



Meeting	Economy and Housing Policy Committee
Date and Time	Tuesday, 11th February, 2025 at 6.30 pm.
Venue	Walton Suite, Guildhall, Winchester and streamed live on YouTube at www.youtube.com/winchestercc

Note: This meeting is being held in person at the location specified above. Members of the public should note that a live video feed of the meeting will be available from the council's YouTube channel (youtube.com/WinchesterCC) during the meeting.

A limited number of seats will be made available at the above named location however attendance must be notified to the council at least 3 working days before the meeting (5pm Wednesday, 5 February 2025). Please see below for details on how to register to attend. Please note that priority will be given to those wishing to attend and address the meeting over those wishing to attend and observe.

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies and Deputy Members**
To note the names of apologies given and deputy members who are attending the meeting in place of appointed members.
- 2. Declarations of Interests**
To receive any disclosure of interests from Councillors or Officers in matters to be discussed.

Note: Councillors are reminded of their obligations to declare disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs), other registerable interests (ORIs) and non-registerable interests (NRIs) in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct.

If you require advice, please contact the appropriate Democratic Services Officer, prior to the meeting.

- 3. Chairperson's Announcements**
- 4. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 November 2024 (Pages 5 - 10)**
That the minutes of the meeting be signed as a correct record.



5. **Public Participation**

To receive and note questions asked and statements made from members of the public on matters which fall within the remit of the Committee

Members of the public and visiting councillors may speak at the Policy Committee, provided they have registered to speak three working days in advance. Please complete this [form](https://forms.office.com/r/Y87tufaV6G) (<https://forms.office.com/r/Y87tufaV6G>) by 5pm on 5 Feb 2025 or call (01962) 848 264 for further details.

6. **Summary of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Fund programmes 2022-2025** (Pages 11 - 24)

7. **Housing Repairs And Maintenance Policies** (Pages 25 - 100)

Laura Taylor
Chief Executive

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3 February 2025

Agenda Contact: Matthew Watson, Senior Democratic Services Officer
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MEMBERSHIP

Chairperson: Councillor: Batho (Liberal Democrats)

Vice Chairperson: Councillor Chamberlain (Liberal Democrats)

Conservatives

Miller

Liberal Democrats

Achwal S
Eve
Morris
Murphy

Green

White

Conservatives

Horrill and Brook

Deputy Members Liberal Democrats

Aron and Brophy

Green

Lee and Wallace

Quorum = 3 members

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A public question and comment session is available at 6.30pm for a 15 minute period. There are few limitations on the questions you can ask. These relate to current applications, personal cases and confidential matters. Please contact Democratic Services on 01962 848 264 at least three days in advance of the meeting (5pm Wednesday, 5 February 2025) for further details. If there are no members of the public present at 6.30pm who wish to ask questions or make statements, then the meeting will commence.

FILMING AND BROADCAST NOTIFICATION

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Public Document Pack Agenda Item 4

ECONOMY AND HOUSING POLICY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 26 November 2024

Attendance:

Councillors
Batho (Chairperson)

Chamberlain
Achwal S
Eve
Morris

Murphy
Miller
White

Other members in attendance:

Councillors Westwood and Horrill

[Video recording of this meeting](#)

1. **APOLOGIES AND DEPUTY MEMBERS**

There were no apologies.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

No declarations were made.

3. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

No announcements were made.

4. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 17 SEPTEMBER 2024**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17 September 2024 be approved and adopted.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Councillor Caroline Horrill addressed the committee regarding agenda item 6 - Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG): Policy Review and her comments were captured within that agenda item.

6. **DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS (DFG): POLICY REVIEW (PRESENTATION)**

Councillor Chris Westwood, Cabinet Member for Housing introduced the agenda item which set out proposals for the Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG): Policy Review, ([available here](#)). The introduction included the following points.

1. The Disabled Facilities Grant was a mandatory grant aimed at supporting people of all ages to live independently and safely within their own homes. Local authorities had a statutory duty to provide DFGs to eligible applicants.
2. The current DFG policy was agreed in March 2023 however despite the unchanged amount of DFG received since August 2019, there had been an increase in DFG applications and approvals.
3. The Council had historically underspent on DFGs, building up a reserve, however, it was now spending its full allocation.
4. If customer demand continued and DFG funding remained unchanged, the Council would exhaust its funds by the financial year 2027/28, potentially leading to a waiting list for approved applications.
5. The officer presentation would outline options to change the DFG policy to better meet the needs of vulnerable residents within Winchester and ensure the best value for money.
6. The committee's views and comments were sought on the proposed options before finalising the revised DFG policy and presenting it to cabinet for a decision next year.

Karen Thorburn, Service Lead - Strategic Housing provided a presentation (available here) which provided the committee with an overview of the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Policy Review options. Several points were raised including the following:

1. The DFG funding flowed from central government to Hampshire County Council and then to Winchester City Council. It was a capital grant available to all ages across private sector housing tenures but excluded Winchester City Council tenants who were funded through the housing revenue account.
2. The grant's purpose was to enable eligible disabled individuals, as defined by the Act, to live safely and independently in their own homes for as long as possible.
3. Applications for the grant were made to the Council, either via Hampshire County Council or directly to Winchester City Council's housing occupational therapist.
4. The most common adaptations funded by the DFG were wet rooms.
5. Once an application was approved, it passed to the Grant officer who ensured the works were reasonable and practical, considering the property's condition and the proportionality of work costs.
6. There was a need to review the DFG policy to reflect the budget and increasing demands.
7. Over the past four years, applications and approved grants had risen, and the average cost of works had increased, while the grant allocations had remained the same.
8. Three options for policy change were presented for consideration, each with its advantages, disadvantages, and potential impacts on the Council's ability to fulfil its duties and manage the DFG budget effectively.

Councillor Caroline Horrill addressed the committee and emphasised the need for transparency in the Council's actions and clarity on the maximum grant amounts and their implications. Councillor Horrill highlighted the importance of understanding the types of requests and levels of spending to better grasp the current situation and stressed that the DFG was transformational for many individuals, significantly improving their quality of life.

The committee was asked for its views and comments on the options presented within the presentation. The committee proceeded to ask questions and debate the agenda item and in summary, the following matters were raised.

1. A question was asked about the difference between mandatory and discretionary grants.
2. Further clarification was sought regarding the breakdown of reasons for cancellations.
3. A question was raised about the potential benefits of not means testing up to a lower point, such as £5,000, to simplify the process for small but significant adaptations.
4. Clarification was requested on how discretionary grants were decided, particularly in cases where the cost exceeded the mandatory grant limit or when there was a sudden change in circumstances.
5. Further questions were asked about the logistics and administration of means testing, including the potential for delays and staffing costs.
6. A question was asked about the potential collaboration with other organisations regarding top-up grants and preventing pressure on the NHS.
7. Clarification was sought on the impact of the policy on the number of applications and the budget, and whether the policy would be reviewed annually or set for a longer period.
8. A question was asked about the internal checks and balances for assessing applications and whether there would be any changes to this process under the new policy.
9. Further information was requested regarding the consistency and transparency of applying for discretionary grants, ensuring that the process was perceived as fair and equitable.

These points were responded to by Karen Thorburn, Service Lead - Strategic Housing, Amanda Cox, Housing Occupational Therapist, Lewis Sellen, Senior Disabled Facilities Grant Case Officer and Simon Hendey, Strategic Director accordingly.

It was noted that a report regarding this item would be presented to a future meeting of the Cabinet Committee: Housing and that this committee's comments would be used to inform that report.

RESOLVED:

1. The committee noted that a change to the policy regarding means-testing was appropriate to ensure that the funding was targeted to those most in need.

2. The committee noted that option three had the potential downside of providing support to those who could contribute a significant amount themselves whilst option two, allowed "boundary" cases to be considered and so enabled funds to be used more beneficially.
3. The committee agreed to ask the Cabinet Member to consider the points raised during its discussion.

7. **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUSINESS PLAN & BUDGET OPTIONS**

Councillor Chris Westwood, Cabinet Member for Housing introduced the report, ref CAB 3478 which set out proposals for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan & Budget Options, ([available here](#)).

Councillor Westwood advised that the report had been reviewed by the Scrutiny Committee on 12 November 2024 and that the Cabinet had also reviewed the paper and approved the budget options detailed in Appendix 2 as a basis for consultation to inform the February 2025 budget setting. He advised that the Committee's views on the paper, including the budget options in Appendix 2, would be considered in preparing the February 2025 budget paper.

Councillor Westwood provided a brief introduction to the paper, which could be summarised as follows:

1. The budget for 2024/25 was set against a backdrop of high interest rates and aimed to address inflationary pressures.
2. Although CPI inflation had fallen to 1.7% in September 2024, below the Bank of England's target of 2%, key cost drivers for the HRA, such as energy and building materials, remained significantly high.
3. The main cost pressures were identified as continuing inflationary pressures on building supplies, increased capital costs for maintaining existing housing stock, high capital financing interest rates, challenges in new homes viability due to high public works loan board interest rates and the recent agreement to purchase 146 affordable homes in Kings Barton.
4. The Council had set rents in line with the rent standard and central government's guidelines, with the current basis being CPI plus 1% for 2025/26.
5. The budget options supported the Council's commitment to increasing investment in customers' homes, delivering 1,000 new homes by 2032/33, and improving customer service for repairs and maintenance.
6. Without addressing these pressures, there would have been insufficient resources to deliver a balanced budget over the 30-year planning period while meeting policy objectives.
7. A savings target of £2 million per annum had been established, and officers had been working to identify potential opportunities for this.
8. The approach to service charges would ensure that those who used the service paid for it, with measures to dampen any significant increases.
9. Feedback from the TACT Board was broadly supportive of the proposed actions.

The committee was asked to comment on the proposals contained within the attached Cabinet Report, ref CAB 3478. The committee proceeded to ask questions and debate the report. In summary, the following matters were raised.

1. A question was asked regarding the impact on individuals of the CPI + 1% rent increase, specifically how it affected those who paid rent in full versus those on benefits, and the potential hardship it might cause.
2. Further clarification was sought on the proportion of people having their rents paid in full and those who might have been impacted by the rent increase.
3. A question was raised regarding page 28, particularly the impact of the rise in National Insurance on the cost of labour and prices for repairs and maintenance.
4. A further question was asked about the future pricing for repairs and maintenance and the potential savings from a new repairs and maintenance contract and its impact upon the budget.
5. A question was raised regarding the interest on borrowing, specifically the refinancing of £100 million and its impact on the total interest burden.
6. Clarification was requested on the acquisition strategy for new homes, particularly the variety of housing types being purchased and the provision for elderly or disabled residents.
7. A question was asked about the recovery of costs for sewerage works, specifically whether the full capital costs or just the ongoing running costs would be recovered.
8. Further clarification was sought on the service charges and the review process, including the potential for cost reduction and consultation with tenants.
9. A question was raised about the IT contingency budget and the integration of IT solutions with the Council's systems.
10. Clarification was requested regarding the vacant posts in the new homes team and the employment of quantity surveyors within the council.
11. A question was asked about the duration of the rebalancing of home acquisition from building to purchase and the potential recovery of the building programme.
12. Clarification was requested on the underspend in the training budget.
13. A question was asked about the change in the tenant involvement budget and its impact on tenant engagement activities.
14. Further clarification was sought on the new cost proposal for the damp and mould in-house service.
15. A question was raised about the termination of the contract for Voice Scale.

These points were responded to by Councillor Chris Westwood, Cabinet Member for Housing, Simon Hendey, Strategic Director and Gilly Knight, Corporate Head of Housing accordingly.

RESOLVED:

1. The committee noted the ongoing efforts to identify additional savings opportunities.

2. The committee wished to highlight the importance of policy reviews, particularly in areas such as the repairs recharge policy, voids, and the repair process review.
3. The committee was reassured to note that officers were also considering other ways to add value, for example, addressing damp and mould issues as a non-financial benefit of the proposed changes.
4. That the Cabinet Member consider the committee's comments raised during the discussion of the item.

8. **TO NOTE THE CURRENT WORK PROGRAMME.**

RESOLVED:

The current work programme was noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 8.35 pm

Chairperson

REPORT TITLE: SUMMARY OF THE UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND AND RURAL ENGLAND FUND PROGRAMMES 2022-2025

11 FEBRUARY 2025

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: Cllr. Lucille Thompson, Cabinet Member for Business and Culture

Contact Officer: Andrew Gostelow Tel No: 07980 732149

Email agostelow@winchester.gov.uk

WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

Since October 2022 the council has been distributing its allocation on UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) grant of £1.745m. This three-year programme concludes at the end of March 2025. This report details how the funding has been awarded to projects across the district on a range of activities that benefit local communities, businesses and residents. It highlights the types of projects supported and the outcomes to date these have achieved and the value of these to local areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Policy Committee is asked to:

1. Note the types of projects, distribution, impact and value derived from the UKSPF and REPF programme
2. To note the Government's priorities and provide comment on the Council's approach for distributing funds for the 2025/2026 UKSPF extension

1 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

1.1 The total UKSPF and REPF allocation made to the council was:

Year	UKSPF		REPF	Totals
	Revenue	Capital	Capital	
2022/23	£41,695	£17,500	£0	£59,195
2023/24	£89,709	£28,681	£186,274	£304,664
2024/25	£366,406	£456,009	£558,822	£1,381,237
Total	£497,810	£502,190	£745,096	£1,745,096

1.2 The UKSP funding allowed up to 4% to be allocated to resource administration and co-ordination support. This funded a dedicated officer (0.6 FTE) until the end of March 2025. Programme management support has also been provided by existing staff resources in the both the Economy and Finance teams. Teams within the council receiving grants to deliver projects have provided their own resources as necessary.

1.3 In December 2024, Government announced an additional year of UKSPF programme funding and the council was allocated a further £327,146 of which £60,401 is capital and £266,745 is revenue, to be spent from 1 April 2025 to end of March 2026. This also allows for up to £13,000 to be used for administration costs. Programme management support will also be required by existing staff resources in the both the Economy and Finance teams.

2 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Background

2.1 Winchester City Council was allocated £1m of the government's UKSPF in April 2022. Owing to the predominantly rural nature of the district, the council was also allocated a further £745,000 under the REPF.

2.2 To draw down the funds the council submitted to government an Investment Plan, as approved by Cabinet on 19 July 2022 (CAB3356). To align the programmes interventions to local need and priorities several stakeholders and partners including members, parish councils and officers across the council were contacted to input their ideas. This feedback helped create the Investment Plan which also includes details of the local challenges and opportunities as they relate to the UKSPF's three priorities of Community and Place, Supporting Local Business and People and Skills. The projects detailed in the Plan formed the basis on which funds were awarded to projects, subject to the completion of detailed project proposal.

- 2.3 The REPF was allocated by government as a top-up to UKSPF after the council's Investment Plan had been submitted and approved. Therefore, an additional framework for how we would distribute the REPF was approved by Cabinet on 15th November 2022 (CAB3372). It set out the investment proposals under which projects could come forward for capital funding from the market towns, villages and rural areas of Winchester district. It approved a competitive grant application be established for each of the four priority investment proposals of:
- a) Net Zero / Climate Mitigation
 - b) Community Infrastructure and Assets Improvement
 - c) Culture, Arts and Tourism Development
 - d) Green Spaces Enhancement
- 2.4 As part of the grant terms we were required to set up programme governance arrangement in the form a Partnership Board comprising representatives from a broad range of sectors and interests. The Winchester District Prosperity Partnership was created and is chaired by the Cabinet Member for Business and Culture. Members include representatives from organisations such as Winchester Business Improvement District, Hampshire Cultural Trust, the Country Landowners Association and the parish councils. Their role is to ensure the view of a wide range of interests and places are considered in the selection and delivery of projects.
- 2.5 Project proposals were submitted to the council either following a direct invitation under UKSPF or as an open competition application under REPF. Applications were received from businesses, community organisations and council departments. Each application was scored by a panel of three reviewers. Success depended on due diligence including credit checks, a clear alignment with the objectives of the fund and a reassurance that the project could be completed before the closure of the fund in March 2025. Applications involving building or refurbishment work for which planning permission had not yet been granted were regarded as high risk in terms of deliverability.

Impact of the overall programme

- 2.6 In total, over the three-year lifespan of the programme the funds have supported 57 projects:

Year	Projects		Totals	£
	UKSPF	REPF		
2022/23	3	0	3	56,800
2023/24	7	5	12	207,922
2024/25	18	20	42	1,303,488
	4 jointly funded			122,794
Total			57	1,691,004

Delivery alignment with government, agreed council approach and priorities

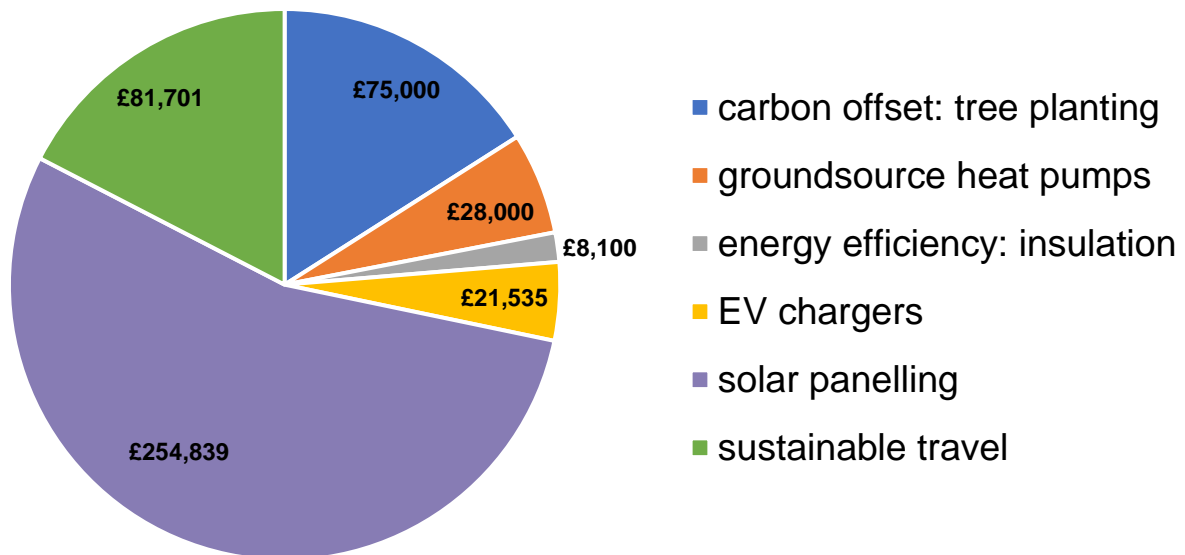
- 2.7 The original UKSPF investment plan, created in 2022, envisaged 26 projects covering 20 of the government's suggested themes. 22 of these projects were realised on time and on budget and the funding for the remaining five projects, amounting to 14.5% of the total fund, was reallocated to eleven new projects. At the close of the three-year period, we are proud to report that we have supported 32 projects covering the 20 themes we originally identified. The fund is on track to be fully spent.
- 2.8 Whilst REPF priority investment areas were developed, as outlined in 2.2, the expenditure against this fund was fully market driven, delivered through three open call competitive funding rounds. This resulted in a lower than expected take up of projects to improve green spaces. However, this was offset by considerably more interest in net zero projects, which accounted for over 50% of the total REPF allocation. The visitor economy, including culture, arts and tourism projects, was 28% more popular than we had predicted whilst community infrastructure was 30% less so. Overall, the fund was significantly oversubscribed with 25 projects fully funded by the REPF, on track to be fully spent.
- 2.9 In designing the schemes, scoring methodology and award criteria, we have prioritised applications that contribute to making the Winchester district greener, that boost the local economy and that help our residents to live well.

Tackling the Climate Emergency and Creating a Greener District

- 2.10 27% of the total UKSPF and REPF grant from government - £479,675 - has been allocated to 20 projects, designed to reduce carbon emissions. 11 of these were solar panelling projects comprising of five on community buildings Colden Common, Denmead, Easton, Sutton Scotney and Upham as well as five commercial buildings.

2.11 Winchester Action on Climate Change (WinACC) were also funded to engage organisations and deliver decarbonisation plans as the first step to solar panelling projects. This led to funding the five solar projects on community buildings noted above as well as leveraging funding from other channels leading to the completion of a further six projects across the district.

**Figure 1: UKSPF and REPF 2022-2025
20 carbon-reducing projects by technology/activity**



2.12 The impact of this funding has helped to meet the targets set by The Green Economic Development Strategy 2022 to 2032 and the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan (CNAP) 2020 to 2030. Outcomes include the following achieved and projected results:

- a) 85 m2 of low carbon installations already completed
- b) 12.6 tonnes of CO2 already avoided with a further 20t forecast once the solar panelling projects are all operational. Of this total, 18t will result from installations on commercial buildings, exceeding the annual CNAP target of 14.7 tCO2e
- c) 7 EV charging stations
- d) 40 m2 of green space recovered and a further 10 acres to come
- e) 150 m2 of new foot and cycle paths
- f) 280 residents are set to gain qualifications in retrofit, alternative energy installation and digital communications through three green skills projects

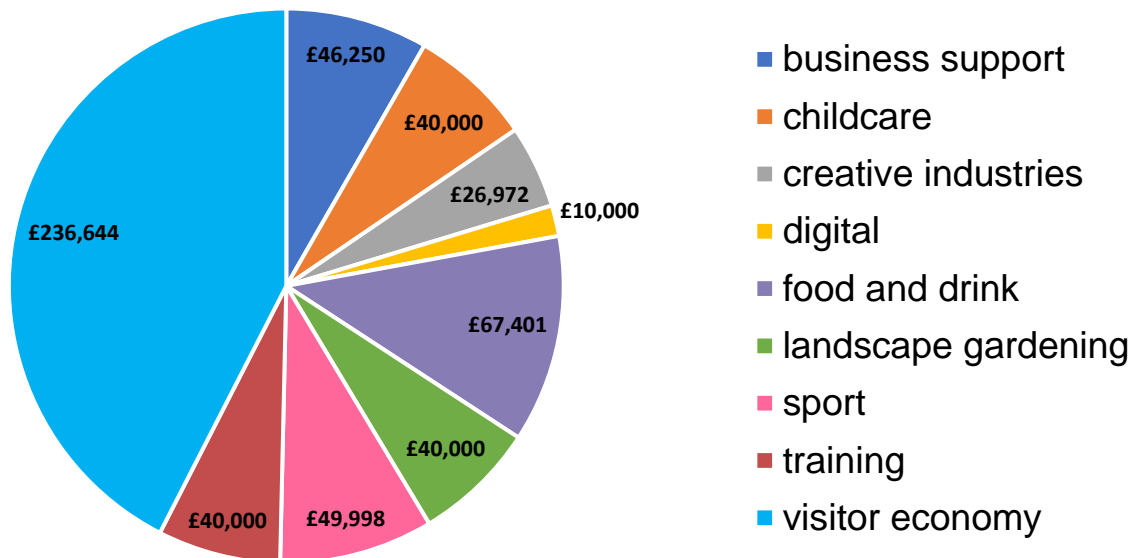
- 2.13 Patrick Foster, owner of Oakridge Smallholdings Ltd of Upham, whose solar panelling, part-funded by the REPF, has resulted in such significant CO2 and cost savings in the six months since installation that: "The good thing is that it's making us think about adding another solar/battery system to secondary supply we have on the farm to be much less grid reliant."
- 2.14 Bob Porter, Trustee of Denmead Community Centre, said: "REPF Funding through Winchester City Council enabled us to install a PV array at the Denmead Community Centre which will not only have environmental benefits but also reduce our costs enabling us to maintain and enhance opportunities and activities for all the residents of Denmead and the surrounding area."
- 2.15 Kate Shanley, owner of the Northbrook Arms pub at East Stratton, said "The funding for the EV Chargers at The Northbrook Arms has enabled us to install four EV charging points at the rear of the car park. This has made EV Charging available to guests visiting the pub, staying in the cottages, employees and the wider community."

Vibrant Local Economy

- 2.16 The council's commitment to boosting a vibrant local economy is complemented by two key objectives of the Shared Prosperity Funds: to support small, local businesses, especially in rural areas, and to develop people and skills.
- 2.17 42% of the total UKSPF and REPF grant from government has been allocated to business related activities.
- 2.18 22 separate businesses, some of which were micro-businesses, received 32% of the total UKSPF and REPF grant from government
- 2.19 Ten of these, representing £234,528, are involved in the visitor economy: three are pubs and two are educational exhibition centres (Winchester Science Centre and Marwell Zoo). When added to the UKSPF projects undertaken by the public sector, including funded projects delivered by the council to attract visitors to the district, the projects taking place in the visitor economy accounts for 51% of the total UKSPF and REPF grant from government.
- 2.20 In addition to the above, the wider business community is also benefitting from several training courses financed by UKSPF. £196,000 was allocated to six different training programmes.

2.21

**Figure 2: UKSPF and REPF 2022-2025
Business sectors supported**



2.22 The impact of these projects includes:

- a) Visitor numbers are forecast to increase by 4,585 once all projects are completed
- b) 40 events have been supported
- c) 22 businesses financed directly by the funds
- d) 52 businesses have been supported indirectly through the organisation of events
- e) Three local businesses are expanding because of the financial support received
- f) 205 people have already received training

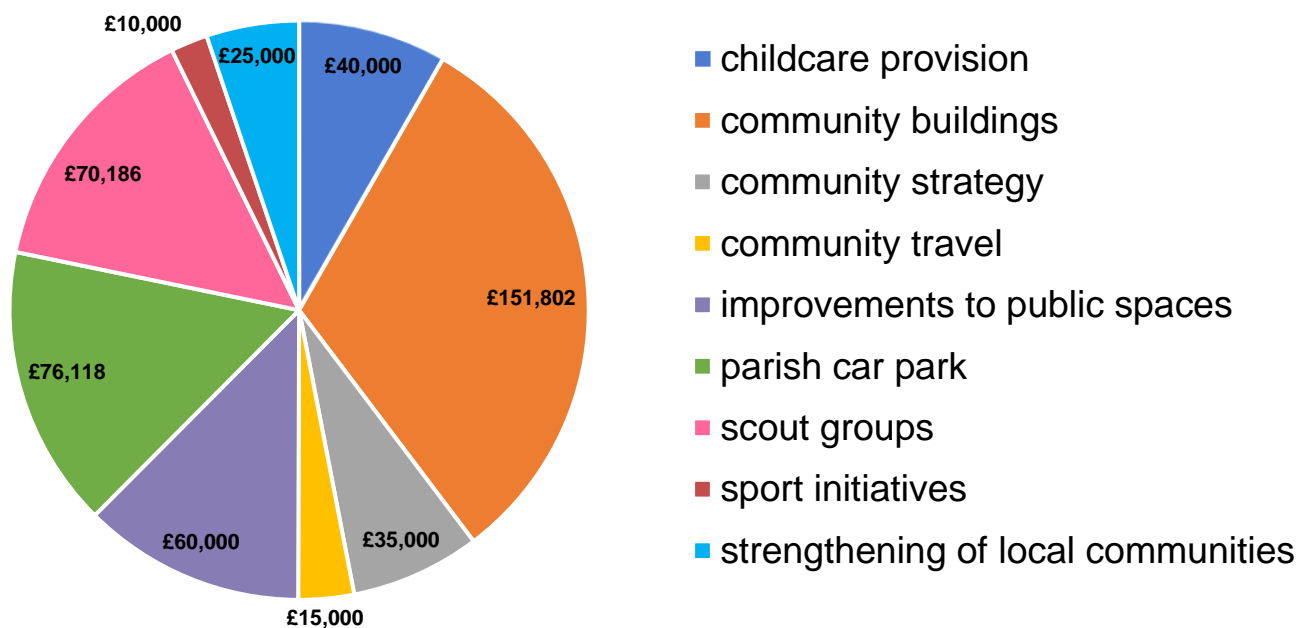
2.23 Will Harrigan, Founder and CEO of River Coffee Roasters which received funding for a larger roasting machine, said: "The project has allowed us to increase our production capacity. With this production capacity increase we have been able identify further sectors for growth. An example of this is a successful application and award for a listing on the TUCO supplier framework featuring in 5 lots. This framework gives us access to over 700 universities with the potential to supply hot beverage products. Without the

project and increase of capacity we would not be able to achieve this. The project has supported an extra full time employment role at River Coffee Roasters, with the new employee learning how to operate the new equipment. The project has also supported a part time role, taking our total employee count to 6 employees."

Living Well

- 2.24 Funds have been awarded to projects that make community buildings more comfortable, affordable and accessible by improving their energy efficiency. Additional funds have been directed towards the regeneration of town centres and green spaces to create pride in place. One project has focused on plans to give resident minorities a voice along with developing support networks in areas of deprivation. Another has provided social and physical benefits to residents through the development of health walks and a third has provided upskilling to local residents with low levels of digital experience.
- 2.25 28% of the total UKSPF and REPF grant from government - £483,106 – has been allocated to 18 projects for local community services. 31% of this has supported the improvement of seven community buildings (five of which are also reported under the Climate Emergency priority).

**Figure 3: UKSPF and REPF 2022-2025
Community projects**



2.26 Impacts of these projects include:

- a) 2,352 m2 made wheelchair accessible with a further 475 m2 projected
- b) 300 residents engaging in sport

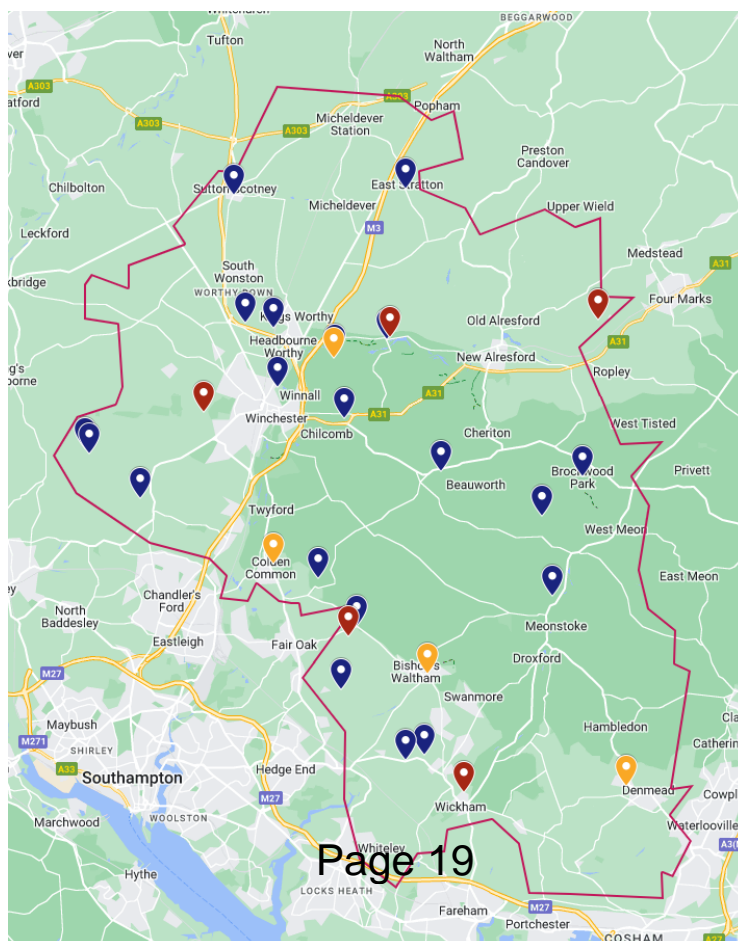
2.27 Mark Robins, Finance Director of Woodham’s Farm Day Nursery at Kings Worthy which received funding for a balcony providing access to fresh air for the youngest children, said: "Without the REPF funding, this important improvement to our childcare provision would have stayed on our wish list for another year or two”

District focus

2.28 The REPF provided the council with an additional £745,000 to be spent across the district excluding the urban centres of Winchester and Whiteley. By means of social media outreach and direct contact with networks, including those of the Partnership Board, the council was able to alert farms and other rural businesses to this opportunity, resulting in 51 applications over three competitive grant application rounds.

2.29 There were many strong applications with clear potential benefits for the district which resulted in the fund being oversubscribed. Accordingly, several of projects were supported with funding from the UKSPFF

2.30 The geographical spread of the 34 successful REPF applicants is shown below:



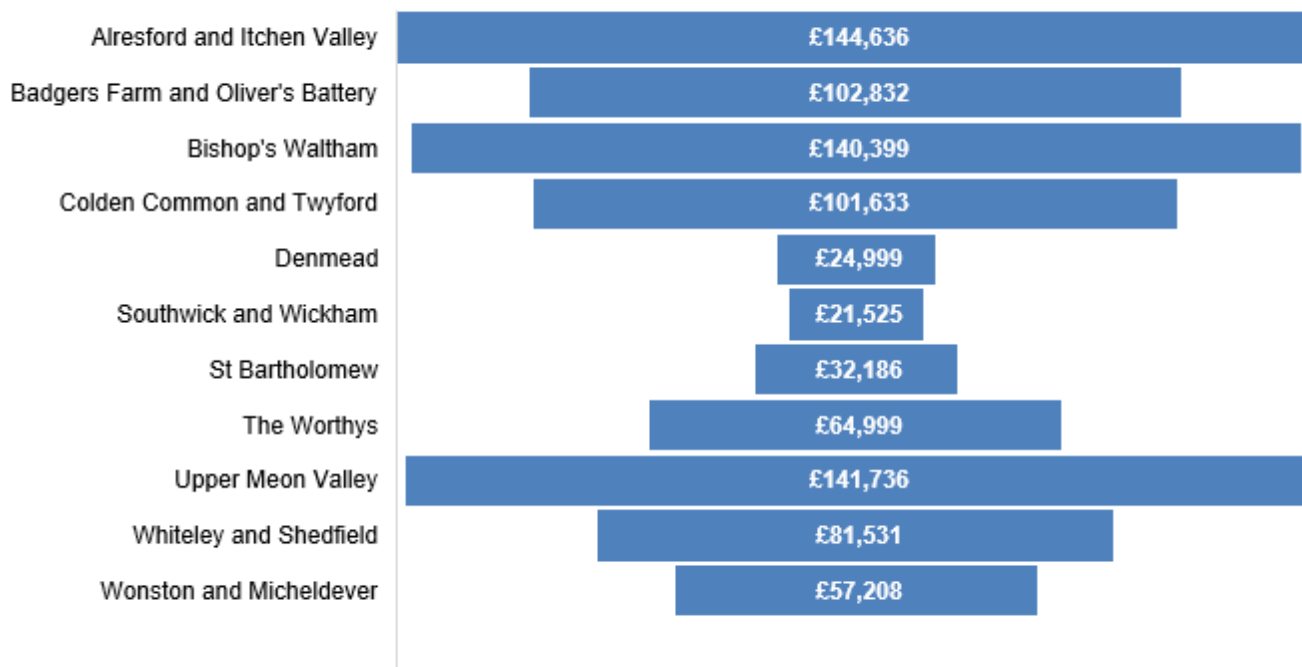
<https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1sz8BayX0RXpuaacblmtp-KBnVpr0T0k&usp=sharing>.

2.31 70.7% of the total UKSPF and REPF grant from government has funded projects in the rural parts of the district as outlined below:

Fund	Total grant award to rural areas
REPF	£744,332
REPF / UKSPF	£134,352
District-wide UKPSF	£355,100
Total	£1,233,784

2.32 The value of REPF projects funded for each ward is shown here:

Figure 4: Rural England Prosperity Funding by wards 2022-2025



Conclusion

- 2.33 In many cases, the funding awarded to local projects has been up to half of the total project cost. In the case of some of the bigger projects, the contribution has been lower still: in the order of 20-23%. Our most recent progress report returned to UK Government forecasts that the £1,745,000 fund has levered an additional £1,688,354 of private investment, nearly doubling the total project investment to £3,433,354 so far. This has meant that for every pound the council has awarded it has unlocked another pound from local businesses, community and other organisations.
- 2.34 The impact to the local community and economy is already, and will continue to be, significant. The projects that have been delivered are varied, innovative and align with council priorities as laid out in the original investment plan. They help meet local needs, supporting communities, business growth and skills development as identified by the business and organisations themselves and endorsed by the Partnership Board. It is anticipated that there will be a high level of project completions with associated increased impact by the time the current programme concludes on 31 March 2025.
- 2.35 In the meantime, many grant recipients have already come forward to report on the impact that the grants have offered. This paper has illustrated some of these which are examples from a diverse range of organisations from across the district. A further example of these was the Nunnaminster interpretation improvement project in the city centre. A local tour guide who admired the new panels said "Just a quick note to say how brilliant the new information boards are! I tried very hard to read the last boards but they were very weathered. The new boards are fascinating, full of things I didn't know, and I took a group there last week and they thought they were great! I am a Winchester guide and I will take groups there all the time now!"
- 2.36 Case studies are regularly up-dated on the council's website with projects that are successfully completed:
- [UK Shared and Rural England Prosperity Funds - Winchester City Council](#)
- 2.37 As the current UKSPF and REPF programmes come to an end, officers have taken the opportunity to reflect on how these programmes have been delivered.
- 2.38 Both funds have shown that relatively small sums of public sector support can kick start an activity that might otherwise have been deferred indefinitely. Two recipients have already informed us that they will be adding to their initial match funding pledge. In the council's last report to UK Govt, it was observed that the total benefit to the local economy was already double the allocation. We anticipate that this figure will rise.

- 2.39 Other local authorities have commented on the shortage of applicants for these funds, especially from the business community. Our funds have been oversubscribed and we believe that our success in reaching residents and potential recipients is owing to working closely with our networks, including our advisory board, business databases and parish colleagues.
- 2.40 We have seen particular success in areas where a preliminary study or strategy, financed by the UKSP, has identified areas for further funding by the UKSPF or REPF. A good example is the WinAcc audit of community buildings which has resulted in five REPF awards.
- 2.41 The government is well aware of the difficulties experienced in the first two years of the funding period, caused the by transition from one report system to the PowerApp. The lesson learned from the delays and inaccuracies that arose from these problems is the continued importance of robust internal systems within the council so that data is protected and an accurate record retained for post assurance purposes.

Programme Extension 2025-26

- 2.42 On 13 December 2024 government confirmed the council would be in receipt of additional UKSPF grant, enabling us to extend our programme of support for local communities and economic growth for a further year. We have been awarded a total of £327,146 of which £60,401 is capital and £266,745 is revenue to be spent from 1 April 2025 to end of March 2026.
- 2.43 MHCLG and DEFRA are working together and will update on any further programme for REPF in 2025/26 in due course.
- 2.44 Comment from the committee is sought on the approach planned for the 2025/2026 programme.
- 2.45 Delegated authority to the Corporate Head of Service for Economy & Communities to accept the 2025/2026 UKSPF, design and implement a grant programme in consultation with the Cabinet member for Business & Culture and spend against it, will be sought at an upcoming Cabinet Meeting. C
- 2.46 The government has laid out its priorities for the 2025/2026 UKSPF programme <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-2025-26-technical-note#:~:text=An%20additional%20year%20of%20UKSPF,of%20existing%20a ctivity%20where%20appropriate> which align with the previous years.

- 2.47 An open call to businesses and not for profit/community organisations across the district will be made, concentrating on economic growth, community resilience and energy generation will be undertaken in the coming weeks. This will be supported by a range of business engagement activities including marketing and promotion.
- 2.48 Applications will be sought for projects with grant values between £25,000 and £50,000.
- 2.49 Successful applicants will be advised in time for funded projects to be undertaken and delivered by 27 February 2026
- 2.50 All other grant conditions will reflect those set out for the previous UKSPF programme as agreed by Cabinet on 19 July 2022 (CAB3356).

3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

3.22 Not applicable

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

CAB3356: UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND – INVESTMENT PLAN PROPOSAL 19 JULY 2022

[UKSPF Investment Plan proposal - Cabinet Documet.pdf](#)

CAB3372: RURAL ENGLAND PROSPERITY FUND – INVESTMENT PLAN PROPOSAL 15 NOVEMBER 2022

[CAB3372 Rural England Prosperity Fund Investment Plan Proposal.pdf](#)

Other Background Documents:-

None

APPENDICES:

None

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REPORT TITLE: HOUSING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE POLICY

11 FEBURARY 2025

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: Chris Westwood, Cabinet Member for Housing

Contact Officer: Gilian Knight Tel No: 01962 848 577 Email
gknight@winchester.go.uk

WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

The four-housing repair and maintenance polices for review have been updated or introduced to support the current procurement of the of council housing repair and maintenance redesign contract to help provide improvements in customer satisfaction and efficiency of delivery.

The policies supported by service procedures will provide a foundation to ensure compliance with laws and regulations, consistency and fairness, mitigate risk and liability and improve customer communication.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the policy committee are asked to review and comment upon the proposed four policies attached.

1. Disabled Adaptations Policy
2. Housing Repairs And Maintenance Policy
3. Housing Repairs Recharge Policy
4. Managing Damp And Mould

1 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 1.1 The policy and consultation work are undertaken within existing staffing resources from the Housing Revenue Account with budget in place to deliver on associated work within the polices.
- 1.2 The polices will be taken for formal adoption in a report to Cabinet Committee: Housing in July 2025 to include legal and financial assessment.

2 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Background.

- 2.1 The four polices have been updated or introduced to support the current procurement of the of council housing repair and maintenance redesign contract to help improve customer communication, satisfaction levels and efficiency of delivery.

2.2 Polices for Review and Comment.

Disabled Adaptions Policy.

The updated policy proposes an approach to ensure the needs of those living with disabilities are met to allow them to stay safe and live independently at home for longer. The policy also operates in conjunction with the council's allocation policy to support those to move to a more appropriate home when it is not suitable or cost effective to carry out property adaptations. The policy sets a benchmark of £ 6,000 for major adaptations with alternative approaches to help meet housing need investigated on a case to case to basis by the housing adaptations panel.

Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy.

The policy sets out the council's approach for the delivery of housing repairs and maintenance. The policy reflects responsive repairs and planned and cyclical maintenance programs to ensure the council's stock is well maintained and safe to meet the needs of our tenants. The policy aims to meet all the council's statutory and regulatory repair and maintenance requirements within a value for money context.

Housing Repairs Recharge Policy.

The policy aims to reduce the cost of repair works that are not considered to be a landlord responsibility. The policy introduces a framework for recharging

tenants and sets out examples of the type of repairs to be recharged it includes an appeal process to manage disputes.

The policy refers to tenant and landlord responsibilities as set out in the Tenants Handbook.

Damp and Mould Policy

The policy and associated procedure provide a framework for staff to effectively deal with reported damp and mould problems. The policy is aimed at ensuring tenants get appropriate information regarding the causes and control of damp and mould and that as a landlord we carry out our duties in relation to the provision of a “healthy and safe” home.

The policy also contains a chapter for Private Sector Housing tenants.

2.3 Consultation

2.4 In May 2024 a survey relating to the repairs service was sent to all council tenants, leaseholders and shared owners who hold an email address to be completed on-line and a paper copy sent to those without an email address. There were 823 responses to the survey, reflecting a 13% return rate.

2.5 A series of workshops were carried out with residents across the Winchester district and 135 residents expressed an interest to attend with a total of 17 residents attending. Four workshops were hosted for housing staff and 41 staff members attended. A workshop was hosted for elected members and 11 councilors attended.

2.6 The survey and workshop consultation were predominantly to support the early work of the procurement of the council housing repair and maintenance redesign service, but the feedback and outcomes captured from surveys and workshops informed the formulation of several of the policies.

2.7 A further tenant consultation program on all four of the draft policies is set to begin this month through various tenant engagement opportunities.

3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

No other options have been considered and rejected as it is a requirement to have appropriate service policies as together policies and procedures provide a roadmap for day-to-day operations. They ensure compliance with laws and regulations, give guidance for decision-making, and streamline internal processes.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Previous Committee Reports:

[Economy and Housing Policy Committee - Tuesday, 17th September, 2024 6.30 pm](#)

[Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 20th November, 2024, 9.30 am - Winchester City Council](#)

Other Background Documents:

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 Disabled Adaptions Policy.

Appendix 2 Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy.

Appendix 3 Housing Repairs Recharge Policy.

Appendix 4 Damp and Mould Policy

HRA Disabled Adaptations Policy



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This policy sets out how Winchester City Council (The council) will respond to requests for property disabled adaptations to the homes of Council tenants and residents.

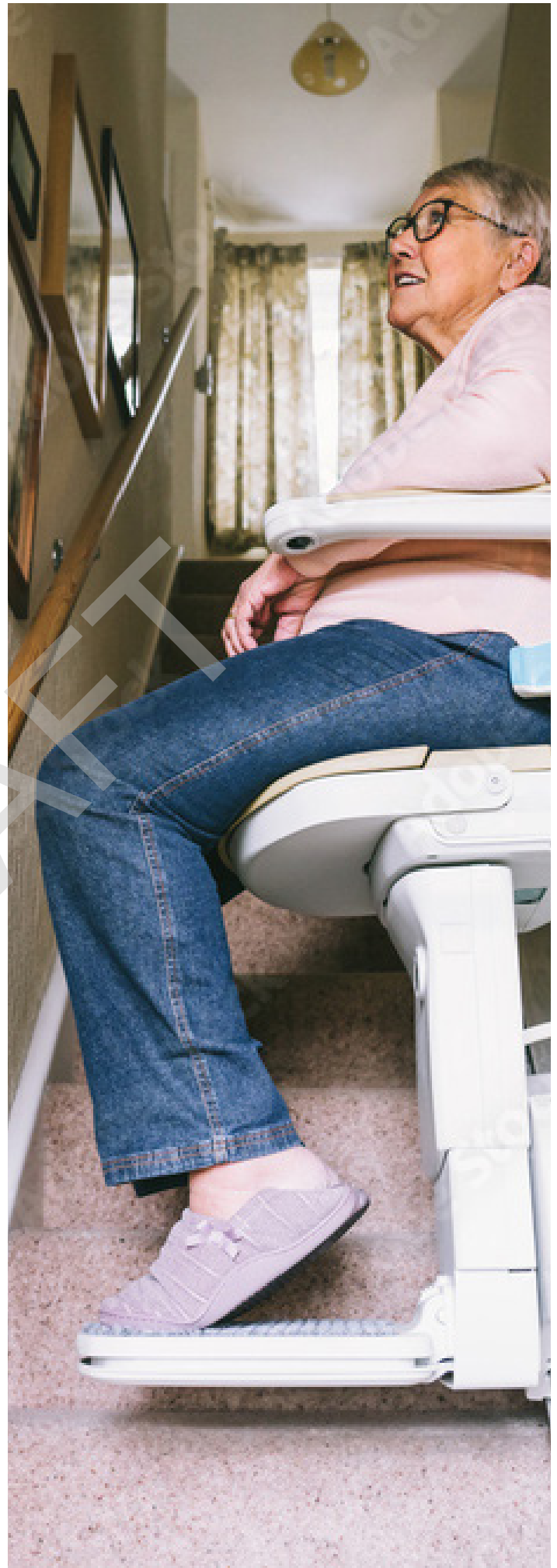
1.2 The council is committed to supporting residents to live independently within their own home where possible. The increase in demand for social housing requires a greater focus on supporting residents to consider how their housing needs may be met in the longer term and as their needs change, residents may be required to move to a more suitable property.

1.3 This policy is aligned with the council's Housing Allocation Scheme and the objectives of making best use of the council housing stock whilst responding to the housing needs within the Winchester district.

2. AIMS

2.1 The aims of this policy are to;

- Enable the council to provide housing which best meets the assessed needs of residents.
- Support best use of financial resources, to ensure budgets are spent effectively.
- To make effective use of the council's property assets so that the long-term benefit derived from the housing stock is preserved for future use.
- Ensure that Residents, Occupational Therapists (OT) and other professionals are provided with good guidance and have a clear understanding as to the circumstances in which THE COUNCIL will not be able to assist with adaptations.
- Operate a service that offers suitable, practical, and cost-effective solutions that meet residents' assessed needs.
- Meet the long-term needs of residents and their families, ensuring their safety, well-being and quality of life.
- Ensure no resident waits longer than 12 months for an approved adaptation to be progressed.



3. LEGISLATIVE, REGULATORY CONTEXT AND DEFINITIONS

3.1 The Disabled Adaptations Policy considers the following legislation and policies:

- The Care Act 2014
- The Housing Allocations Scheme made under the Housing Act 1996
- Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010
- The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 (“The Order”)
- Delivering Housing Adaptations for Disabled People – A good practice guide (June 2006)
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) delivery: Guidance for Local Authorities in England 2022

3.2 The Council’s Aids and Adaptations Policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- The Council’s HRA Asset Management Strategy
- The Council’s Health and Safety Policy
- The Council’s Void Policy
- The Council’s Recharge Policy
- The Council’s Safeguarding Policy
- The Council’s Residents’ Handbook
- The Council’s Tenancy Agreements

3.3 Long-term adverse effect refers to disabilities that have lasted for at least 12 months, the effects of which will last for at least 12 months, and which are likely to last for the remainder of a person’s life.

3.4 Living with disabilities if:

- Their sight, hearing or speech is substantially impaired.
- They have a mental health condition or impairment of any kind.
- They are physically disabled by illness or impairment present since birth or otherwise.

4. POLICY DETAILS

4.1 Adaptation work will only be undertaken after careful consideration of various factors such as:

- Current and future needs of the tenant/ resident(s) and their household
- Individual resident’s level of disability
- Professional assessment/recommendations of healthcare professionals
- Characteristics of the dwelling, its construction and internal arrangement
- Planning and building regulation requirements and legislation.
- Budget provision and long-term property asset implications
- Most cost-effective approach of achieving the required outcome.
- Alternative solutions to address assessed needs.
- Assessing if the tenant/resident should move to an alternative property where an appropriate adaptation already exists.
- Most effective use of housing stock

4.2 For property disabled adaption work to be considered tenants/ residents submit a request for assessment and referral to a Hampshire County Council (HCC) OT.

4.3 The HCC OT will assess the housing needs and confirm their recommendations to THE COUNCIL. In some cases, the HCC OT will request a joint visit with THE COUNCIL.

4.4 The HCC OT assessments will be reviewed and considered by the THE COUNCIL OT. THE COUNCIL as the council landlord will ultimately make the decision on what is a reasonable adaption in relation to the tenant/resident’s disabilities and housing circumstances to ensure adapted housing is available to a wide range of people.

4.5 In extreme cases the THE COUNCIL OT will consider applications directly from third party sources such as the NHS.

4.6 For an adaptation request to qualify, an OT or other suitable professional must confirm that the effects of the disability will last for at least 12 months and/or are likely to last for the remainder of

a person's life.

4.7 The long-term diagnosis of tenant/ resident's condition and the future use and occupation of the property will be key considerations when deciding about the most appropriate solution.

4.8 Adaptations may be refused where the costs of adapting the current home are unaffordable and where the assessed needs could be met within the council's existing housing stock

4.9 Provision of appliances and portable specialist equipment will not be funded as these are either the resident's responsibility or that of Adult Services.

4.10 MINOR adaptations such as handrails up to a combined total value of £250.00 may be carried out without an OT assessment to enable a resident to remain independently living in their home regardless of whether they are under occupying the property. Such adaptations will be revenue funded.

MINOR adaptation work includes:

- Grab rails in various locations throughout a property
- Additional internal banister rails
- Additional external handrails
- Lever taps
- Key Safe
- Banister Rails
- Newell Rails
- Internal Door Thresholds
- Reposition Door Handle
- Kitchen cupboard handles
- Door and wall protectors
- Altering sockets and light switches
- Door Intercoms
- Paint nosings on steps and stairs
- Provision of external lighting
- Provision of lighting in principle rooms
- Flashing/ loud doorbells
- Smoke Alarm Alerts

4.11 MAJOR adaptations costing above £250.00 and up to a total of £6000.00 will be assessed and if appropriate approved by the THE COUNCIL OT.

All adaptation works that exceed a total value of £6000.00 will be referred to the THE COUNCIL Adaptations Panel. Major adaptations will be capital funded.

MAJOR adaptation work includes:

- Over-bath showers
- Level access shower
- Stairlifts
- Door and Threshold adaptations (including door openers and environmental controls, where part of a major scheme)
- Ramping or adaptations to steps including handrails
- Significant external handrail installations
- Improving access to toilet, bathroom and essential living areas
- Adapting the kitchen to provide accessible facilities to enable the person with the disability to access and use the kitchen
- Adapting heating and lighting controls to ensure appropriate access and ease of use
- Extensions to existing property to provide essential amenities, i.e. accessible bath or shower facilities, bedroom

4.12 In circumstances where adaptation works will exceed a total cost of £6000.00, these cases will be referred to the THE COUNCIL Adaptations Panel. The THE COUNCIL Adaptations Panel will meet to review each case and the membership will include:

- THE COUNCIL HRA Occupational Therapist
- THE COUNCIL Tenancy Services Manager
- THE COUNCIL Assets and Planned Maintenance Manager *
- Senior allocations officer
- THE COUNCIL Housing Support and Inclusion Manager

* The THE COUNCIL Assets and Planned Maintenance Manager will be the lead member of the panel.

When appropriate representatives from other agencies with a specialism in relation to the tenant/ resident's circumstances may be invited to attend.

The THE COUNCIL Adaptations Panel will assess each case and consider the criteria a) - n) below to determine if the requested adaptation is appropriate. The panel will advise the resident in writing within 20 working days of the outcome of the decision and include detailed reasons if the outcome is to reject the request. If the panel determines that the adaptation is approved, the resident will be informed accordingly and given an indication of timescales.

- A. Is the intended property to be adapted, under occupying by one or more bedrooms?
- B. Is the resident waiting for a transfer to another property?
- C. Is the tenancy ending imminently?
- D. Will the property require structural alterations?
- E. Is the adaptation, installing a level access shower above ground floor?
- F. Can the tenant/resident's needs be met with alternative use of the property, for example, using a ground floor second reception room as a bedroom?
- G. Are other suitable alternative adapted, or part adapted accommodation available?
- H. Might the required adaptation adversely affect THE COUNCIL's ability to make best use of the stock and relet the property in the future?
- I. Might the household's circumstances be such that further adaptations will be required in the future and therefore more suitable accommodation may be more appropriate?
- J. Would the adaptation place others at risk e.g. a communal stairlift with no alternative access for other residents?
- K. Is the property unsuitable for adaptation due to its construction?
- L. Does the Council own the property?
- M. Is the property temporary housing ?
- N. Is the adaptation a good use of HRA funds. Has the cost of a supported move compared with the cost of the adaptation work been reviewed and assessed?

Where THE COUNCIL considers that a tenant/resident's needs are best met by moving them to a more suitable home, the focus will be to

understand the wider impact of a potential move on the tenant/resident's well-being and continuity of care. Should a move be the required solution, it will be managed and supported by Hampshire County Council, Adult Social Care and THE COUNCIL Housing Services.

The following should be considered by the Adaptations Panel.

- **Support Networks** – Whether sufficient support networks exist to support the tenants/resident's move, or will support be lost if they move. E.g. proximity to family networks?
- **Health** – Would the upheaval of a move be detrimental to the tenant/resident's health, location of specialist treatment and groups?
- **Employment** – If the tenant/resident is employed, would the new location impact the tenant/resident's ability to sustain employment?
- **Education** – If the tenant/resident has children at school, would the new location impact schooling?
- **Social Networks** – Would a move make it difficult for the tenant/resident to maintain important social activities that aren't available in other locations?
- **Cultural considerations** – Would a move make it difficult for the tenant/resident to maintain proximity to cultural groups?
- **Faith considerations** – Would a move make it difficult for the tenant/resident to maintain links with faith-based organisations?
- **The resident's view** – Has the resident given sound reasons for not moving?

If the resident refuses the suitable accommodation recommendation, they can appeal to the Yvonne If the tenant/resident decides not to move, they will remain in their current property and THE COUNCIL will support them with appropriate minor adaptations.

Where THE COUNCIL declines adaptations in favour of the tenant/resident moving to suitable alternative accommodation, financial assistance may be provided for the move at THE COUNCIL's discretion.

4.13 Where a tenant/resident living in an adapted property is being moved because of redevelopment or refurbishment of their home, essential

adaptations will be carried out in the new home being offered.

4.14 During planned works, THE COUNCIL will maintain any existing adaptation or fixed equipment if it is still needed for the household.

RETROFIT ISSUES AROUND ADAPTATIONS EG STRAHLIFTS

4.15 THE COUNCIL may remove semi-portable equipment or minor adaptations such as a handrail, stair lift or specialist shower if no longer needed due to a permanent change in the household requirements. Fixed adaptations such as structural alterations or concrete ramps will be retained and maintained.

5. CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH ADAPTATION TASKS WILL NOT BE UNDERTAKEN.

5.1 THE COUNCIL will not install a through floor lift unless this can be accommodated within the existing property without utilising a bedroom.

5.2 THE COUNCIL will not install stairlifts in under occupied properties.

5.3 THE COUNCIL will not replace adaptations in a property where they have been removed by the current resident. If they are required, it will be at THE COUNCIL's discretion whether to reinstall, and the cost may be recharged to the tenant/resident.

5.4 Where a home has been adapted for a specific resident who no longer lives there, THE COUNCIL will seek to identify a suitable tenant/resident for the property. Should it not be possible the property will be let with adaptations in place, and these will not be removed at the request of the new tenant/resident. The property will be advertised and let as such unless there is prior agreement in writing from THE COUNCIL to carry out works.

5.5 Extensions and/or conversions to properties

will not be considered except in exceptional or specific individual cases. This is entirely at the discretion of THE COUNCIL. Any such work may require up to 36 months to complete.

5.6 THE COUNCIL will not consider adapting an under-occupied property except if the potential benefits are greater than THE COUNCIL moving a tenant/resident to a more suitable smaller home. Should a tenant/resident be under-occupying and have requested adaptations, THE COUNCIL will assess the suitability of the property for their needs.

5.7 THE COUNCIL will not carry out adaptations to properties that are subject to a Right-to-Buy application.

5.8 Pavement crossovers and hard standings will only be considered for wheelchair users and residents with severe disabilities. Where a need for parking is identified THE COUNCIL may identify a suitable alternative property. If THE COUNCIL does agree, these requests are subject to approval by the Planning Department and Hampshire County Council Highways.

5.9 There is no statutory duty to grant works to communal areas. Where works are both necessary and reasonably practical, THE COUNCIL will consider essential access requirements. Such proposals may require the consent of other tenants/residents and must not compromise other tenants/residents' safety and will therefore be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

5.10 Adaptations to make provision for a mobility scooter will not be approved where the tenant/resident is under occupying and if alternative accommodation is available. Requests for provision of a mobility scooter store will be considered by the THE COUNCIL Adaptations Panel.

5.11 Where a resident requests a mutual exchange or transfer from their adapted property, to one that is not adapted THE COUNCIL are likely to decline the request unless there is evidence that the adaptations are no longer required. THE COUNCIL may not carry out further major adaptations to the subsequent property unless there are exceptional circumstances. When a tenant requests a mutual exchange, the incoming tenant will be expected to have an OT recommendation for any installed adaptations.

5.12 If suitable access is not viable via the main entrance door/s the most economical provision will

be explored, which may include other adaptations such as changing windows to doors. This will be at the discretion of the THE COUNCIL Adaptations Panel. It is highly likely in such cases that alternative accommodation will be the recommendation.

5.13 A request for provision of additional space, for example an extra bedroom, and/or additional space for a child who has challenging behaviour due to their disability will be referred to the THE COUNCIL Adaptations Panel.

5.14 Tenant/residents wishing to carry out their own adaptations, including making provision for a mobility scooter, need permission from THE COUNCIL. The tenant/resident must;

- Acquire written approval from the council's Repairs, Voids and Compliance Manager
- Ensure proposed work is carried out by a fully competent qualified contractor
- Conform to the appropriate regulations and legislation
- Be responsible for putting right any damage relating to the works being carried out
- Contact THE COUNCIL's Housing Service upon completion of any work so an inspection is carried out
- Provide THE COUNCIL with any relevant certificates of the work upon completion
- Maintain and repair any equipment or fittings they have installed.

THE COUNCIL reserves the right to request that the tenant/resident signs a legal agreement confirming they are responsible for ensuring the property is returned to its original condition upon termination of the tenancy. The cost of this must be met by the tenant/resident. A reasonable charge may be made to cover the cost of THE COUNCIL staff engaged in monitoring this work.

6.0 COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION

6.1 THE COUNCIL will provide clear and comprehensive advice and information to tenants/residents, with an aim of providing a single point of contact

6.2 Where major works are approved THE COUNCIL will consult with tenant/residents, explaining the scope of the works and the completion timescales.

6.3 THE COUNCIL will promote the THE COUNCIL Disabled Adaptions Policy and the adaptations service through a range of media including social media, leaflets, posters, newsletters and on the THE COUNCIL website.

6.4 I Should a Tenant/resident not be satisfied with any aspect of a decision made on their disabled adaptions application; they have a right to request a review. If dissatisfied with the outcome of the review, they may make a complaint under THE COUNCIL's complaint procedure.

7.0 MONITORING AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

7.1 The THE COUNCIL Disabled Adaptions Policy will be reviewed every three years to ensure that it remains a relevant service, is financially viable, meets tenant/resident's housing need requirements and meets any legislative duties.

7.2 THE COUNCIL is committed to monitoring completed disabled adaptation works using customer satisfaction surveys; to ensure performance meets customer satisfaction and to help inform future service improvements.

7.3 Publishing information in relation to THE COUNCIL performance against the aims and standards set out in the THE COUNCIL Disabled Adaptations Policy.

7.4 Training of THE COUNCIL staff to recognise the need for disabled adaptations and to enable them to give guidance to tenants/ residents who may require an OT referral.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

8.1 The policy seeks to promote fairness and equality throughout the activities of THE COUNCIL, regardless of where the tenant/resident lives, their background or circumstances. In deciding whether to carry out adaptations, THE COUNCIL will have regard to the housing need in the area and the duty to achieve best use of stock.

8.2 Where there is a barrier in accessing information, extra effort will be made by THE COUNCIL staff and their representatives. This may involve asking a relative or third party for help (with the consent of the service user) or employing translation or interpretation services if necessary.

8.3 An Equality Impact Assessment screening has been carried out on the THE COUNCIL Disabled Adaptations Policy and is available on request. If THE COUNCIL declines adaptations in favour of a move to more suitable property, support will be available to navigate this process to achieve a positive outcome and to ensure that suitable adaptations are either already available in the selected new home or these are installed to the OT's specification.



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Winchester
City Council

HOUSING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE POLICY

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If you would like to receive this document in another format please contact Winchester City Council's Customer Service Centre on 01962 840 222 to discuss your requirements. Alternatively, you can request this information online.



1. PURPOSE

Winchester City Council (the council) will work collaboratively with residents to create and provide homes, estates, and neighbourhoods that we are all proud of.

This policy sets out the council's approach for the delivery of housing repairs and maintenance. The policy reflects responsive repairs and the planned & cyclical maintenance programs, all of which ensure the council's stock is well maintained, safe and meets the needs of residents.

The policy will support the aims of the council's HRA Asset Management Strategy.

We will work in partnership with residents to continuously improve and shape the service to meet regulatory requirements. Resident feedback is highly welcomed and collectively we will find ways to improve.

This policy applies to all residents. Please refer to the council tenancy agreement, leases and tenancy handbook for specific information.

2. SCOPE AND STANDARDS

THE COUNCIL'S AIMS WILL:

- Deliver a value for money, responsive repairs and maintenance service that meets the needs of the council's residents.
- Comply with all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements and meet the council's contractual and legal obligations.
- Ensure a safe and secure environment for the council's residents to live.
- Ensure that all homes meet decency standards.

THE COUNCIL'S OBJECTIVES ARE TO:

- Provide a reliable responsive service.
- Ensure the service is easily accessible through a range of different contact points.
- Deliver repairs at times that suit the council's residents in alignment with the terms of the repairs contract.
- Achieve high standards of customer care and satisfaction.
- Ensure all relevant stakeholders are aware of responsibilities for repairs and the costs associated with these.
- Deliver 'first time fix' repairs whenever possible.
- Complete work to appropriate standards.
- Offer choice of materials and finishes in line with the council's standards/specifications.
- Undertake only those repairs that are the council's responsibility.
- Undertake repairs within defined timescales to ensure the upkeep of the council's assets.

3. LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

Statutory and regulatory duties that apply to the council.

- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- The Secure Residents of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994
- Equalities Act 2010
- Building Safety Act 2022
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- CDM regulations
- Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Homes (Fitness for Habitation) Act 2018
- Party Wall Act 1996
- Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004
- Decent Homes Standard (DHS)
- Section 4 of the Defective Premises Act 1972
- Social Housing Regulation Act (HL) 2023
- Ensure that all homes meet decency standards.



The council's Repairs and Maintenance Policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- The Council's Aids and Adaptations Policy
- The Council's Asbestos Policy
- The Council's Gas Servicing Policy
- The council's Decarbonisation of Housing Policy
- The Council's Fire Safety Policy
- The Council's Electrical Safety Policy
- The Council's Loler (Passenger lifts) Policy
- The Council's Water monitoring (L8) policy
- The Council's HRA Asset Management Strategy
- The Council's Environmental Policy
- The Council's Health and Safety Policy
- The Council's Void Standard
- The Council's Recharge Policy
- The Council's Safeguarding Policy
- The Council's Lone working policy
- The Council's Residents' Handbook
- The Council's Tenancy Agreements
- The Council's Lease Agreements

4. DEFINITIONS

RESPONSIVE REPAIR

'Responsive repair' is a term used to describe day-to-day repairs that are reactive in nature, rather than planned or those included in longer-term investment programs. It covers repairs that are needed to fix a single or multiple defect that should be carried out within a defined period. If the repair does not fit this description, it may be classed as either cyclical or planned works.

CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE

This is maintenance and servicing carried out on a regular cycle of between 1 and 10 years. This can include external decorations and gutter clearance.

PLANNED PROGRAMMES

This covers any major works that are normally planned. This includes new kitchens, new bathrooms, new heating systems, replacement roofs, rewiring, new windows and Decent Homes works.

DECENT HOMES

The Decent Homes Standard (DHS) is a benchmark set by government for all social housing landlords. For a property to be designated as a decent home, it must:

- Meet statutory minimum standards for housing, currently defined by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- Be in a reasonable state of repair.

- Have reasonable modern facilities and services.
- Provide thermal comfort.
- Free of damp and mould.

VOIDS

Voids refer to empty homes. The Council's Voids Standard will apply to the extent and standard of work within voids.

The Void standard can be accessed through the Council's website. ***

***** Not currently included in the service**

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The council is responsible for repairing and maintaining the structure and any shared parts of the building which dwellings are part of.

The council is generally responsible for repairing and maintaining the interior of tenanted dwellings. Where defects are identified as being wilful damage or neglect then tenants may be charged full or partial cost of the repair/s.

The council will externally inspect its tenanted homes every 5 years.

THE COUNCIL WILL

- Ensure electrical installations are safe and in good working order.
- Maintain and service all council owned gas appliances.
- Ensure a council owned home is structurally sound and weatherproof.
- Maintain windows, drains, guttering, roof, and external pipes.
- Maintain the plumbing of hot and cold water.
- Maintain adequate heating and ventilation within a dwelling.
- Maintain external walls, outside doors, windowsills, soffits, fascia's, window catches and window frames (not including internal painting and decoration)
- Maintain garages.
- Maintain communal boundary walls and fences only. The council may repair dwelling boundary fences in exceptional cases where a Health and Safety matter prevails.
- Maintain installations for heating water.
- Maintain kitchen fixtures and fittings.
- Plasterwork
- Maintain pathways and steps.
- Maintain basins, sinks, baths, electric showers, toilets, flushing systems and waste pipes.
- Common entrances, lifts, rubbish chutes and any other communal parts.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES (CONTINUED)

TENANT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The council's Tenancy Agreement sets out the specific repair responsibilities for tenants.

The council expects tenants to:

- Keep the inside of the home clean and in good condition.
- Gardens should be maintained and clear of debris.
- Communal areas should be clean and tidy and free from all personal items.
- Minor repairs should be carried out as should all internal decorations.
- Report repairs quickly to prevent on-going damage.
- Meet the cost of repairs that are listed as being resident's responsibility.
- Provide access for statutory gas and electrical inspections and where applicable chimney sweeping.
- Provide access, in accordance with Tenancy Agreement conditions so that repairs can be undertaken in accordance with priority timescales. the council's contractors will not carry out work where a child under 16 years old is alone at a property.
- Treat the council's property with respect and care, avoiding wilful damage and neglect.
- Seek permission to make improvements and maintain those improvements.
- Replace lost keys and/or gain entry if accidentally locked out.
- Replace light bulbs/lamps.
- Repair broken glass to windows and doors if damaged by resident behaviour. Residents will need to provide a crime reference number where glass has been broken through criminal activity.
- Clean shower heads and shower curtains.
- TV aerials where not on a communal council-maintained system.
- Installation and maintenance of own appliances. This includes connection of gas and electric cookers, which must be fitted by an appropriately registered installer. A completion certificate for the work must be forwarded to THE COUNCIL within one week.
- Ventilate and heat the property, cleaning of mould caused by condensation.
- Maintain humidity levels in the home.

Leaseholders are responsible for all maintenance, repairs, and servicing within the property as defined in the lease, excluding communal areas. (For more details and responsibilities, refer to the council's lease agreements)

Wherever possible the council will replace items with like for like but this is not always achievable where a fixture or fitting is non-standard or no longer available. In these circumstances we will try and find the closest match available, but we will not undertake unnecessary works or full replacements simply for aesthetic reasons.

The council will accommodate resident choices wherever possible except where this may have implications on cost, on future repairs or replacement obligations. If a resident has replaced fixtures or fittings themselves (such as tiling, flooring etc.) the council is not responsible for any repair or replacement.

6. RECHARGES

Whilst residents are responsible for the repairs outlined in 5 above, in some cases where residents continue to neglect their responsibilities the council may undertake and recharge for works and an administration charge.

Any repairs or maintenance works carried out by residents must be to the council's standard and if not, the council reserves the right to rectify the works and recharge residents for the costs incurred.

It is resident's responsibility to insure the contents of their home and are responsible for any loss or damage to the contents due to theft, flooding, fire, or accidental damage.

Resident's may also be held responsible for damage caused to other properties as a result of flooding or fire if the cause is found to be arson, wilful damage or neglect.

7. RESPONSIVE REPAIRS

The council has target times for different types of repairs priorities. Such timescales may vary dependent on the nature of the repair, resident vulnerabilities and health safety concerns. These will be agreed with the resident according to the nature of the repair at the time of appointing the job.

EMERGENCY REPAIRS – 2 HOURS

This response priority is reserved for incidents that require an immediate response to either prevent danger to life or extensive damage to the property, if the incident/problem will have a serious and unavoidable adverse effect on someone's medical

needs or personal health and/or safety or if there is an infant in the property under 1 year old living in the property. Emergency repairs will be attended to within two hours and made safe at a subsequent visit if a full repair cannot be completed and are:

- Total loss of water supply (other than by water supplier)
- Total loss of electricity (other than power cut)
- Serious water leak or flood inside a home that you cannot contain
- Blocked toilet (where there is only one in a dwelling)
- Broken external doors or windows

where there is a threat to security

- Serious structural damage e.g., loose or falling brickwork, tiles, etc.
- Lift breakdowns
- Making safe collapsed ceilings and floors
- Blocked flue to an open fire or boiler
- Major health and safety repairs to communal parts
- Stair-lifts in communal areas (not within dwellings) and ceiling track hoist breakdowns

The council may recharge a resident for an emergency call out if it is determined that it was not a genuine emergency.

OUT OF HOURS

During the periods that are deemed to be Out of Hours, the council will provide an emergency repairs service. The council may recharge a resident for an Out of Hours call out if it is determined that it was not a genuine emergency. Residents should call the repairs telephone number **01962 865405** and this will transfer directly to the Out of Hours service.

- 5pm - 8am each working day
- Weekends

- Bank holidays

URGENT REPAIRS - 24 HOURS

These repairs require urgent attention to prevent residents from experiencing significant inconvenience, risks to health and safety or further damage to the council's property.

The following Urgent repairs will be attended to within 24 hours and made safe at a subsequent visit if a full repair cannot be completed:

- Blocked toilet, soil stacks and sewers
- Restore flush to WC where tenant is unable to flush with a bucket of water.
- Insecure windows and doors
- Unsafe electrical fittings and lights
- Blocked or leaking foul drains.
- Total or partial loss of heating and hot water (between 1 Nov -30 April). Where this cannot be completed because there is a need to obtain parts, an alternative source of heating will be provided.
- Minor health and safety repairs to communal parts
- Providing access where a key is lost or misplaced.

The council may recharge a resident for the following:

7. RESPONSIVE REPAIRS (CONTINUED)

- Blocked WC's
- Blocked sinks, WHB's baths and showers
- Broken windows or doors
- Blocked drains
- Gaining access where a door key is misplaced

ROUTINE REPAIRS – 1-30 WORKING DAYS

The following repairs will be attended to within 3 working days:

- Total or partial loss of heating and hot water (between 1 May -31 Oct).
- Door entry systems if security is a significant concern.
- Restore flush to WC where a tenant can flush with a bucket of water.

All other repairs will be carried out within 1 to 30 working days.

REPAIRS APPOINTMENTS

The council will aim to make appointments for all routine repairs except for those relating to communal areas. Appointments will generally be made at the first point of contact with the resident and for a time and date that is convenient. We will offer appointments for pre- and post-inspections as required.

The following appointment time slots

will be available:

- Morning - between 8am and 12pm
- Afternoon - between 12pm and 5pm
- Avoiding school run appointments 9.30am -2.30pm. ***
- Saturday mornings (9am- 1pm) and twilight appointments (5pm -8pm). ***

Residents will be informed about progress with their repairs through various channels including telephone, text messaging and email. The council will keep residents informed of progress with repairs as required.

Residents will be able to log in to the council's website to track repair progress. ***

If an appointment cannot be kept, residents must inform the council at the earliest opportunity. If there is no access and no contact from the customer, the job order will be cancelled after the council's access procedure has been complied with.

Gas leaks should be reported to National Grid immediately by calling the National Gas emergency number.

Power cuts should be reported by calling UK Power Networks.

***** Not currently included in the service**

KEY REPAIRS PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The council aims to consistently achieve and surpass the following performance measures.

- The number of jobs completed first time - > 90%
- The number of appointments kept -> 95%
- Customer satisfaction in day-to-day repairs - > 90%

Performance will be reported monthly on the WCC website and via internal communication channels ***

***** Not currently included in the service**

8. PLANNED PROGRAMMES

CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE

These works will be carried out based on need and cost. Timescales for any agreed works will be communicated with residents who will be impacted by the works.

PLANNED WORKS

The council will undertake planned works to deliver home improvements for residents. The council will create a planned programme which will be publicised on the council's website. This programme will be reliant on available funding, informed by the 5-year stock condition survey and therefore subject to change.

The council will consult with residents on all planned works, explain how the works will be carried out and be clear about the impact of the works.

Wherever possible the council will give residents choice in the selection of certain design aspects for example, kitchen and bathroom replacements.

The council will publish the planned and cyclical programmes on the website. ***

[Find out when your external repair and painting is due - Winchester City Council](#)

***** Not currently included in the service**

9. VOIDS

The council aims to maintain a consistent, cost-effective letting standard for all void properties. All voids should be turned around within set timescales and will be safe, secure, clean, free of damp and mould, in sound condition and with services in full working order.

Residents must remove all personal effects inc debris and waste on leaving the property. Failure to do so could lead to the full cost being recharged.

Residents must ensure that the property is clean when leaving. Failure to do so could lead to the full cost of a deep clean being recharged.

Residents must ensure that the internal decorations of the property are restored to moderate colour schemes on leaving. Failure to do so could lead to the full cost of re-decorating being recharged.

Residents must ensure that any alterations to the property are restored to the original condition unless specifically agreed with the council. Failure to do so could lead to the full cost of restoration being recharged.

10. DEFECTS

For newly built homes the developer/builder is responsible for any defects that may occur for the first 12 months, which is known as the 12-month defect period. Residents will be made aware of when the 12-month defect period started and is due to end when moving into their new home.

During this 12-month defect period of a newly built home, residents should report repairs directly to the council to ensure that they are resolved with the developer/builder. Defects which come to light following the initial 12-month period must also be reported directly to the council to investigate.

Housing Property Services will undertake Post Inspections of jobs that are above a value that is commensurate with contract terms.

11. AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS

The council can help facilitate and support independent living, by carrying out alterations and adaptations to meet the needs of residents and enhance the quality of life within the home. The council's Aids and Adaptations Policy will apply.

12. CONTRACTORS

All Contractors working with the council will be required to adhere to the council's Contractor's Code of Conduct (Appendix A). The council's Code of Conduct outlines the standard of service that all contractors are expected to deliver to the council's residents.

All contractors will be made aware of this policy and any other relevant policies such as the council's Health and Safety and Environmental policies.

All contractors will be required to implement their own Safeguarding Policy and comply with the council's Safeguarding policy.

13. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION (ED&I)

Diversity is about respecting people's individual differences and ensuring that all people that encounter the council's repairs service have access to the same high standards of behaviour and service.

The council is committed to ensuring that no resident will be treated less favourably because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Housing Accessibility Statement 2022

These measures require staff to design contact and communication around the individual. Respect what we already know about people or ask them what would help. By taking this approach the outcome is more likely to be successful; plus it should mean that residents will be happier, that there'll be less work and conflict for council from follow up and complaints as well as saving the organisation costs.

Monitoring performance against this standard (for those living in council homes) is through the annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey which looks for variances between household groups to check for disparities in service delivery. The survey also asks about ease of use, fairness and respect. Survey reports can be found on the website.

14. CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

The council aims to ensure that all residents are consulted prior to any major decision being taken on planned or major works that affect their home. A range of approaches to consultation will be used regarding repairs and maintenance.

- TACT
- Service Delivery Groups

APPENDIX A



CONTRACTORS - CODE OF CONDUCT

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APPENDIX A

CONTRACTORS -CODE OF CONDUCT

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards that contractors will be expected to meet to ensure a good service for the council's residents.

CUSTOMER FOCUS

The contractor will deliver a service at a standard which meets the needs of residents. This will include:

- Introduce themselves and show formal identification.
- Always behave in a polite and professional manner.
- Will endeavour to keep appointments for all repairs appointments.
- Aim to fix the repair at the first visit.
- Communicate with residents about the work in a way that is clearly understood.
- Communicate with neighbours who may be affected by works.
- Respect the homes, contents, and environment of the council's residents.
- Always ensure the safety of residents.
- Keep residents informed about the status of a repair. In the event of any delay or cancellation, notifying residents as soon as possible.
- Apply the council's Safeguarding policy and report any areas of concern to the relevant council staff.

WORKING IN COUNCIL HOMES

On arrival the contractor will:

- Produce a photo identity card which shows the employee's name, company name, address, and telephone number. Residents are guided to not let anyone in if the contractor does not show relevant identification and report the incident to the council's Repairs Team
- Be dressed appropriately and in branded clothing where applicable.
- Advise the resident about the work, how long it will take and any relevant matters.
- Be respectful of shared areas such as gardens, car parks and access ways.
- Speak to residents before crossing or encroaching on a resident's personal space and/or privacy. For example, when using ladders to work on upper flats, contractors must notify the residents of the flats below that they will be there.

WHILST WORKING AT THE PROPERTY THE CONTRACTOR IS ALWAYS REQUIRED TO:

- Be polite and courteous and not use abusive or offensive language.
- Always liaise with the resident during works.
- Be considerate of the needs of residents who are elderly, disabled or otherwise vulnerable.
- Take care of resident's possessions (and replace any items that are damaged).
- Use shoe protectors or dust sheets as appropriate.
- Cause minimum disruption to the resident.
- Not move residents' possessions unless the resident is unable to do so themselves and only with permission.
- Confine and protect the area to ensure safety of both residents and the operative/s.
- Provide their own power source.
- Make sure all materials and equipment used on site are kept safe and with a minimum of inconvenience to residents.

- Be mindful around security and not leave entrance doors to properties open and unattended.
- Supervise sharp tools, heavy plant, power tools and toxic substances and keep them out of the reach of children and pets.
- Regularly clean up all debris created by the work.
- Completing repairs to a high standard, within the specified target time, and within one visit wherever possible
- Advise the residents when the work is complete.
- Provide residents with easy-to-understand explanations of work completed and guidance on how to use various components.
- Check that the resident is happy that the work has been satisfactorily completed.

WHILST AT THE PROPERTY THE CONTRACTOR WILL NOT:

- Play music or the radio.
- Smoke, drink alcohol, take drugs or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Use a resident's WC, kitchen, phone, or belongings for personal use or for cleaning unless given permission.
- Work outside of defined areas unless by agreement.

WHEN LEAVING THE PROPERTY OR SITE THE CONTRACTOR IS REQUIRED TO:

- Leave the site clean, tidy, and secure at the end of each working day.
- Clean up thoroughly and remove all materials upon completion.
- Make sure that, wherever possible, supplies of gas, electricity and water are fully restored at the end of each day, or where this is not possible ensure that there is an adequate temporary supply.
- Ask the resident if they are satisfied with the work undertaken.



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Winchester
City Council

Housing Repairs Recharge Policy



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

This Policy and Procedure sets out Winchester City Council's (The council) approach to when and how rechargeable works are applied to tenants and former tenants of council owned housing. The aim is to encourage tenants to take responsibility for looking after their homes and in cases of failure to identify and recover the cost of repairs and other associated charges. Charges would be applied as a result of wilful damage, accidental damage or general neglect by the tenant to fixtures and/or fittings owned by the council. The council has a duty to all tenants to ensure that the use of HRA funds is applied appropriately.

1.2 Scope

The council will manage the portfolio of homes and tenancies effectively and an aspect of delivering value for all residents is by ensuring:

- A. We minimise the cost of carrying out work which is not the council's responsibility.
- B. We recharge the costs back to those responsible.
- C. We enforce tenancy conditions consistently.
- D. We have a clear audit trail for tenants should they refute a recharge.
- E. We chase those who do not pay to ensure equality for all tenants.

1.3 Objectives

- The council is committed to providing excellent homes and services to tenants and helping to build sustainable communities where people want to live and work.
- Tenants are to be encouraged to take ownership for the maintenance and cleanliness of their homes in accordance with the responsibilities set out in their Tenancy Agreement.
- Demands on the service are increasing with limited capacity to increase revenue. The council will work with residents to ensure that funds are spent appropriately and are not applied indiscriminately.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 Recharge – Where the council charges the tenant/s for work which is their responsibility such as damage, neglect or non-compliance with the tenancy agreement and that has been carried out by the council.

2.2 Tenant – tenants, leaseholders, former tenants.

3. LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

3.1 The rights and obligations of our tenants are set out in the following:

- Housing Act 1985
- Housing Act 1988
- Equalities Act 2010
- Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Tenancy Agreement
- Lease Agreement
- Garage Agreement
- The council Repairs Policy
- The council Damp and Mould Policy
- Neighbour Nuisance policy and procedure
- The council Voids Policy

4. POLICY PRINCIPLES

4.1 The council will recover costs which have been caused through wilful damage or carelessness/negligence by a tenant or his/her family or visitors to their home.

4.2 The council will recover costs for damage or neglect to a property when a tenancy ends.

4.3 The council will recover costs for the clearance of rubbish and debris left at the property, including untidy gardens, when a tenancy ends.

4.4 The council will recover costs for reinstatement work where tenants have undertaken unauthorised or poor standard works within the dwelling.

4.5 This policy applies to all current council tenants, damage by their pets and any previous tenants.

4.6 Tenants will, in all cases, be given full information relating to situations in which they are being recharged.

4.7 Tenants shall be given the opportunity to rectify any works themselves to the council's approved standards.

4.8 The council will seek to recover all appropriate costs that are deemed to be chargeable.

4.9 Where damage has been caused as the result of a deliberate act, proceedings for Criminal Damage and/or action may be taken against a tenant or a third party.

4.10 If a tenant or a member of their household, or a visitor causes damage, this may be deemed to be a breach of tenancy and the council may take legal action such as seeking an injunction, possession proceedings and/or recovery action.

4.11 Where damage has been caused by a third party outside of a tenant's household, family or visitors, the Police will be informed, and a crime number requested. In such cases a tenant may not be recharged. However, the council reserves the right to investigate such circumstances and may impose a recharge if it considers it reasonable to do so.

4.12 The council may exercise discretion in the application of this policy, dependent upon the circumstances of individual tenants.

4.13 Tenants will have the right to appeal (see section 7 below)

4.14 Instances that may result in recharges being applied are, but not limited to:

- A. Costs arising due to reinstating any unauthorised or unsatisfactory alterations or improvements.
- B. Costs arising from work undertaken by the council to make tidy, neglected and overgrown gardens.
- C. Costs arising from fires or floods that are due to unauthorised alterations or other faults caused by a tenant or their family or visitors.
- D. Costs arising due to damage caused to the property as a result of the lawful execution of a warrant by the Police and/or other authorised body.
- E. Costs incurred by inappropriate callouts by a tenant to the Out of Hours Repairs Service.
- F. Costs resulting in gaining access to the property on a tenant's behalf as a result of misplaced keys.
- G. Costs arising from negligence or malicious action by a tenant or their family or visitor to their home.
- H. Costs incurred by the council when applying to the court or undertaking court proceedings.
- I. Where costs are included in a court order or money judgement, we will not arrange a separate recharge.

5. RECHARGEABLE REPAIRS

5.1 Examples of rechargeable repairs works are (this list is not exhaustive):

- A. Repairs that are the responsibility of a tenant.
- B. Any works that are required due to unauthorised alterations undertaken by a tenant/s to restore a property to an acceptable standard.
- C. Works and clearance of debris required on termination of the tenancy.
- D. Works associated with the clearing of untidy gardens
- E. Vandalism to properties.
- F. Replacement of lost or broken door entry keys.
- G. Replacement or additional communal door entry fobs or keys.
- H. Replacement of dwelling entrance doors due to suspected criminal activity.
- I. Clearance of large items or removal of other waste which has been dumped or fly tipped on council land or property.
- J. Removal of abandoned vehicles on land that the council owns.
- K. Removal of vehicles that are not insured or taxed.
- L. Court and legal costs incurred with applying any recharge.
- M. Costs pertaining to recovering recharge debts.

5.2 Tenant's Repairs Responsibilities are set out in the Repairs Policy and the tenants handbook.

5.3 The council's officers will ensure that tenants are made aware of their responsibilities in relation to the maintenance of their home when signing their tenancy agreement or lease.

5.4 In cases where a tenant requests the council to complete rechargeable repairs on their behalf, the council may request payment or part payment in advance.

5.5 A tenant will be required to sign a declaration accepting liability for the recharge and agreement to pay. In the event that a tenant refuses to accept liability then the council will apply the recharge accordingly.

5.6 Tenancy Terminations– Refer to the council's Voids Policy

5.6.1 A property should be left clean, tidy, empty and in a condition that an outgoing tenant would expect to find the property, at commencement of their tenancy, and which accords with the THE COUNCIL Void standard.

5.6.2 Where tenants are vacating the property, THE COUNCIL will identify any rechargeable repairs at the pre-void inspection and arrangements will be made for any repairs to be carried out, by a tenant, prior to termination.

5.6.3 Any rechargeable repairs that are outstanding, once the property is vacated, will be repaired by THE COUNCIL and charged to the outgoing tenant. This will also include costs of clearing out and cleaning properties and gardens on termination of tenancy.

5.6.4 If a tenant is carrying out a mutual exchange, THE COUNCIL will identify any rechargeable repairs in their property prior to the exchange. An outgoing tenant will be required to carry out those identified repairs or ask THE COUNCIL to carry out any repairs and accept the recharge costs.

5.7 Emergency or urgent repairs will not be delayed whilst liability is being established and will be made safe within appropriate timescales.

5.8 When a repair is identified as being rechargeable, a tenant will be given a written explanation of the reason and costs, prior to work commencing.

5.9 Where a tenant seeks consent to carry out the works themselves, this should be completed within 25 working days of the repair being reported or any shorter period which the council may specify. A quality check may be carried out of these repairs by the council's surveyors.

5.10 If the repair is deemed to be an emergency or urgent and is a threat to the health and safety of a tenant or others or is likely to cause further damage to the property or adjoining properties, then a tenant may not be given an opportunity to carry out the works themselves.

5.11 On occasions where a tenant is to carry out rechargeable works, they should immediately make safe and undertake repair/replacement works within the council's repair timescales or any shorter period which the council may specify. Failure to do so may result in the council undertaking the repair and recharging a tenant accordingly or taking appropriate action for breach of tenancy or lease.

5.12 The council will store removed items for a reasonable period, usually 7 days, for which the storage costs will be recharged to the outgoing tenant.

6. RAISING INVOICES

6.1 Council officers will advise the Income Services Team of the following details relating to a recharge.

- Name of the tenant(s)
- First line of address of the (former) tenant's property
- Type of recharge (e.g. void recharges)
- Value of recharges (excluding VAT)
- Value of admin fee
- Total invoice amount
- Cost Centre
- Correspondence address for where the invoice is to be sent

Officers that this would apply but not limited to

- Customer Liaison officers
- Customer Support officers
- Area Property Surveyors
- Lettings Officers
- Housing Officers

6.2 The Income Services Team will use this information to raise an invoice.

6.3 All invoices should be sent to the tenant within 1 week of the rechargeable repair request, and the payment will be required within 14 days of the receipt of the invoice.

6.4 The council's Housing Rent Team will have the discretion to negotiate payment terms in cases of severe hardship, where a tenant cannot pay the full amount at one time.

6.5 The Income Services Team will add a UDC to the tenant's rent account. This UDC will notify officers that a recharge is being pursued with that tenant.

6.6 If there are multiple debts owed by a tenant, then payment of rent or lease arrears will remain the priority debt.

6.7 An administrative charge of £20 will be applied to any single recharge invoice. This fee may increase in line with CPI/RPI.

6.8 Where the council have exhausted attempts to collect outstanding debts or are unable to locate the tenant, we may pass the debt to a debt collection agency.

7. RIGHT TO APPEAL

7.1 The tenant/s will have the right to appeal the decision to recharge for the works identified.

7.2 The tenant/s will need to write to the The Repairs, Compliance and Voids Manager, stating their reason for the appeal, within 15 working days of receiving the invoice.

7.3 The Repairs, Compliance and Voids Manager will need to inform The Income Services Team if an appeal request is received, so that the outstanding invoice can be placed on 'On Hold'.

7.4 Should a tenant choose to escalate the dispute recharge this will be reviewed by The Service Lead – Housing Landlord Services.

If a tenant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the review decision they may make a complaint under the council's complaint procedure.



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Winchester
City Council

MANAGING DAMP AND MOULD

IN COUNCIL AND PRIVATE SECTOR HOMES

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If you would like to receive this document in another format please contact Winchester City Council's Customer Service Centre on 01962 840 222 to discuss your requirements. Alternatively, you can request this information online.



1. INTRODUCTION

Damp and mould causes serious concern because of its health and wellbeing impacts for residents but is a particular issue for residents living in accommodation that is either rented, council owned or temporary.

This policy defines how we will respond to reports of damp and mould and implementation of actions to prevent recurrence. The Damp and Mould Policy will achieve lasting improvement in how we tackle damp and mould and will set out how the council will meet the requirements of the Social Housing (Regulation) Bill 2023 and specifically reports of damp and mould within the following sectors:-

- Council owned homes.
- Private rented sector homes.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is for the council and its residents to work together to solve the causes leading to damp and mould in people's homes and to control, manage and eradicate damp. The key aim is to provide assurances for residents that effective processes are in place to resolve issues of damp and mould in their homes. It is the objective of the council to make sure the fabric of council and private sector leased homes is effectively maintained to prevent damp and mould, disrepair and are compliant with the requirements of Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). The council will adopt clear processes for staff and contractors to report, monitor and manage concerns regarding damp and mould. The council will elevate awareness and understanding of the causes and

remedies for damp and mould with residents and council officers. The council will provide guidance, advice and assistance for residents living in properties of all tenures.

3. THE COUNCIL'S PRINCIPLES TO RESOLVING DAMP AND MOULD

To achieve long term improvement in dealing with damp and mould, the council's policy and action plan are guided by the following principles:

- Ensure that an effective response to damp and mould is provided to residents regardless of the route through which reports are made.
- Treat all residents who report issues with damp and mould with respect, empathy and with an appreciation of the seriousness of the problem.
- Take a proactive approach to identifying and resolving the causes of damp and mould in council owned properties.
- Ensure that a thorough assessment is undertaken to identify the cause of damp and mould, with all options being considered. Lifestyle and occupation should never be the default explanation.
- Develop awareness to prompt behaviour change, understanding, and above all, good support. Provide information about reducing condensation in a sensitive way that avoids blaming and stigmatising residents. Train staff and contractors.
- Clearly signpost the council's and resident's responsibilities in the handling all reports of damp and mould.
- Provide residents with really good support and guidance to help reduce the likelihood of damp and mould reoccurring in their home.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The council is required to meet statutory duties set out in the following:

- Section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004
- The Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Decent Homes Standard (DHS)
- Section 4 of the Defective Premises Act 1972
- Social Housing Regulation Bill (HL) 2023
- Section 3 & 4 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

The above can be accessed via the [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications site](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/site)

The council's responsibilities are set by the Housing Regulator relating to damp and mould and can be accessed through the Regulator of Social Housing - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Residents are required to follow the instructions and guidance set out in the Tenancy Handbook:

[The council's housing tenancy agreement and handbook Tenants Handbook](#) - Winchester City Council

sets out the specific responsibilities for residents which include :

- Residents must report to the council as soon as possible any evidence of damp and/or faulty equipment that will hamper the management and control of damp and condensation (e.g. faulty extract fan, unable to open windows, lack of heating etc.).
- Residents should regularly check and clean off mould as soon as it is discovered.
- Residents are responsible for allowing access for inspections and for the carrying out of remedial works as set out in the Tenancy/ Lease Agreement.
- Residents should manage moisture in their homes by eliminating/ minimising the conditions that lead to condensation by following the guidance provided to them by the council.
- Practicable and reasonable measures will be made available to residents to suitably manage condensation in their homes with further advice and support provided by the council if difficulty occurs.
- If a resident fails to properly heed the advice/guidance provided and take reasonable steps to eliminate /minimise the effects of condensation, the resident may be recharged for any resulting repairs.

5. RESPECTING DIVERSE NEEDS

GENERAL DUTY

The council's Nov 2021 Public Sector Equality Duty Policy states that the council will ensure its policies and services meet the needs of all its service users and are delivered in a fair, flexible, efficient and accessible way.

The Housing Service Accessibility Statement sets out the measures taken to meet this standard and applies to how the council should handle contact from service users for all elements of the service including queries relating to damp and mould.

HOUSING ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT 2022.DOCX

These measures require staff to design contact and communication around the individual. Respect what we already know about people or ask them what would help. By taking this approach the outcome is more likely to be successful; plus it should mean that customers will be happier, that there'll be less work and conflict for council from follow up and complaints as well as saving the organisation costs.

Monitoring performance against this standard (for those living in council homes) is through the annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey which looks for variances between household groups to check for disparities in service delivery. The survey also asks about ease of use, fairness and respect.

Survey reports can be found on the website.

TENANTS SATISFACTION SURVEY - WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

At the point of contact service users will be asked about their needs and communication preferences and this will be checked with the council records and updated as appropriate. Any early indications that the household will require a bespoke approach (e.g. language, culture, literacy, health, neurodiverse, cognitive impairment) will be highlighted to the Property Surveyor and/or Tenancy Sustainment team. Moderate and high-level cases are automatically passed to the Tenancy Sustainment team to check for support required.

It is critical to be aware that some people are more sensitive to damp and mould than others, including:

- Babies and children
- Older people
- Those with existing skin problems, such as atopic eczema
- Those with respiratory problems, such as allergies and asthma
- Those with a weakened immune system, such as those having chemotherapy.

6. CAUSES OF DAMP AND MOULD

One of the most common issues for residents is the causes and outcomes of dampness and mould in their homes. Condensation dampness is a condition that affects many homes and has become the major cause of dampness, typically causing mould growth on ceilings, walls, furniture and personal effects. Mould can encourage the growth of mites, which feed on mould and can increase the risk of respiratory and other illnesses for some people. Condensation is particularly common in homes which are inadequately heated and poorly ventilated and will usually get worse in the colder winter months. There are however other causes of dampness that are less easy to diagnose and resolve which are rising damp and penetrating damp.

PENETRATING DAMPNESS is a result of moisture that might originate from building defects such as

- Leaking pipes, wastes, drainage and overflows
- Rainwater from defective roof coverings, blocked or leaking gutters and broken pipes.
- Dampness around windows, through walls and due to raised ground levels.
- Cold bridging

RISING DAMP is when moisture rises through the walls of a building. The common cause is a breakdown or the bridging of the damp proof course/membrane. Debris piled up against the outside of a wall that is higher than the damp proof course can cause bridging which will lead to rising damp. Buildings constructed prior to 1876 were built without a damp proof course.

CONDENSATION is prevalent in homes which are inadequately heated, poorly ventilated and insufficiently insulated. There will always be moisture present in the air, which is not evident until it condenses onto cold surfaces. Controlling and managing moisture in the air is critical to minimising condensation.

Moisture is released into the air through normal daily activities such as breathing, washing, cooking, drying clothes, showering and bathing. Typically, a family of four will introduce around 20 pints of water into the air within their home each day. When the air gets colder, it cannot hold all the moisture and the water condenses on cold surfaces like windows or external walls, or other cold surfaces within the fabric of the property.

Ventilation is key to removing moist air and preventing condensation. This should be provided through extractor fans in bathrooms and kitchens, air bricks, and trickle vents in windows.

6. CAUSES OF DAMP AND MOULD (CONTINUED)

However, when these ventilation systems are absent or not performing as they should, condensation can occur and mould growth can develop.

The appearance of mould may be black, white, yellow or green in colour, depending on the specific type of mould and the surface that it grows on. It can often be found in corners, on or near windows, in or behind furniture that is situated close to walls.

The lasting way of avoiding condensation and mould growth is to minimise moisture in the air that can condense onto cold surfaces:

- By increasing insulation to the structure,
- Introducing effective ventilation,
- Ensuring homes have an effective heating system.
- Working with residents to understand what they can do to manage the moisture in their homes and reduce condensation dampness.

CHAPTER 1



COUNCIL OWNED HOMES

DRAFT

7. RESPONDING TO REPORTS OF DAMP AND MOULD

This section of the policy sets out the process by which reports of damp and mould either received directly from residents or through other channels will be managed. It defines the actions taken to diagnose the cause and provide solutions for resolving the problem/s.

To speed up diagnosis and dealing with reports of condensation and damp from council residents or other sources, steps A-H below should be undertaken by the Customer

Repairs Team (CRT). Direct calls from residents will be triaged based on whether it is a new or existing report, so that the team will be able to establish priority cases.

1. The emphasis will be for the Customer Repairs Team (CRT) to
2. To check for residents needs and vulnerabilities using the dashboard in Orchard.
3. Establish the cause(s) of the damp, mould or condensation from a discussion with the resident.
4. Ask residents to provide photos to assist the Customer Repairs Team to triage the report more effectively.
5. Assess the extent of condensation, damp and mould in accordance with the risk ratings outlined in the

table below and apply the relevant actions.

6. Respond sensitively, assess the issue, identify the severity of the damp and mould and potential risks to residents and action accordingly.
7. Ensure residents are informed about the steps that will be taken to address any issues and the timeframes for the work.
8. All moderate and high-risk Damp and Mould cases to be reported to the Tenancy Sustainment Team (via the TenancySustainment@wincheser.gov.uk inbox). The resident will be contacted to assess whether they may benefit from support for any underlying tenancy related issues.

RESPONSE PROCESS FOR HRA PROPERTIES

There are 3 levels as to how damp and mould will be reviewed at the time it is reported and are Low; Moderate and High. Each has a different outcome in terms of the action that the council will engage with. The Housing Regulator has set clear guidelines on what the council should do when receiving reports of damp and mould from residents. The response formula below largely follows that guidance and seeks to provide guidance initially to residents for self-help. The triaging of initial calls by the CRT will determine the most appropriate action. If the damp and mould is minimal then residents will be guided on how to manage the condensation and clean off mould growth. If the condition is moderate or high, then a surveyor will visit to make a detailed assessment. In cases where mould growth is found to be extreme the residents may need to be decanted. The Tenancy Sustainment Team should be notified of all moderate and high-level cases as they may have knowledge of a resident's needs and can guide accordingly. A weekly report of all damp and mould reported cases is to be created and forward to the Tenancy Sustainment Team to review.

RISK RATING	REPORTED ISSUE	ACTIONS
<p>LOW</p>	<p>Condensation or slight mould on or around windows.</p> <p>Minor amount of mould on the extremities of walls and ceilings.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request the resident sends in photographs. To a new email address i.e reportmould@winchester.gov.uk** 2. Advise the resident to wipe off any condensation when seen and to clean off any minor amounts of mould, using an appropriate mould prevention solution of their choice. 3. Information leaflet to be sent to the resident. 4. The Repairs Team to call the resident 6 weeks from the initial report date to ascertain if the problem has been resolved. 5. If not, then instruct a contractor to undertake a mould clean within 5 working days

RISK RATING	REPORTED ISSUE	ACTIONS
MODERATE	<p>Black mould occurring on the extremities of external walls and behind furniture.</p> <p>Large amounts of condensation on windows. Damp and musty smell in the affected areas.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request the resident sends in photographs. reportmould@winchester.gov.uk** 2. If an inspection is required a WCC Surveyor to attend within 10 working days of receipt of the resident's report. 3. As required the surveyor will instruct a contractor to undertake a mould clean within 1 working day. 4. The surveyor's report will identify the cause of the damp/mould and incorporate the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying whether the property is suitably heated. • Identifying whether the property has sufficient insulation and meets EPC band C. • Identifying whether the property is properly ventilated. • Ensure that the residents understand their role with managing moisture in their home. • The surveyor will raise identified works i.e. humidistat installation(s), insulation top up 5. The Repairs Team to call the resident 6 weeks from the initial report date to ascertain if the problem has been resolved. 6. If the problem has not been resolved then a APS should attend to conduct further investigation to identify possible building defects, using appropriate means. The Area Property Surveyor to liaise with the Tenancy Sustainment officer on their findings and whether support is being provided. If appropriate, joint visits with the Area Property Surveyor and Tenant Sustainment Officer to the resident to help resolve damp and mould occurring in the home.

RISK RATING	REPORTED ISSUE	ACTIONS
HIGH	<p>Excessive amounts of black mould on external and internal walls that cannot be managed with household products.</p> <p>White staining on lower walls and salty substance present on lower walls. (Efflorescence)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request the resident sends in photographs. reportmould@winchester.gov.uk** 2. Refer the matter to the council's Area Property Surveyor. 3. If remaining in the homes is not advised the tenant will be offered a move into temporary accommodation. 4. The surveyor will, instruct a contractor to undertake a mould clean within 1 working day if decanting the residents is not necessary. 5. The surveyor will instruct a specialist relevantly qualified damp and mould surveyor to conduct a full damp investigation to determine the potential causes of damp. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying whether the property is suitably heated. • Identifying whether the property has sufficient insulation and meets EPC band C. • Identifying whether the property is properly ventilated. • Ensure that the residents understand their role with managing moisture in their home. • The surveyor will raise identified works i.e. humidistat installation(s), insulation top up 6. The outcome of the investigation will be to ensure: 7. The surveyor will call the resident 6 weeks from when works are completed to ascertain if the problem has been resolved. 8. Conduct a full review of the property and further remedial work, if the follow up found that treatment was unsuccessful, and damp and mould reappeared. <p>The Area Property Surveyor to liaise with the Tenancy Sustainment officer on their findings and whether support is being provided. If appropriate, joint visits with the Area Property Surveyor and Tenant Sustainment Officer to the resident to help resolve damp and mould occurring in the home.</p>

** Where residents are unable to take photos and family/friends are not able to assist on their behalf, the council will make appropriate arrangements.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES for how the council will monitor managing damp and mould. Performance information to be reported on a weekly basis via the Winchester City Council website and internal communication channels.

- No of damp and mould cases for low; moderate; high received each month.
- Source of the report of damp and mould.
- No of cases awaiting an inspection by criteria.
- No of cases where work determined within 7 days after inspection.
- No of cases completed and signed off by criteria.
- No of cases by criteria that have been reinspected within 3 months. (initial treatment/works has failed)
- Average no of weeks in which cases are resolved.
- A schedule of all damp cases to be maintained that includes the date first reported, the date case is closed and the number of weeks the case was open.
- Tenant satisfaction with the process.
- No of cases where tenancy sustainment has supported household.

The Repairs Team Manager/Supervisor will maintain and update weekly the damp and mould case schedule and circulate to all relevant staff.

RESPONSE PROCESS FOR LEASEHOLD PROPERTIES

- Leaseholders are responsible for the interiors of their homes. The council would not undertake works within a Leaseholders' home unless the cause was due to a defect in the structure of the building and the damp was as a direct result.
- In such cases the leaseholder would be asked to submit photographs providing the location(s) of the damp, for referral and consideration by the Area Surveyor for review and action.
- These cases need to be referred to the Home Ownership Service via the homeownership@winchester.gov.uk inbox
- Home Ownership officer will work with APS to investigate whether this is a property defect. It should be confirmed if under the respective lease what liability the council has to rectify the issue.

RESPONSE PROCESS FOR VOID PROPERTIES

- Apply the actions included above during the void period with regards to overcoming damp and mould.
- The council must ensure that the accommodation provided is free from serious hazards, including damp and mould, and that homes are fit for habitation.

8. COMMS AND GUIDANCE

- We will create effective and easy to follow guidance leaflets on how residents can manage moisture and condensation in their homes.
- We will ensure that advice and support about damp and mould is provided at all community events.
- We will regularly review and update the website which both provides guidance and supports residents to report damp and mould.
- We will contact tenants who live in homes which are similar to those that have experienced damp and mould so that we do not rely on tenants having to contact the Council.

9. TRAINING

All applicable council housing staff and term contractors should understand the causes of damp and mould, why it is crucial to address them and should be trained to:

- Understand the health risks of damp and mould and the importance of acting quickly to protect residents.
- Understand that some residents might be at a greater risk of the health harms from damp and mould.
- Understand the need to 'make every contact count' and look for signs of damp and mould when carrying out home visits by both contractors and the council officers.
- Take residents' reports seriously, give a first assessment as to the severity of damp and mould, and be able to pass it on quickly to someone trained to make a judgement on the root cause (or causes) of the issue.
- Understand the need to identify and address the underlying causes of damp and mould, not just remove visible mould.
- Be sensitive to residents' circumstances and ensure they are not blamed for damp and mould.
- Ensure that repairs are undertaken within a reasonable timescale and that trades people are competent to undertake the nature of the work required.
- Understand the discrimination some residents can face when experiencing damp and mould, such as discrimination based on race or religion when reporting problems.
- Be conscious that changes to residents' personal or financial circumstances might impact their ability to maintain their homes or heat or ventilate them adequately.
- Understand corporate policies, processes and data handling related to damp and mould.
- Include a detailed introduction to damp & mould in all new starter inductions (where applicable)
- Offering reassurances at each stage

CHAPTER 2



HOMES IN THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR

10. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The cause and potential health consequences of damp, mould and condensation in private rented homes is no different to the council's housing stock and the advice previously given in respect of the council's own housing tenants on to how to deal with damp and avoid, in particular, the build - up of condensation and mould, will similarly apply to tenants in the private rented sector.

Complaints of damp, mould and condensation in private rented homes will be investigated by the council's Private Sector Housing (PSH) team. Tenants of residential social landlord (RSL) properties should follow their own housing association guidelines on how to report problems of damp and mould. Further information for both private and RSL tenants on what their landlords should be doing to address damp and mould issues are detailed in the guidance document 'Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home' available on the GOV.UK web site:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/damp-and-mould-understanding-and-addressing-the-health-risks-for-rented-housing-providers/understanding-and-addressing-the-health-risks-of-damp-and-mould-in-the-home--2>

However, in the first instance and before PSH will become involved tenants must first have written to their landlord to discuss their circumstances to try and resolve matters informally themselves.

Following discussions with their landlord should tenants still feel their situation has not improved, or they don't hear back or their landlord refuses to take action in a reasonable amount of time, they can contact the Private Sector Housing team on telephone number **01962 848 526** or email: **privatesectorhousing@winchester.gov.uk**

ENFORCEMENT ACTION

In response to a direct complaint or referral, the council can undertake an inspection of a property and assess the conditions using the Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS).

Deficiencies identified in a property are determined as either serious Category 1 hazards or lower scoring Category 2 hazards. Damp and mould and excess cold are all conditions that are covered by the HHSRS, although damp and mould would usually have to be very serious to meet the threshold of a Category 1 hazard.

When a hazard or hazards have been identified and the landlord has failed to act to resolve the issue, the council

will serve a legal document called an Improvement Notice on the landlord to make repairs. In more serious cases the council will prohibit the use of a property, sometimes suspended until the current tenancy comes to an end to avoid making households homeless.

Where a landlord fails to make improvements or improve poor management then the council can also issue a financial penalty notice (FPN) of up to £30,000. For serious breaches, or where there is previous history of non-compliance, the council in extreme cases can also prosecute the landlord.

Guidance on HHSRS provided by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government can be found at:- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/9425/150940.pdf

PRIVATE LANDLORDS ARE REQUIRED TO MEET STATUTORY DUTIES

- Environmental health and nuisance laws, in particular 'statutory nuisance' under section 79 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.
- Section 10 of the Landlord & Tenant Act 1985 requires a privately rented home must be fit to live in. It gives a checklist of factors to consider that are issues for landlords to address which include damp and mould.

- Decent Homes Standard 2006
- The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 creates a new right for tenants where their landlords have failed to maintain their home to the appropriate standard in an attempt to improve housing conditions for tenants.
- Defective Premises Act (DPA) (1972) – Under section 4(1) of the DPA, a duty of care is imposed on landlords to ensure that users of their property are reasonably safe from damage or personal injury attributable to a relevant defect. A tenant may be able to claim compensation if their home has been severely damaged or they have suffered adverse health effects due to the condition of the premises such as due to damp and mould.

ENFORCEMENT OF MINIMUM ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARDS (MEES)

Enforcement of energy-efficiency standards are the primary legal tool through which the council (PSH) can take a proactive action to prevent damp and mould in homes in the private rented sector. Private rented sector properties are required to have a EPC of E or higher under minimum energy efficiency standards (MEES) regulations. Unless they qualify for an

exemption (for example if the property is a listed building), landlords letting out properties with EPCs of F or G may be subject to enforcement action.

SCHEMES AND GRANTS

The council is part of the Warmer Homes Consortium scheme which is headed up by Portsmouth City Council and Agility ECO. Inclusive of Winchester City Council it comprises of 22 different local authorities mainly located in Hampshire and the Southeast. The scheme offers grants to eligible homeowners, landlords and private sector tenants to have various energy efficiency measures installed ranging from insulation to air source heat pumps.

Information on grants available can be found at: **www.warmerhomes.org.uk** or by calling **0800 038 5737**

11. APPENDICES

Strategic Action plan

ITEM	ACTION	DELIVERY TARGET
1	Develop a resident centric culture that makes residents feel completely at ease with reporting damp and mould in their homes.	
2	Create a range of communication options that help residents understand the causes, diagnosis and ways to mitigate condensation in their homes.	
3	Implement a simple process that effectively manages residents through the entire process of dealing with damp and mould in their homes.	
4	Collect and store data/reports relating to damp and mould cases in order that appropriate reports and performance can be compiled.	
5	Ensure that all relevant council staff and contractors are properly trained in how to help residents manage condensation/damp in their homes	
6	Take appropriate action when residents act flagrantly against guidance provided and completed improvement works to mitigate damp in their homes.	
7	Take a proactive approach with ensuring that council homes are free from damp and mould	
8	Dedicate appropriate resources for all council resident's homes to be warm and dry.	
9	Monitor performance through KPI's	

ITEM	ACTION	ACTION OWNER	TARGET DATE	STATUS
A	Implement and communicate a process for residents to report damp and mould, which is easy for residents and council staff to understand and use.			
B	Develop a system to record, document, manage and act on reports of damp and mould. and to identify common issues and trends in their housing stock			
C	Create good guidance to help and support residents to understand what they can do to reduce damp and mould in their homes.			
D	Implement data capture systems so that trend analysis relating to damp and mould in the housing stock can be reported			
E	<p>Create a 5-year stock condition survey protocol, that incorporates identifying if properties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have suitable heating. • Have effective ventilation. • Are insulated so that the property meets EPC band C, 			
F	Identify and act upon common issues and trends relating to damp across the housing stock.			
G	Create an environment for all relevant teams across housing to work collaboratively.			
H	Work with health and social care and other frontline professionals supporting residents to ensure that every opportunity to identify residents living in homes with damp and mould is utilised.			

ITEM	ACTION	ACTION OWNER	TARGET DATE	STATUS
I	Take a direct and proactive approach and ask residents if they are experiencing damp and mould in their homes.			
J	Set out a programme for when all properties will meet EPC Band C			
K	Create a set of online DIY tutorials that guide residents on how to look after their homes.			
L	Enhance the website to provide guidance to all residents on how to manage condensation and damp in their homes.			
M	Implement a training programme for diagnosing and remedying damp and mould for all relevant council staff.			
N	Create a protocol so that all contractors working within the council housing stock can report evidence of damp and mould.			
O	Create a weekly Business Objects report that records all reports of damp and mould by the respective criteria			
P	Develop a satisfaction questionnaire for residents to complete in response to action taken			
Q	Set up a forum with other LAs within HCC to establish common practise and develop improvement through learning.			



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