Try the below tips to reduce moisture levels in your home to prevent condensation:

Dry clothes outside or in a vented tumble dryer where possible

Take shorter showers

Add cold water first when running a bath – this reduces steam by up to 90%

Keep a lid on pots and pans when cooking

Wipe windows daily with a squeegee

KEEP KITCHENS AND BATHROOMS CLEAN

Kitchens and bathrooms are hotspots for condensation and therefore, mould as well. Keep on top of your cleaning routine to prevent the build-up of black mould in these rooms.



CONTACTING US ABOUT DAMP AND MOULD IN YOUR HOME

Reporting damp and mould to the council is the right thing to do, and the earliest this can be done, the easier it will be to resolve. Any signs of damp should be reported to the Housing repairs support team as soon as possible. This can be done by calling or emailing using the below details, or online on the Portsmouth City Council website via the 'maintaining and repairing your council property' web page.

If you notice black mould spots starting to appear, do not leave it. To remove the mould, first try buying a domestic mould and mildew remover from your local supermarket and cleaning the affected areas by carefully following the manufacturer's instructions.

If you have **extreme** black mould or the initial treatment is not effective, please contact the Housing repairs support team as this may be an indication of an underlying repair issue with your home and will need to be cleaned off and treated with fungicidal treatment. Do not try to remove with a brush or Hoover as this can lead to the mould spreading further round your home.

HOUSING REPAIRS SUPPORT TEAM CONTACT DETAILS

 023 9284 1311

 repairssupportteam@portsmouthcc.gov.uk



FOR ADVICE AND SUPPORT WITH
YOUR ENERGY USE AND BILLS VISIT
SWITCHEDONPORTSMOUTH.COM
OR CALL **0800 260 5907**



You can get this information in large
print, Braille, audio or in another
language by calling 023 9284 1193

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Damp and mould

During winter we see more issues with damp and mould in your homes.

You can look out for mould by checking the corners and borders of your home for any dark spots or patches. Mould can also create a musty smell in the home.

Top tips to reduce mould in your home:

- Ventilate rooms by turning on extractor fans or opening windows slightly when you're doing things like cooking, showering or drying clothes.
- It's recommended to keep rooms between 18-21°C to keep you warm and healthy.
- Wipe condensation off windows and window sills as often as you can.

Remember, if you spot any signs of black mould, even a small amount, you should report it to the repairs team straight away. Treating it sooner rather than later can stop the mould spreading.

For more tips visit www.portsmouth.gov.uk/housetalk

To contact the repairs support team about damp, mould, window opening restrictors or asbestos, email repairssupportteam@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or call **023 9284 1311**.



If you have a balcony, it's important to be aware of safety for you and your family. We've put together some guidelines:

- Use window opening restrictors. If you don't have them or they're not working, contact us and we'll install new ones.
- Keep your balcony door locked when not in use.
- Never allow young children access to a balcony without an adult present.
- If you have young children, consider installing a child-proof gate that you can lock when you're not in the room and don't want to lock the balcony door.

Here's a few other things to remember to keep your balcony safe:

- Never lean over, sit or climb on the balcony wall or railing.
- Never try to pass items to someone on another balcony.
- Never try to climb onto another balcony from your balcony.
- Keep balcony furniture away from the railing, and heavy enough so children can't drag it to climb up on.
- Don't store waste on balconies (this includes BBQs, gas bottles and heaters).
- White goods like fridges should **not** be stored or used on balconies.
- If you smoke on a balcony, extinguish cigarettes properly - do not discard them on or over your balcony.
- Don't modify your balcony.
- Remember that netting to prevent birds accessing your balcony is not safety netting.

To contact the repairs support team about damp, mould, window opening restrictors or asbestos, email repairssupportteam@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or call **023 9284 1311**.

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Asset Type Construction Type Repair Keywords Repair Status

- Block of Flats
- Bungalow
- Flat
- House
- House in Multiple Occupat...

- (Blank)
- Acquired Traditional
- BISF
- Bison
- Concrete ring beam

- Damp and Mould - Condensation
- Damp and Mould - External Leaks
- Damp and Mould - Internal Leaks
- Damp and Mould - Rising Damp
- No Damp/Mould Keyword

- Repair Closed
- Repair Open

Surveyor Appointments

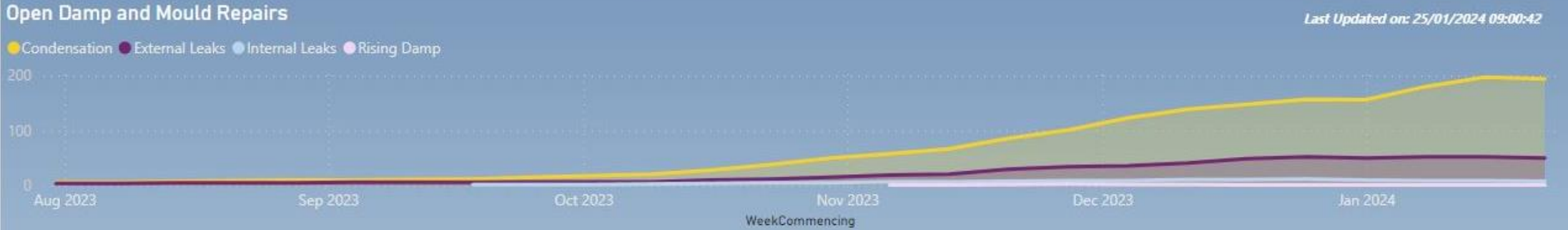
- Building Surveyor Appointments
- No Building Surveyor Appointment

Quarterly Performance

Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
4	20	289	86
Repairs where First-Appointment is within 14 Days of First Contact Date			
75.0%	80.0%	83.7%	97.7%

Overall Performance

Total Repairs	Completed Repairs	Open Repairs
403	154	249
Awaiting Call Back	Total Costs	Average Cost
153	£253.59K	£728.61



Asset ID	Full Address	Asset Type	Repair Status	Repair ID	Repair Keywords	Repair E2E (days)	First Contact Date	Last Repair Completed Date	Surveyors Appointments	Appointments	Cancelled Appointments	Total Cost
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Agenda Item 7



Portsmouth
CITY COUNCIL

Title of meeting:	Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness
Date of meeting:	22 nd February 2024
Subject:	Park Homes Pitch Fee Review 2024 & Park Homes Policy
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Darren Sanders, Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness
Report by:	James Hill - Director for Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services
Report Author:	Clare Hardwick - Head of Private Sector Housing Sam Rickeard – Housing Regulation Manager
Wards affected:	All
Key decision:	No
Full Council decision:	No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to make recommendations regarding the Park Homes pitch fee review, and agree the approach that will be applied to the upcoming annual pitch fee review process for April 2024. This report also makes recommendations for Officers to conduct a resident consultation regarding the implementation of a Park Homes policy.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness increase Park Home pitch fees by 4% in the new financial year (2024/25) starting 01st April 2024. This increase is in line with the January 2024 Consumer Price Index (CPI) rate for England and is the latest published figure 28 days before the review date (01st April 2024).
- 2.2. That an annual report will be brought to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness for decision before each pitch fee review process commences.
- 2.3. That the Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness instructs Officers to conduct a 4-week resident consultation starting 01st March 2024 regarding the implementation of a Park Homes policy. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness should instruct Officers to bring a report back to cabinet regarding the findings of this consultation and a further recommendation regarding the implementation of this policy.

- 2.4. That, regardless of any consultation, the current policy of not charging any sales commission is reconfirmed.

3. Background

- 3.1. Portsmouth City Council is the landowner of two residential Park Home sites: Cliffdale Gardens and Henderson Park. The residents of these sites are private owner occupiers who own their private Park Homes and rent their plots from the local authority for a weekly charge.
- 3.2. Residents who live on fully residential sites are required to pay a pitch fee in line with their pitch agreement, which is a contract between site owner and park home resident. The agreement states the amount of the pitch fee and when it is to be paid. Pitch fees can be reviewed annually to allow site owners to recover increases in costs due to inflation. On 2nd May 2023, the Mobile Homes (Pitch Fees) Act 2023 was introduced to amend the provisions regarding pitch fees in the Mobile Homes Act 1983. Primarily this Act changes the inflationary index for annual pitch fee reviews from Retail Price Index (RPI) to Consumer Price Index (CPI). CPI is generally lower compared with RPI.
- 3.3. The pitch fee is a rental charge applied to Park Home residents for allowing them to keep their mobile home on the site. This fee allows the council, as the site owner, to cover the cost of managing the site, including repairs and maintenance of it, as well as to generate a surplus which contributes to the council's General Fund.
- 3.4. The pitch fee can be increased by up to the CPI each year, as well as recovery of certain costs related to "improvements" to the site. Any cost increase that seeks to include "improvements" must follow a consultation process with residents, where the majority of residents do not disagree to the proposal. This means that the pitch fee must cover the cost of managing the site, including all repairs and maintenance of the existing facilities. If, for example, a major repair or maintenance scheme were required that exceeded the income from the pitch fees there is no mechanism to recharge this to residents by increasing the fee above CPI or levying an additional charge.
- 3.5. The pitch fee can only be changed either by agreement between the occupier and site owner or by a determination of the First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber). It should be reviewed annually at the review date, a date which is specified in the pitch agreement. In February 2023 cabinet made the decision to increase pitch fees by 6% from 01st April 2023. The rate of RPI was 11.4% as of 01st April 2023, meaning the cost increase was lower than the potential maximum rate.
- 3.6. As mentioned in 3.2 above, the applicable rate of inflation that can be used for pitch fee increases has now changed to CPI. The applicable rate of CPI is approximately in line with the Council's expected internal rate of inflation, such as increased costs in staff salaries and repairs and maintenance. Some services, such as water rates, are expected to exceed the current rate of CPI. As mentioned in 3.3 above, the

Council may use any surplus income generated from pitch fees as a contribution towards the Council's General Fund. Because of this it is not recommended that a rate lower than CPI is considered.

- 3.7. The Council currently manages its Park Home sites in line with several legislative requirements and prescribed standards which relate to the management of Park Home sites. Residents of Park Home sites have a written statement which provides them with the terms under which they may rent the plot from the Council. The written statement can be broadly considered the rules that residents and the council must adhere to.
- 3.8. Due to the construction type and build materials of Park Homes, they are considered higher risk compared with typical 'bricks-and-mortar' properties. To manage the collective risk at Park Home sites, especially regarding fire safety, specific requirements regarding building works, temporary structures and stored items must be met. The Council currently manage this risk by giving consideration towards any requests for works based upon relevant legislation, national guidance (including the Model Standards 2008 for Caravan Sites in England), advice received from the Fire Service and Fire Risk Assessors as well as other sources, where applicable.
- 3.9. The current process for determining whether works can be approved or not relies heavily upon residents supplying information to the Council regarding any proposed changes and seeking express consent before any works take place. Residents are not currently furnished with the Councils' requirements in relation to most typical build or alteration requests, nor how the Council reaches a determination on whether to give permission or not. The process can often be unclear and burdensome for residents and the Council in responding to individual requests.
- 3.10. Current established practises are formalised through the written statement that each resident living on Park Home sites holds with the Council. In most cases this requires residents to contact the Park Homes Management team and seek consent to carry out works, or permission to make a change, including common day-to-day matters such as improvement works and alterations to the home and individual plots. It is proposed to create a written policy which makes the Council's requirements clear for residents, so that permission for common alterations and changes can be given to the requirements in the policy, without needing to seek consent from the Park Homes Management team. It is also intended that the policy will include helpful information as guidance regarding how the Council manages Park Home sites, information on obtaining planning permission and buying and selling a Park Home. This will not introduce any changes to how the council manages sales, including not charging a sales commission, and is intended to inform current and prospective Park Home residents. A draft policy is contained within appendix 3 of this report.
- 3.11. The policy does not amend or interfere with planning permission requirements and informs residents of the need to seek planning consent in most cases. Park Homes do not benefit from 'Permitted Development' rights like 'bricks-and-mortar'

properties. Extensions, porches, sheds, and other structures may require full or partial planning permission. Residents should contact the Council's Planning department before undertaking works. Failure to do so may result in the requirement to remove any unlawful structures by the Council's Planning Enforcement team.

4. The Pitch Fee review Process

- 4.1. On 26th July 2013, the government introduced a prescribed procedure that a site owner must follow to increase a pitch fee.
- 4.2. At least 28 days before the specified review date, occupiers must be formally notified of the pitch fee review. For Cliffdale Gardens & Henderson Park the next review date is 1st April 2024. Residents of the site must therefore be notified in writing no later than 4th March 2024 of any proposed revision to the fee.
- 4.3. The written notice must be accompanied by a pitch fee review form. This form is prescribed by legislation and is designed to provide transparency in the Pitch Fee Review process and to help Park Home residents to understand the amount that they are being charged. It is also designed to ensure that a site owner is not able to add unfair charges to the pitch fee.
- 4.4. A Park Home resident is not obligated to accept the proposed increase in pitch fees. They can, however, pay the current amount and withhold the increase. The site owner may make an application to the First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) for a determination of the amount of the new pitch fee. This should be done no later than three months after the review date. If there is a late review, an application to the Tribunal will need to be made no later than four months after the date that the site owner serves the notice.

5. How the Pitch fee is calculated

- 5.1. As mentioned in 3.2 above, the Mobile Homes (Pitch Fee) Act 2023 amends the provisions regarding pitch fee review, changing the rate of any increase from RPI to CPI. This change is effective from any pitch fee review commencing after 2nd July 2023. This change does not impact the current written agreement residents hold to rent a pitch from the site owner.
- 5.2. The calculation of the fee takes into account; the current pitch fee adjusted by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), any consulted upon recoverable costs (for improvements) and any relevant deductions (for reduction or deterioration in service or facilities).
- 5.3. The CPI is calculated by using the last figure that was published 28 days before the review date (01st April 2024). Due to CPI being published mid-month in arrears the rate of CPI to be applied for the pitch fee review is the January 2024 rate of 4%.

6. Current Pitch Fees

6.1. Henderson Park has 67 Plots comprising of:

- 23 x Small plots
- 27 x Large Plots
- 17 x Double Plots

6.2. Cliffdale Gardens has 48 plots comprising of:

- 13 x Small plots
- 25 x Large plots
- 10 x Double plots

6.3. The pitch fees at both sites are charged at the same weekly rates, which are currently as follows:

- Small plot: £37.55
- Large Plot: £42.44
- Double plot: £47.16

The combined total fee from both sites currently generates an income of approximately £251,000 per annum.

7. Park Homes Policy

7.1. The council wishes to seek the views of Park Home residents on a proposed written Park Homes policy, by conducting a 4-week consultation with the residents of Cliffdale Gardens and Henderson Park.

7.2. The consultation will include a survey, made available online and in print, which will capture the views regarding specific areas of the policy. Officers also propose to hold an in-person forum with residents' mid-way through the survey to support residents in completing the survey and enable residents to raise any questions regarding the consultation or policy.

7.3. The policy does not make any changes to the written statement residents hold to rent their pitch. The main aims of the policy will be to provide information and advice to both current and prospective Park Home residents regarding the obligations of the Council and residents. Key areas the policy will include rules and requirements around works, modifications or alterations to Park Homes and individual plots, guidance on buying and selling a Park Home and information on Council services applicable to Park Home sites.

7.4. The intention of introducing this policy is to provide clarity regarding day-to-day obligations that impact those living on Park Home sites, as well as removing the need for residents to seek individual permission for common works that adhere to the published standards. Residents will be given the necessary information on the Councils' requirements to carry out works, so as to remove the need to seek

permission in most cases. As mentioned within this report, this will not remove the requirement for residents to seek Planning consent in most cases. The Council would continue to support residents who had questions or concerns regarding these standards and would continue in its duty as site manager to ensure the sites remain safe and well managed, taking action where necessary if works have not been completed to the required standard.

- 7.5. In addition to this, the policy would seek to cover areas of joint responsibility, such as repairs and drainage and give guidance surrounding common Park Homes issues, such as buying and selling a Park Home and insurance needed. This will not introduce any changes to how the council manages sales, including not charging a sales commission, and is intended to inform current and prospective Park Home residents. A draft policy is contained within Appendix 3 of this report.

8. Reasons for recommendations

- 8.1. As outlined in this report, there is a process of annual review of the pitch fees for Park Homes, following legislative criteria. The pitch fee date for this year is set for 1st April 2024, and the local authority must write to residents at least 28 days before this date detailing the review and proposals for any changes to the pitch fee using a nationally prescribed proforma (an example of which is contained in Appendix 1).
- 8.2. The Council incur a number of costs in running the two Park Homes sites, including staffing costs for managing the sites. Staffing costs have increased by approximately 6% since the pitch fees were last reviewed in April 2023.
- 8.3. The Council are also responsible for the costs of repairs and maintenance of the Park Homes sites. The cost of building work nationally, including repairs and maintenance, have increased significantly in recent years. The "All In" Tender Price Index showed an annual growth of 4% in 2023. Market predictions indicate that construction costs are forecast to rise just over 3% in the year leading up to quarter 3 in 2024. The costs of any repairs and maintenance of the Park Homes sites required in the next financial year should therefore be expected to increase in cost significantly.
- 8.4. The Council currently include water charges amongst the pitch fees charged to residents and recover these costs through the pitch fee income. Water rates have risen by approximately 7.5% per household from April 2022 to April 2023. Increases in water rates should be expected over the next financial year and therefore considered regarding the rate of increase to pitch fees.
- 8.5. The applicable rate of CPI for the proposed increase is 4% (January 2024). This rate of inflation is approximately in line with expected internal cost increases, such as staff salaries and repairs and maintenance. However, due to the unpredictable nature of some cost increases Officers recommend that the maximum permitted increase is applied to prevent a negative budget pressure.

8.6. The Cabinet member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness is now asked to increase the pitch fee by the January 2024 rate of CPI for the next financial year (2024/25). An increase of 4% would increase the pitch fees to:

Small plot: £39.05 (an increase of £1.50 per week or £78 per annum)

Large plot: £44.14 (an increase of £1.70 per week or £88.40 per annum)

Double plot: £49.05 (an increase of £1.89 per week or £98.28 per annum).

8.6.1. The combined total fee from both sites would generate a gross income of approximately £261,000.

8.7. Officers recommend that the Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness instructs Officers to conduct a 4-week resident consultation, starting 01st March 2024, and present the findings of this consultation in a subsequent cabinet report, so that the views of residents can be gathered and included as part of the decision-making process.

9. **Integrated impact assessment**

9.1. An Integrated Impact Assessment can be found at Appendix 2.

10. **Legal implications**

10.1 The residents of these mobile homes site occupy them under the Mobile Homes Act 1983 (MHA 1983). The Act sets out a number of terms which are implied into the agreement between the Council and the occupants. Occupiers of the sites must be given a written statement of the terms of the agreement setting out certain information including the terms implied by the MHA 1983 and the express terms. The pitch fee can only be amended in accordance with the procedure set out in the implied terms which are in the written statement. The Council must give each occupier written notice of the new pitch fee at least 28 days before the review date for the pitch fees. If the occupier agrees then the new fee takes effect on the review date. If the occupier does not agree then an application to the Residential Property Tribunal can be made to determine the amount of the new fee.

10.2 The pitch fee can only be reviewed and changed on an annual basis. The proposed new pitch fee may increase (or reduce) by no more than the change in CPI since the last review date. In setting the proposals for the pitch fee, the site owner must take account of the following matters:

- Any authorised amounts spent on improvements to the site since the last review date.
- Any reduction in occupier's ability to use the site since the last review date.
- The effect of any relevant change in the law that has come into force since the last review date.



- 10.3 A further recommendation in this report is to conduct a 4-week resident consultation regarding the implementation of a written Park Homes policy with the intention of clarifying and offering transparency and guidance on the council's management processes and policies in respect of its mobile home sites. Provided the policy content does not seek to make, vary or delete existing site rules for the mobile home sites, it is not necessary for the council to follow the statutory consultation process set out in the Mobile Homes (Site Rules) (England) Regulations 2014. However, the Cabinet Member should be satisfied that the consultation proposed allows residents sufficient time to respond and is carried out in an accessible manner.
- 10.4 It is within the Cabinet member's powers, as set out in the Council's constitution, to make the recommendations set out in this report.

11. Director of Finance's comments

11.1 The recommendation to increase the pitch fees by the January 2024 Consumer Price Index (CPI) is the maximum permissible increase. It is considered necessary to prevent the Mobile Homes account falling into deficit due to predicted future increases in staff and maintenance costs. Staffing costs for managing the sites have increased by approximately 6% since the pitch fees were last reviewed in April 2023. The cost of building work, including repairs and maintenance, have also increased significantly in recent years. In addition, water rates have risen by approximately 7.5% per household from April 2022 to April 2023.

.....
Signed by: James Hill, **Director of Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services**

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 - Pitch fee review form template 2023
- Appendix 2 - Integrated Impact Assessment
- Appendix 3 – Draft Park Homes Policy

Background list of documents:

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Mobile Homes Act 1983	Mobile Homes Act 1983 (legislation.gov.uk)



Mobile Homes (Pitch Fees) Act 2023	Mobile Homes (Pitch Fees) Act 2023 (legislation.gov.uk)
Mobile Homes Act 2013	Mobile Homes Act 2013 (legislation.gov.uk)
Park Homes LEASE advice website	Pitch Fee Review - Park Homes (lease-advice.org)
Consumer Price Inflation UK	Consumer price inflation, UK - Office for National Statistics

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

.....
Signed by:

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Pitch Fee Review Form

[The Mobile Homes (Pitch Fees) (Prescribed Form) (England) Regulations] SI 2023/620

FORM TO ACCOMPANY A PITCH FEE REVIEW NOTICE

Form prescribed under paragraph 25A(1) of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mobile Homes Act 1983

Important note: This form, or a form substantially to the like effect, must be sent with the pitch fee review notice where the site owner proposes to increase the pitch fee. Otherwise, the pitch fee review will not be valid. This form may also be used if the site owner is proposing to reduce the pitch fee. Both the site owner and the occupier(s) should read the notes at the end of this form as they contain important information about pitch fee reviews.

Section 1: Parties

From: [insert name of the site owner(s)]

To: [insert name of occupier(s)]

Section 2: Proposed new pitch fee

I/We propose to increase/reduce [delete as appropriate] your pitch fee for:

.....
 [insert address of the home]

The last review date was [insert date]

The current pitch fee is £ [insert amount] per week/month/quarter/year

The proposed new pitch fee is £..... [insert amount] per week/month/quarter/year

Section 3: Date new pitch fee proposed to take effect (effective date)

The review date is twelve months after the last review date.

The effective date is the date when it is proposed the new pitch fee is payable from, which may be on the review date or, in the case of a late review, a later date.

- The proposed pitch fee will take effect on the review date on
- The proposed pitch fee will take effect on which is later than the review date

(Complete whichever is appropriate)

Note: For further information on the review, late reviews and effective dates see the notes at the end of the form.

Section 4: Calculation of the proposed new pitch fee

The proposed new pitch fee has been calculated as (A) + (B) + (C) - (D) where:

(A) is the current pitch fee of £ [insert figure]

(B) is the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) Adjustment £ [insert +/- figure]

[calculated from a percentage increase/decrease [delete as appropriate] of%]

(C) is the recoverable costs of £[insert figure]

(D) is the relevant deductions of £ [insert figure]

(B) The CPI adjustment

In accordance with paragraph 20(A1) of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mobile Homes Act 1983 (as amended by the Mobile Homes (Pitch Fees) Act 2023), I/we have calculated the CPI adjustment as the percentage increase/decrease [delete as appropriate] in the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) over 12 months by reference to the CPI published for

..... [insert month and year of latest index] which was

..... [insert CPI for that month].

Note: For further information on the correct CPI figures to use refer to the section on the CPI adjustment in the notes at the end of this form.

(C) Recoverable costs

I /We have added a charge that I /we have incurred and believe can be recovered through the pitch fee. The details of the costs are set out below.

Description of item relating to the costs	The period in which the cost was incurred	The total cost	How this has been divided across the homes	The net charge to the occupier is

The total net charge to you is £ [insert amount] per week/month/quarter/year [delete as appropriate]

(D) Relevant deductions

I/We have deducted the sum of £..... per week/month/quarter/year [delete as appropriate]

to take account of the following matters:

..... [insert details of any matter(s) which you have taken into account in calculating the figure arrived at].

I/We have arrived at that figure as follows:

.....
.....

.....[insert explanation of how you have calculated the figure for (D)]

Note: The matters to which the site owner(s) shall have particular regard to when carrying out the pitch fee review include those set out in paragraph 18 of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mobile Homes Act 1983 (as amended by section 11 of the Mobile Homes Act 2013) which forms part of your implied terms. Account should therefore be taken of these matters in the calculation of either (C) or (D). Paragraphs 18 and 19 of that Chapter also set out certain matters which cannot be taken into account in the calculation of (C) and (D). Further information can also be found in the notes at the end of this form.

Section 5: What to do if you disagree with the proposed new pitch fee

If you do not agree to the proposed pitch fee you do not have to pay the proposed new amount from the effective date, but you must continue to pay the current pitch fee. You will not incur arrears. I/We may, however, apply to a tribunal for it to decide what the new pitch fee should be. You also have the right to apply to the tribunal. If the tribunal decides that a new pitch fee is payable it shall be payable as from the effective date. (The notes accompanying this form contain further information).

Section 6: Signature of site owner(s)

Signed:

Date:

Name and address of the site owner(s) (for the purpose of serving notices)

.....

Section 7: Notes: *You should read these notes carefully as they contain important information about the pitch fee review. You should note, however, that these notes are for guidance only and do not purport to provide a definitive statement of the law.*

General

- This form should be used if the site owner is proposing to change the pitch fee.
- This form must be served on the occupier with the pitch fee review notice at least 28 days before the date on which it is proposed to change the pitch fee.
- This form sets out the proposed new pitch fee, the date from which it is proposed the new pitch fee will take effect and how it has been calculated. This form should be sent to the occupier(s) with the pitch fee review notice.
- The new proposed pitch fee cannot be imposed on the occupier. It must be agreed or determined by a tribunal.

Reviews and late reviews

- A change in pitch fee is normally proposed to be effective from the review date. A minimum notice period of 28 days prior to the review date must be given.
- The review date is the date specified in the written statement as the date on which the pitch fee will be reviewed in each year. If no date is specified it is likely to be each anniversary of the date the agreement commenced.
- If the site owner misses the review date a proposed change to the pitch fee can be made to take effect at a later time. Provided a minimum notice period of 28 days is given a late review can be proposed to take effect at any time after the review date and before the next review date.
- The “next review date” is the date twelve months from the review date. This applies whether or not the current review is late. It means, for example, if the review date is 1st April 2023, but the review is late and doesn’t take effect until 1st July, the next review date will be on 1st April 2024, rather than 12 months from the effective date of the current review.
- As reviews are conducted annually, if the site owner does not propose a change in the pitch fee on the review date or before the next review date (in the case of a late review) the review is deemed to have been conducted for the year in question. This means, for example, that if a review date was 1st April 2023, but the site owner did not initiate a review before 1st April 2024, any charges (including CPI) attributable to the 2023 review cannot be included in the 2024 review.

The effect of the pitch fee review notice & making an application to the tribunal

- If the occupier accepts the new pitch fee they can let the site owner know or simply pay the proposed amount from the effective date.
- The occupier is not obliged to accept the proposal or pay the proposed amount. Failure to pay the new pitch fee will not result in the occupier being in arrears.

- If the occupier does not accept the proposed pitch fee they can let the site owner know, but the occupier does not have to do so. Provided the current pitch fee continues to be paid that is the maximum amount payable unless the tribunal decides a different figure.
- If there is no agreement as to the new pitch fee the site owner or the occupier may make an application to a tribunal for it to make a determination.
- Where the pitch fee review notice was served at least 28 clear days before the review date, an application to the tribunal may be made after the end of the period of 28 days beginning with the review date but not later than three months after the review date.
- Where the pitch fee review notice was served later, an application to the tribunal may be made after the end of the period of 56 days beginning with the date on which the site owner serves the notice but not later than four months after that date.
- In either case, a late application to the tribunal is permitted only if there are good reasons for the failure to apply within the time limit and for any delay since then in applying for permission to apply out of time.
- Before deciding a case the tribunal will invite representations from the parties and may hold a hearing and inspect the site.
- If you act unreasonably in connection with an application the tribunal can impose a costs order against you.
- If the tribunal makes a determination its decision will apply from the effective date. This means any proposed increase could be backdated by several months. However, the occupier shall not be treated as being in arrears until 28 days after the date of the order made by the tribunal determining the new pitch fee.
- If no agreement as to the pitch fee is reached and the tribunal does not make a determination (i.e. because the site owner has not made an application or because an application is refused or withdrawn) the occupier must continue to pay the existing pitch fee, but the proposed pitch fee cannot be charged, there are no arrears and the review process has ended for the year to which the notice refers.
- If, on the application of the occupier, a tribunal is satisfied that a notice of pitch fee review is of no effect due to the failure to serve this form with the notice of pitch fee review, but the occupier has nevertheless paid the pitch fee proposed in the notice, the tribunal may order the site owner to pay back the difference between the amount which the occupier was required to pay for the period in question and the amount which they have actually paid.

Matters that can and cannot be taken into account on a proposed review

- The law says¹ there is a presumption that the pitch fee cannot be changed by more than the annual change in Consumer Price Index (CPI), unless this would be unreasonable having regard to the matters set out in paragraph 18(1) of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mobile Homes Act 1983.
- This part of the notes explains how the CPI adjustment is worked out and what other matters can be taken into account as part of the review.

CPI adjustment

- How the CPI adjustment has been worked out is in section 4(B) of the form.
- The maximum CPI adjustment is limited to the CPI change in the previous year, even if the pitch fee has not changed for a number of years. (See above in the 'Reviews and late reviews' section for further details.)
- When applying the CPI adjustment to a pitch fee review which is proposed to take effect on the review date, the figure that must be used in the calculation is the latest published 12-month CPI figure available before the notice of review is served. The notice must be served at least 28 clear days before the review date.
- When applying the CPI adjustment to a pitch fee review which is proposed to take effect at a date later than the review date (a late review), the CPI figure that must be applied is the last 12 month CPI figure that was published before the day by which the site owner(s) should have served the review notice had the review taken place on time – i.e. the last 12-month CPI figure published prior

¹ Paragraph 20 of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mobile Homes Act 1983. For matters that can be taken into account on a review more generally see paragraph 18 (as amended by the Mobile Homes Act 2013).

to the day which was 28 clear days before the review date. So, if the review date is 1st April 2023, the CPI figure to be applied would be the last CPI figure published before 3rd March 2023.

- No other date or method for calculating the CPI adjustment is permitted.

Other matters that can be included in a review

- Costs incurred by the site owner, which are proposed to be recovered from the occupier, are shown in section 4(C) of the form.
- Matters to which such costs relate that are recoverable through the pitch fee include:
 - A change in the law since the last review date, other than one which is specifically prohibited from being included, which has directly affected the cost of the management or maintenance of the site.
 - The costs of certain “improvements” to the site (see below for details on improvements).
- A deduction from the pitch fee should be made and shown in section 4(D) of the form if it relates to a matter set out below:
 - The deduction of any charges included in previous reviews relating to the cost of improvements which have already been recovered through the pitch fee.
 - A reduction in costs as a result of the change in the law since the last review date, which has directly affected the cost of the management or maintenance of the site.
 - A deduction to reflect any deterioration in the condition or decrease in the amenity of the site or any adjoining land occupied or controlled by the site owner which has occurred since 26 May 2013 and which has not been taken into account in a previous pitch fee review.
 - A deduction to reflect any reduction in the services that the owner supplies to the site, pitch or mobile home, or any deterioration in the quality of those services which has occurred since 26 May 2013 and which has not been taken into account in a previous review.

Improvements

- **The cost of an improvement can only be recovered in a pitch fee review if:**
 - (a) the improvement is for the benefit of the occupiers of the site;
 - (b) there has been consultation with the occupiers and any qualifying residents’ association and
 - (c) the majority of occupiers have not disagreed in writing to the improvements being carried out or where the majority have disagreed, a tribunal has ordered that the costs can be included in the pitch fee².

Matters that cannot be included in a pitch fee review

- **Any costs relating to the following matters cannot be included in a pitch fee review:**
 - costs in complying with changes to the Mobile Homes Act 1983 introduced by the Mobile Homes Act 2013, including any cost relating to the preparation and service of this form³;
 - costs incurred as a result of any action taken by the local authority in licensing enforcement under sections 9A to 9I of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 and as a result of being convicted for an offence under section 9B⁴;
 - fees paid by the site owner for an application to the local authority for site licence conditions to be altered⁵ or for consent to transfer the site licence⁶;
 - any costs incurred by the site owner in connection with expanding the protected site;
 - any costs incurred by the site owner in relation to the conduct of proceedings under the Mobile Homes Act 1983 or under agreements made between the site owner and occupiers under that Act; and
 - any financial loss arising from the change from the requirement to use CPI instead of RPI as the inflationary index for the purposes of calculating the adjustment provided for by paragraph 20(A1) of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mobile Homes Act 1983. See section 2(2) of the Mobile Homes (Pitch Fees) Act 2023.

Site owner’s consultation obligations

- The site owner is required to consult the occupiers on any improvements to the site in general and in particular those where the owner proposes to recover the cost of the works through the pitch fee⁷ (see ‘Improvements’ above).

² Paragraph 18 (1) (a) of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mobile Homes Act 1983.

³ Paragraph 18(1A) of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mobile Homes Act 1983.

⁴ Paragraph 19(4) of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mobile Homes Act 1983.

⁵ Paragraph 19(3) of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mobile Homes Act 1983.

⁶ Paragraph 19(3) of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mobile Homes Act 1983.

⁷ Paragraph 22 (e) of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mobile Homes Act 1983.

- In addition, the site owner must consult with any qualifying residents' association⁸ of the site on matters relating to the operation and management of the site and any improvements to the site that might affect the occupiers of the site directly or indirectly⁹.
- In consulting, the site owner must give at least 28 days' notice of the improvement in writing. The consultation document must describe the proposed improvement and explain how it will benefit the occupiers in both the short and long term. The document must provide details about how the pitch fee will be affected by the proposed improvement at the next review date and it must state when and where representations can be made about the proposal¹⁰.
- Before undertaking any improvements to the site, the owner must take account of any representations received from the occupiers¹¹. But the site owner cannot undertake any works the cost of which is proposed to be recovered through the pitch fee if the majority of occupiers have disagreed to the works by notification in writing, unless a tribunal has authorised in default that the costs can be recovered in the pitch fee¹².

Site Owner's Repairing and maintenance liabilities

- Paragraph 22(c) and (d) of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mobile Homes Act 1983 sets out the site owner's repairing liabilities. These are that the owner:
 - be responsible for repairing the base on which the mobile home is stationed and for maintaining any gas, electricity, water, sewerage or other services supplied by the owner to the pitch or to the mobile home;
 - maintain in a clean and tidy condition those parts of the protected site, including access ways, site boundary fences and trees, which are not the responsibility of any occupier of a mobile home stationed on the protected site.
- Examples of such repairs and maintenance that fall within paragraph 22 may include repair and maintenance of pipes, conduits, wires, structures, tanks or other equipment provided by the site owner and of the parts of the site that are under the control of the site owner, including access ways, roads, pavements, street furniture and lighting, boundary fences, buildings in common use, drains and the drainage system and any open spaces or facilities in common.
- The site owner is also obliged to provide the occupier, free of charge, on request, documentary evidence in support and explanation of:
 - any new pitch fee;
 - any charges for gas, electricity, water, sewerage or other services payable by the occupier to the owner under the agreement; and
 - any other charges, costs or expenses payable by the occupier to the owner under the agreement¹³.

Occupiers' Repairing Liabilities

- The occupier is required to
 - (a) keep the home in a sound state of repair; and
 - (b) maintain the outside of the home and the pitch, including all fences and outbuildings belonging to, or enjoyed with, the pitch and the mobile home and ensure the same are kept in a clean and tidy condition¹⁴.
- Where the occupier is seeking the reimbursement of any costs or expenses from the site owner, if requested, the occupier must supply to the owner documentary evidence in support of the claim¹⁵.

Further information

A copy of this form and further information about residents' rights and obligations can be downloaded from www.gov.uk/park-homes-guidance or by contacting the free independent advisory service LEASE on 020 7832 2500.

⁸ For the definition of a qualifying residents' association see paragraph 28 of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mobile Homes Act 1983. More information on setting up and the role of residents' associations are available in the DLUHC fact sheet which can be downloaded from www.gov.uk/park-homes-guidance.

⁹ Paragraph 22(f) of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mobile Homes Act 1983.

¹⁰ Paragraph 24 (a) of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mobile Homes Act 1983.

¹¹ Paragraph 24 (b) of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mobile Homes Act 1983.

¹² Paragraph 18 (1) (a) of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mobile Homes Act 1983. For definition of "majority" see paragraph 18(2).

¹³ Paragraph 22(b) of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mobile Homes Act 1983.

¹⁴ Paragraph 21(c) and (d) of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mobile Homes Act 1983.

¹⁵ Paragraph 21(e) of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mobile Homes Act 1983.

Form name	Integrated Impact Assessment
Reference	IA573442802
Date	02/01/2024



Policy details

Request date	02/01/2024 09:24
Directorate	PCC Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services
Service	Private Sector Housing
Title of policy, service, function	Park Homes Pitch Fee Review 2024
Type of policy, service, function	Existing
What is the aim of your policy, service, function, project or strategy?	The purpose of the report is to present the options to agree the approach that will be applied to the upcoming pitch fee review for residential Park Home sites owned by Portsmouth City Council.
Has any consultation been undertaken for this proposal?	yes
What were the outcomes of the consultations?	The upcoming pitch fee review process forms the basis of a consultation with residents.
Has anything changed because of the consultation?	no
Did this inform your proposal?	no

Equality & diversity - will it have any positive/negative impacts on the protected characteristics?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
--	-------------------------------------

Crime - Will it make our city safer?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---	-------------------------------------

Housing - will it provide good quality homes?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---	-------------------------------------

Health - will this help promote healthy, safe and independent living?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---	-------------------------------------

Income deprivation and poverty - will it consider income deprivation and reduce poverty?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---	-------------------------------------

Carbon emissions - will it reduce carbon emissions?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---	-------------------------------------

Energy use - will it reduce energy use?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---	-------------------------------------

Climate change mitigation and flooding - will it proactively mitigate against a changing climate and flooding?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---	-------------------------------------

Natural environment - will it ensure public spaces are greener, more sustainable and well-maintained?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---	-------------------------------------

Air quality - will it improve air quality?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---	-------------------------------------

Transport - will it make transport more sustainable and safer for the whole community?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---	-------------------------------------

Waste management - will it increase recycling and reduce the production of waste?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---	-------------------------------------

Culture and heritage - will it promote, protect and enhance our culture and heritage?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---	-------------------------------------

Employment and opportunities - will it promote the development of a skilled workforce?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---	-------------------------------------

Economy - will it encourage businesses to invest in the city, support sustainable growth and regeneration?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---	-------------------------------------

Social value

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Involvement

Who was involved in the Integrated impact assessment?	Sam Rickeard
Name of the person completing this form	Samuel Rickeard
Date of completion	2024-01-02

Draft Park Homes Policy

Henderson Park & Cliffdale Gardens

Introduction

There are currently two park home sites managed by Portsmouth City Council, Cliffdale Gardens and Henderson Park.

Both parks are run by the park home management team. You can contact the park home management team via email at ParkHomes@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or by phone at 023 9260 6193.

This policy provides information and advice to both current and potential residents of the sites, and should be read alongside the written statement, which is a legal document all park homeowners agree to when purchasing a home on either of the sites. The written statement outlines the rules and obligations for both residents and the council.

[Contents page](#)

Policy

1. Repairs
2. Permissions
3. Replacement homes
4. Pitch fees
5. Site rule breaches
6. Fire risk assessment
7. Legionella
8. Drainage

Guidance

1. Sale
2. Insurance
3. Grounds maintenance
4. Trees on park homes sites
5. Waste

Glossary

Legal Definition of a Caravan

[Policy:](#)

[Repairs:](#)

Repairs that are the responsibility of the site owner should be reported to the council. Emergency repairs that require attention out of hours should be reported to the out-of-hours service via 023 9282 4244.

The council is responsible for:

- Repairs within the common areas of the site
- Repairs to the hard standing beneath the home
- Drainage issues below the ground
- Fresh water issues from fire hoses or communal taps
- Perimeter fences
- Signs around the site
- Road signs
- Lamp posts
- Bollards
- Traffic control measures
- Repairs to council-responsibility sheds, excluding missing keys
- Sewage leaks
- Fresh water leaks (depending on rate of loss)
- Street lighting

Residents are responsible for repairs regarding:

- Interior of the home
- Exterior of the home
- Drainage pipes above the ground
- Fresh water pipes from the external stop cock to the home
- Party fences
- Upkeep of the plot, this includes lawns, hedges, bushes, patio, fences, decking, driveway etc.
- Gas leak from the meter to and within the home. If on the meter then it is the supplier, if before the meter responsibility is with SGN
- Electricity issues from the meter to and within the home. If on the meter then it is the supplier, if before the meter then it is SSE
- Replacement keys / changing the locks for sheds

Permissions

If you are considering constructing or replacing structures in your plot or making external alterations to your home, please be aware that some structures or developments require planning permission. Park Homes do not benefit from 'Permitted Development' rights like 'bricks-and-mortar' properties. Extensions, porches, sheds, and other structures may require full or partial planning permission. We highly recommend that you contact the council's planning department before undertaking works. If you fail to do so, you may be required to remove any unlawful structures by our planning enforcement team.

As both Clifdale Gardens and Henderson Park are park home sites, any construction must not be permanent. This is to ensure we retain our planning permission for use of the land as park home sites.

The council, as site managers, must ensure sites under our control remain safe. Due to the construction type and build materials of park homes, they are considered higher risk compared with typical 'bricks-and-mortar' properties. To manage the collective risk at park home sites, especially regarding fire safety, specific

requirements regarding building works, temporary structures and stored items must be met.

Below is a list of typical building and construction works carried out to park homes and within individual plots, alongside information regarding rules and requirements for building works to ensure that park home sites remain safe and comply with the rules.

These policies are based upon relevant legislation, national guidance (including the Model Standards 2008 for Caravan Sites in England), advice received from the Fire Service and Fire Risk Assessors as well as other sources, where applicable.

Sheds

All sheds located within plots, constructed of combustible materials (such as timber) should be built in consideration of appropriate separation distances between park home units and other combustible structures such as timber fences.

Any newly built sheds of combustible material must adhere to a minimum separation distance of 4.5 metres between any structure and adjacent unit.

Sheds must not be constructed over gas or electric meters, inspection chambers, or any other utilities access points.

Windows in sheds within the separation distance must not face towards another resident's park home.

If you install electrics to your shed, you must ensure that the electrics are installed correctly by a qualified person and are kept in repair and proper working order. Storage of flammable material within sheds should be limited.

Steps and ramp(s)

Steps / ramp(s) must only extend into the separation distance by 1 metre.

There must be 5 metres separation distance between your steps or ramps and your neighbour's home, including a neighbour's porch. There should also be 4 metres between your steps or ramps and your neighbour's steps or ramps.

If your plot is on the end of a row, or the rear of your plot faces the boundary of the site, then steps or ramps where there is no adjacent park home may have a larger width.

Before constructing or replacing your steps / ramp(s), the park homes management team must be notified in advance so that they can lay an appropriate concrete hardstanding or inspect an existing hard standing. If you construct or replace your steps or ramps without an adequate hard standing, then your steps or ramps may need to be removed.

Any steps or ramps along the roadside should be the minimum distance of 1 metre from the roadside. If they are within 1- 2 metre distance of the roadside, then they should be easily removable to allow new or replacement homes access onto and off the site.

All steps and ramps must be standalone or removable from the home.

Driveways

New driveway:

All new driveways, regardless of location within the plot, should use permeable or porous surfacing, such as gravel, permeable concrete block paving or porous asphalt. The rainwater can also be directed to a lawn or border to drain naturally.

Replacement driveways:

You can replace your driveway with 'like-for-like' materials as long as you are not expanding the size.

However, if you wish to change the type of materials used or expand the size of your driveway, you will need to use permeable (or porous surfacing, such as gravel, permeable concrete block paving or porous asphalt. The rainwater can also be directed to a lawn or border to drain naturally).

Please visit www.gov.uk and search 'Guidance on the permeable surfacing of front gardens' for a helpful guide to porous driveways.

Electric car chargers

Electric vehicles are prohibited from being charged within or beside plots unless there is over 6 metres clear distance from the car to any neighbouring park home.

Extensions

All extensions will be treated as part of the main home. Therefore, there must be at least 6 metres between the new extension and any adjacent home. This can be reduced to 5.25 metres if your extension has cladding which is of European Classification rating of A1 or A2 and proof of this certification can be demonstrated. There must be a minimum distance between the new extension:

- 1 metre to any parallel fence
- 2 metres to the road / communal pathways
- 3 metres to the perimeter boundary of the site

All extensions must be built upon a chassis, and capable of being towed from site. Extensions must not be constructed over gas or electric meters, inspection chambers or any other utility access.

Before constructing an extension, the park homes management team must be notified in advance so that they can lay a concrete hardstanding or inspect an existing hard standing. If you construct an extension without an adequate hard standing, then your extension may need to be removed.

The extension must be built to the specification of British Standard 3632. You may be asked to provide evidence of your compliance, such as written confirmation from your contractor. If you are unable to do so, then your extension may need to be removed.

Porches

The rules on porches depend upon where you intend to build your porch. Porches can have a maximum depth of 1 metre and maximum width of 2 metres. There must be a minimum of 5 metres between your porch and your neighbour's home, including any porches or extensions they have erected, as well as 4 metres distance from any steps or verandas attached to your neighbour's home. If your porch is clad with cladding that is certified as European Classification rating of A1 or A2 then this distance can be reduced to 4.25 metres. Please be aware that you may be asked to provide proof of this classification. If you are unable to do so, then your porch may need to be removed.

This distance must be clear of any other structures such as sheds, ramps, conservatories, decking, 1.8-metre combustible fences, garages, and car ports. If you are intending to position your porch on a side of your home where there is no other adjacent home (for example the side faces the boundary of the site), then the size of your porch may be larger.

Porches must not exceed the height of your park home.

One door is permitted at the entrance of the home, either on the porch or on the home. If you choose to install a door to your porch, you must remove the internal front door.

Porches must not be constructed over gas or electric meters, inspection chambers or any other utility access, unless the construction allows for easy access. Porches should not render the home incapable of being moved; you must ensure that the porch can be detached from your home.

Before constructing a porch, the park homes management team must be advised so that they can lay a concrete hardstanding or inspect an existing hard standing. If you construct a porch without the council inspecting or installing an adequate hard standing, then your porch will need to be removed.

The porch must be built to the specification of British Standard 3632. You may be asked to provide evidence of your compliance, such as written confirmation from your contractor. If you are unable to do so, then your porch will need to be removed.

Conservatories

Before constructing a conservatory, the park homes management team must be advised so that we can lay a concrete hardstanding or inspect an existing hard standing. If you construct a conservatory without an adequate hard standing, then your conservatory will need to be removed.

The addition of a new or replacement conservatory must not affect the homes' compliance to BS3632. Written confirmation of your continued compliance must be obtained and retained from your contractor. If you are unable to produce this evidence, then you may need to remove your conservatory.

Conservatories must not be constructed over gas or electric meters, inspection chambers or any other utility access. Unless the construction allows for easy access. All conservatories must be 'standalone' or removable from the home.

Cladding

Cladding can be applied retrospectively to a home for aesthetic or energy efficiency purposes.

All the materials used in the cladding must be made from European Classification of A1 or A2. Evidence of compliance must be made available to the park homes management team, if requested. If no evidence can be produced, then you may be asked to remove the cladding.

Once installed there must be a minimum separation distance of 5.25 metres from the walls of your home to any other adjacent homes, including porches.

Fencing

New - All new wooden, composite, UPVC or any other material fencing must be a maximum of 1 metre (with 300mm of trellising, if desired). If using entirely metal fencing the height can be increased to a maximum of 1.8-metres.

Replacement - If you are replacing less than half of your fence, or a single panel / post, it can be replaced with 'like-for-like' (within a 12-month period).

If replacing the whole fence, this will need to be replaced with 1-metre high (and 300 mm of trellising, if desired). If using entirely metal fencing the height can be increased to a maximum of 1.8 metres.

Any fencing fronting the roadway should be easily removable.

If you wish to erect or replace a fence which runs between your own and another home (within the separation distance), you must install a minimum of 1 metre fire break extending from your home. This should be constructed of a metal gate or panel. If this cannot be achieved, a 2-metre fire break within the fence line is also acceptable.

Decking / Veranda

Decking or a veranda must only extend into the separation distance by 1 metre. If your plot is on the end of a row or the rear of your plot faces the boundary of the site, then decking where there is no adjacent park home may have a larger width. All decking or verandas must be 'standalone' or removable from your home.

Storage containers

Consideration should be given to the congestion of these items to any one area of your plot and in relation to adjacent plots and structures.

Solar Panels

Solar panels are allowed to be mounted to the roof of your park home. Your contractor should consider the stability of your roof.

The panels must be connected to your own electric supply, not to connections in the shed owned by the council (if applicable). You must ensure that the electrics are installed correctly by a qualified person and are kept in repair and proper working order.

Gas Consent

If your home is currently supplied by LPG canisters, then you can consider adapting your home to connect to a mains gas connection. There may be energy efficiency schemes available to help finance a connection, please contact the energy team to enquire about any schemes available.

If you live at Henderson Park, SGN will need to take special precautions when working with contaminated land.

Hot tubs / Jacuzzis

Careful consideration should be given to the positioning of a hot tub to ensure it is not likely to cause a noise nuisance to neighbours.

Any electrical cabling must be installed correctly by a qualified person and are kept in repair and proper working order. You may be asked to provide evidence upon request. The hot tub and any other cabling within the plot must be connected to your own electric supply, not to connections in the shed owned by the council.

Trampolines and Gazebos

Careful consideration should be given to the installation and positioning of trampolines and gazebos to ensure they are not likely to cause a nuisance to neighbours. Gazebos and trampolines must be of a non-combustible material.

Skips

All skips must be of the lockable kind unless there is over 6 metres distance between your skip and the nearest home. This is to ensure that any stored combustible materials within the skip do not present a fire hazard or risk of arson. This is regardless of whether you intend to only use for non-combustible material to prevent other peoples from putting dangerous waste into an open skip.

Skips must be positioned within your plot and not on the roadside. Skips must not block access to any fire hose reels, inspection chambers, utility access or electricity or gas meters.

There must be adequate access around the skip to your home.

BBQs

The use of chimineas, free-standing patio heaters, fire pits and all charcoal BBQs including the disposable type (in other words any appliance that will create sparks and leave embers) are prohibited.

The use of gas BBQs is allowed with certain conditions:

1. Propane or butane cylinders must be kept away from any heat source and stored in a safe secure place.
2. BBQs must be on firm, level ground.
3. BBQs must be at least 2 metres away from any park home.

It is recommended that your insurance company be made aware if you are using gas BBQs on your plot, to ensure your insurance conditions are up to date. Propane or butane cylinders should not be stored within your park home.

Terracing embankments (Cliffdale Gardens only)

Digging into the embankment at Cliffdale Gardens is strictly prohibited.

If your plot has historic terracing, this structure remains the responsibility of the resident and any future residents of the plot. No further works should be carried out to these structures so as to not undermine the safety and stability of the site. If you do carry out this work, you may be liable for the significant cost of any works to rectify or maintain the stability of the embankment.

Garden furniture

There must not be excessive garden furniture within the separation distance between two homes. There must be a clear distance between the furniture and any surrounding homes or structures.

Replacement Homes

If you are replacing your home, you will need to submit full details and a plan for the new home that you wish to purchase. This will be considered by the park homes management team and permission will either be granted or declined. If it is declined, we will outline the reasons why and what amendments you would need to make.

The documents that you will need to provide are:

- Measurements of the intended new park home (height, width, length).
- Measurements from the new home to all fixed points in the pitch, such as fences, neighbouring park homes, sheds, roadways, fire hoses and pathways.
- The location of all doors, steps and windows on the home
- Location of utilities e.g. gas meter, electric meter, and water pipes (fresh and drainage).
- Drainage plan which explains how the guttering will drain away, such as a new soakaway, gullies, or a porous material.
- Documentary evidence of the make, model and serial number of the new park home.
- Documentary evidence to show that the new park home complies with British Standard 3632.

- Confirmation as to whether the new park home is set up for LPG or natural gas.

Once the park homes management team have received the documentation above, we will make a decision as to whether your request complies with Model Standards 2008 for Caravans. If it does not comply, we will make recommendations. You should not purchase any park home before the park homes management team have granted permission to position the specific park home onsite.

The siting of the home must allow for:

- 2 metres distance between your park home and the road / pathway
- 3 metres distance between your park home and the site boundary
- 6 metres distance between your park home and any other park home. This can be reduced to 5.25 metres if your replacement park home is clad using fire rated materials of class 0 or 1 (evidence of this status will need to be provided)
- 1 metre distance around your park home and any other structure e.g., electric meter cupboard, concrete shed, hedge, or fire hose cabinet
- Capable of being fitted with a 50mm towing hitch to enable removal from site
- Adequate space underneath your park home to allow it to be connected to the services and for repair work to be carried out

Our team may visit your plot to verify the information you have provided.

It is important to bear in mind that you will remain liable for the full pitch fee amount whilst the plot is unoccupied.

Gas

If your new park home is equipped for natural gas, this can be connected to the site if there is an existing meter. If there is no current mains gas connection, and you wish to have one, then you will be liable for the cost of having this laid and the ongoing maintenance of the pipes from the park home to the meter.

If the park home uses LPG, this cannot be connected to the mains, and you will need to pay for bottled gas. If you wish to adapt your system from LPG to natural gas you will need to pay for a gas safe engineer to do so and you may need to replace your appliances.

All new park homes with gas will need to be commissioned. This process involves gas being run through the system to ensure compliance and working order. This must be organised and paid for by the resident once the park home is in place. Evidence of this will need to be provided to the park homes management team.

Hardstanding

Your new park home needs to stand upon a concrete hard standing which the park homes management team is responsible for maintaining. The hard standing shall extend over the whole area occupied by the park home and additional footings shall be provided for steps to the new park home.

Once the old park home is removed, we will arrange for a contractor to inspect the existing hard standing.

- Some existing park homes do not sit upon hard standings. These will require a new hard standing to be laid.
- If your new park home is the same size and you already have a concrete hard standing, we will inspect the condition of the hard standing and carry out any remedial works, if necessary.
- If your new park home is larger, we will either increase the size of the existing hard standing or replace all or part of the existing hard standing depending upon condition.

We will arrange for our contractors to lay the hard standing at the earliest availability. Once it has been laid it will require time to set. This will take approximately three weeks, weather permitting.

Delivery

The new park home will need to be delivered and positioned on the site by your chosen contractors. They will need to provide a copy of their insurance. The park homes management team will need to be notified of the date in advance so we can advise other residents of disruption in advance and arrange for an officer to be onsite. You will need to provide the electrical installation condition report (EICR) for the park home to confirm the electrical safety of the park home before it is connected.

If you have increased the size of your park home, then your pitch fee may be re-categorised from the date that your new home arrives. Please ask for details of the current fees.

Pitch Fees

Residents are required to pay a pitch fee for the rent of the pitch where their park home is situated. Failure to pay your pitch fee is a breach to the agreement you have with the council and could result in action being taken against you and put your occupancy at the park home site at risk.

The pitch fee is a commercial rent, and includes the costs of running the management services, maintenance of sites and any planned works or improvements. A review is carried out at the beginning of every financial year and residents are informed if there is going to be any changes in the amount they pay. More detail can be found on the end of year review form. You can pay your pitch fee in several ways, including:

- direct debit
- standing order
- at the bank / post office / building society
- automatic payment line
- online - www.portsmouth.gov.uk
- payment card

If you have any questions or concerns regarding payment of your pitch fee, please contact the park homes management team.

If you are experiencing financial difficulties, there is local advice available to help you:

- check which benefits you're entitled to
- get support with debts
- keep your bills and everyday costs down
- make your money go further.

Advice Portsmouth, supported by the council, can help you if you are not sure what to do. Their service is for anyone who lives or works in Portsmouth, and they offer free, confidential, and local advice on bills, benefits, debt, housing, and employment issues. Call 023 9279 4340, text 07789 550593 or email advice.portsmouth@theyoutrust.org.uk.

Citizens Advice Portsmouth have a team of specialist money advisers on hand to advise and support you with all your money and debt queries. To speak with a specialist money adviser, call 023 9400 6600 or email contactus@caportsmouth.org.uk

Site Rule breaches

There are a number of site rules which residents living on park home sites in Portsmouth must adhere to. These are laid out in detail in your written statement, which all residents agree to when they rent a pitch on a park home site.

For more details regarding your obligations and our responsibilities as site owners and managers please refer to your written statement agreement.

Where appropriate, the park homes management team will work with residents to informally address site rule breaches and provide advice and guidance. However, where a resident fails to properly address breaches to the site rules the council may take further action to resolve the breach, including legal escalation via the first-tier tribunal. This could result in a resident's agreement to occupy a pitch ending.

Information and support is available for residents through the Lease Park-Home service, available online via [Home - Park Homes \(lease-advice.org\)](http://Home-ParkHomes(lease-advice.org)) or by calling 080 8196 2212.

Fire risk assessments

As site owners, the council is responsible for conducting regular fire risk assessments at park home sites we own and manage. This is a requirement under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

An assessment will be undertaken by an independent and qualified assessor to understand the fire safety of the site. These reports can be made available for residents should they wish to review these, and the council will inform residents of

any findings that concern their pitch or property, and any action that may be required to mitigate the risk.

There is no strict requirement for when these need to take place, however the council are required to keep these under regular review. Generally, the council will conduct these Fire Risk Assessments every three years unless they believe an earlier assessment is needed. If we require access to your pitch during the assessment you will be given suitable notice of this.

Legionella

The council are required to carry out testing to water outlets that are typically used less than once per week.

A legionella risk assessment must be in place for both park home sites and reviewed at least every three years.

Drainage

Residents are responsible for drainage pipes above the ground on their pitch and freshwater pipes from the external stop cock to the home. The council is responsible for drainage issues below the ground. These are explained in the implied terms of the written statement.

For urgent or emergency repairs regarding either sewage leaks or severe water leaks resident should contact Repairs Support Team on 023 92 841 311 / Out of Hours Service, on - 023 92 824 244.

Guidance:

Sales:

If you're selling a park home on a residential park, there are two transactions that happen at the same time:

1. The sale of the park home itself
2. The transfer ('assignment') of the seller's occupation agreement to the buyer

In 2013, the government introduced a [new procedure](#) that must be followed whenever a used residential park home is bought or sold on a site in England. One effect of this is that both buyers and sellers of park homes now have much more responsibility to ensure that the transaction is completed properly. If any mistakes are made, this could lead to the assignment of the agreement being unlawful, and result in costly disputes between the two parties.

The council does not lead on the sales process and is unable to accept any responsibility if the correct process is not followed by the buyer or seller.

The below links to the government website contains useful guides for both buying and selling a park home. This policy does not replace these, and these guides should be read carefully before buying or selling a park home.

- Selling or gifting a park home factsheet - which can be found at gov.uk by searching selling or gifting a park home – fact sheet.
- Buying a park home - which can be found at gov.uk by searching buying a park home.

Current owners who are seeking to sell their home must arrange the following works before completion:

- Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) certificate by a qualified electrician
- A Gas Safety Record certificate by a qualified gas safe engineer (where applicable)

During the sales process the seller will need to sign a declaration that this has been completed. The council may request to see evidence of the documents on providing suitable notice.

The seller must supply the proposed buyer with certain prescribed information and documents using a 'Buyer's Information Form'. The purpose of this form (and the documents accompanying it) is to give the proposed buyer the necessary information to enable them to decide whether they want to purchase the home. This form and more information can be found at gov.uk by searching buyers information form park homes.

If the seller is not able to provide some of the information or documents that are required to be given within the 'Buyer's Information Form', they must advise the proposed buyer what this is and explain why they are unable to provide it.

The seller must also ensure any outstanding pitch fee balances are cleared prior to the sale taking place. If the current owner purchased their home before 2013 then they will need to provide the council with a 'Notice of Proposed Sale form (Schedule 2)'. The form provides council with confirmation of the sale price and confirmation that the buyer meets the rules. This can be found at gov.uk by searching "[Notice of proposed sale form: park homes](#)".

In addition to this, all sellers will need to transfer the pitch agreement to the buyer through an 'Assignment Form (Schedule 4)', found at gov.uk by searching "[Assignment form: park homes](#)". The form provides confirmation of the agreed purchase price and the pitch fee payable by the new occupier. The seller must provide the proposed buyer with their forwarding address, and all the correct paperwork, including the agreement, written statement and site rules.

If the current owner purchased their home on or after 26 May 2013, they can proceed straight to the 'Assignment form (Schedule 4)' and are not required to provide a 'Notice of Proposed Sale form (Schedule 2)'. The 'Assignment Form (Schedule 4)' will need to be provided to the council, clearly showing the date that it is signed, as evidence of transfer of ownership.

Within seven days of the assignment, the buyer (new occupier), must send the council a 'Notice of assignment form', found at gov.uk by searching "[Notice of](#)

[assignment form: park homes](#)" together with several documents. These documents are:

- A copy of the assignment instrument
- A copy of any pre commencement rules/site rules
- A copy of the agreement, implied terms, and written statement
- Documentary evidence of the price paid for the park home

The new occupier will need to sign the form and confirm the information and documents supplied are true and up to date.

All new buyers will need to provide proof of photo ID (such as a current passport or driving license) to the park homes management team following the purchase of their home. If the seller is the first person to have rented the pitch from the council, both the seller and buyer will need to attend an appointment with the park homes officer so that the written statement can be signed over to the buyer in the presence of the officer.

If the pitch has been rented more than once, neither the seller nor buyer will need to attend an appointment with the park homes officer, as the incoming owner will not receive their own written statement. The seller is responsible in these circumstances to provide the incoming buyer with the current written statement, which is assigned as part of the Schedule 4.

If you owned the park home prior to 26 May 2013, and intend to sell or gift the home, you must provide the park homes management team with a 'Notice of Proposed Sale Form'. This can be found at gov.uk by searching notice of proposed sale form park homes.

This should be provided when you have accepted an offer or decide to gift your home to a family member. Where the agreement was assigned after 26 May 2013 you may sell or gift your park home, and assign the agreement, without first needing to inform the park homes management team. The new occupier must notify the site owner within seven days after completion of sale/gift.

New owners will be provided with information such as, how to pay pitch fees, the site rules, and the council's privacy notice.

Insurance

As per your written statement agreement, residents are required to obtain a specific park home insurance policy for their property. Residents should be able to provide this to us upon request.

Grounds Maintenance

The grounds maintenance for park home sites is managed by the Council's Green and Clean service. They are responsible for grass cutting, hedge cutting and weeding. Green and Clean can also attend for ad-hoc services when requested, for things affecting the common parts of sites.

Grounds maintenance is completed on a cycle, so there is no need for residents to contact Green and Clean to request the site be attended. However, residents can get in touch with the service directly to request someone attend or raise a concern via 023 9268 8444.

Trees on Park Homes Sites

Trees in Portsmouth are periodically reviewed to check they are safe and healthy, and do not pose a risk to residents.

If residents are concerned or have any questions regarding trees that are the responsibility of the council, they can get in touch with the arboriculture officer via our website by searching "[Trees in Portsmouth - Portsmouth City Council](#)" or by contacting the city helpdesk via 023 9282 2251.

Waste Management

The waste management team at the council are responsible for collecting rubbish and recycling. Residents are responsible for presenting their household waste for collection, and generally doing so in a clean and tidy way. This includes only placing securely tied bags within the communal bins at Cliffdale Gardens.

For more information or if you have any questions regarding your household waste services you can contact waste management online via the council website and searching 'Recycling and rubbish' or by calling 023 9284 1105 or email recyclingandrubbish@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Glossary:

* Separation Distance - The Separation Distance is the distance referred to between two park homes.

* BS3632 - BS3632 is the British Standard to which residential park homes are built.

Legal Definition of a caravan:

Following any alterations to your home, your park home must remain under the legal definition of a caravan. The wording of the legislation can be found below:

Section 29 (1) of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 defined a caravan as:

"... Any structure designed or adapted for human habitation which is capable of being moved from one place to another (whether being towed, or by being transported on a motor vehicle or trailer) and any motor vehicle so designed or adapted but does not include

(A) Any railway rolling stock which is for the time being on rails forming part of a system, or (B) Any tent"

Section 13 (1) of the Caravan Sites Act 1968, which deals with twin-unit caravans. Section 13 (1) provides that:

“A structure designed or adapted for human habitation which:

- Is composed of not more than two sections separately constructed and designed to be assembled on a site by means of bolts, clamps and other devices; and*
- Is, when assembled, physically capable of being moved by road from one place to another (whether being towed, or by being transported on a motor vehicle or trailer), shall not be treated as not being (or have been) a caravan within the means of Part 1 of the Caravan Sites Control of Development Act 1960 by reason only that it cannot lawfully be moved on a highway when assembled”.*

Amendment of the definition of caravan 2006:

- Length (exclusive of any drawbar) 20m (65.6FT)*
- Width: 6.8m (22.3ft)*
- Overall height (measured internally from the floor at the lowest level to the ceiling at the highest level) 3.05m (10ft)*