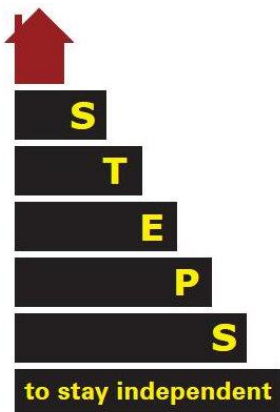




East Sussex
Fire & Rescue Service

Multi-Agency Hoarding Framework

**Guidance for Practitioners in
East Sussex**



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Special thanks to Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service and West Sussex County Council for allowing us to use their Hoarding protocol and associated documents as the basis of our framework.

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1. Introduction

In 2016 the Brighton & Hove Community Initiatives Partnership (CIP), chaired by East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, commissioned a steering group to develop a multi-agency hoarding framework for the City of Brighton and Hove. This was based on an identified need by partnership agencies for joint working in this area to better identify, support and achieve positive outcomes for people who hoard, thereby improving their safety and wellbeing and the safety of the wider community.

The Brighton & Hove Hoarding framework was implemented in June 2017 and is supported by a hoarding sub group, which was introduced to help identify those with severe hoarding issues.

A hoarding framework has now been developed for East Sussex with the aid of the Brighton and Hove model. Following a meeting held by the East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) Ops Practice sub group in March 2018, ASC will be the lead organisation for hoarding cases where a safeguarding enquiry is being undertaken and for other circumstances for adults with care and support needs where hoarding is identified, a decision will be made by the agencies involved who is best placed to take the lead using the hoarding framework to assist.

This document sets out a framework for collaborative multi-agency working within East Sussex. The aim is to ensure that every contact counts and that anyone coming into contact or working with someone who is hoarding in East Sussex has knowledge and awareness of the tools and resources available to be able to offer help and support. The framework takes a person-centred approach recognising that the relationship formed with an individual is key to engaging and working with them. In addition it is recognised that the sequence of interventions may be as crucial as the steps themselves. In some cases, mental health and wellbeing support may need to be put into place and worked through before the individual is in a position to take further practical steps around safety or de-cluttering. In some cases long-term and sustained support may be needed. It is important to consider the impact of interventions such as de-cluttering on an individual and be aware of the potential long-term and unintended consequences.

The below guidance provides Coronial and Government endorsement of the relevance of multi-agency working in order to reduce the risk associated with uncooperative occupiers that has in the past meant that necessary interventions were less likely to be undertaken, which could have prevented injury or death due to hoarding in a person's private dwelling.

Following an inquest into a double fatality as a result of a fire attended by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service (MFRS) in October 2016, a Regulation 28: Report to prevent future deaths was produced for the Secretary of State for the Home Department. This was in relation to concerns surrounding the current powers of entry to private residential properties given to Fire & Rescue Services. In this case the cause of the fire was a faulty fan heater however due to circumstances such as excessive levels of hoarding in the property the rescue operation was hindered, meaning egress from the property was obstructed. Although agencies were aware of the couple's living conditions there is currently no legislative powers in place for those vulnerable people who do not take on board advice offered by Fire & Rescue Services and other statutory authorities with regards to hoarding, allowing them to address the issues present in a private home.

The Secretary of State responded to the Regulation 28 Report stating the following key points:

- *Current legislation does not address the risk of fire caused by the behaviour of occupants in domestic dwellings and that to do so would represent a significant and disproportionate burden on them;*
- *Where the behaviours of vulnerable people are challenging and complex a more holistic approach should be taken by all relevant agencies to safeguard the safety of these people;*
- *She strongly supported the recommendation from (MFRS) to strengthen local partnerships in order to reduce the risk of such a tragedy from reoccurring.*

Due to the outcome of the above incident and the Secretary of State's response MFRS worked closely with local safeguarding partners in order to establish Multi-Agency Hoarding Protocols. In December 2017 MFRS attended an emergency strategy meeting where a severe case of hoarding had been raised through a safeguarding concern, where the occupiers were refusing access into the property and stated they would not engage with agencies for support. A multi-agency approach was adopted and Environmental Health were able to intervene by successfully applying for a warrant of entry under the Housing Act by citing the above fatality as reasonable grounds to gain entry. MFRS along with Environmental Health and Adult Social Care were then able to enter the property together to address the concerns.

When working with people who are hoarding, it is important to be mindful that they may be experiencing a range of emotions such as embarrassment, shame, guilt, depression, self-criticism. Equally, the person may not see the hoarding as a problem and therefore not experience these emotions about their behaviour. They may feel extreme attachment to some objects, feelings of sadness, loss, grief and bereavement to contemplate getting rid of these objects and confusion as to why they can't have their objects around them. Therefore it is important to understand hoarding from the hoarder's perspective and work collaboratively to identify solutions to the problems they would like to address, taking a respectful and non-judgemental approach.

This document contains background information as well as practical tools such as the clutter image rating guidance and local contact details. The aim of the framework is to promote closer working between partner agencies and that there is someone to pick up the phone and talk to and discuss how best to support a client. Through raising awareness it is hoped that those in need of support can be identified earlier and preventative measures put into place.

2. Aims of This Protocol

The aims of this framework are to:

- Create a safer and healthier environment for the individual and others affected by the hoarding behaviour, e.g. family, neighbours.
- Develop a multi-agency pathway which will maximise the use of existing service's and resources and which may reduce the need for compulsory solutions.
- Ensure that when solutions are required, there is a process for planning solutions tailored to meet the needs of the individual and utilising a person centred approach. Possible solutions should consider both the mental health and wellbeing support as well as practical support needed.
- Develop creative ways of engaging individuals in the process.
- To create a consistent and joined-up approach to assessing risk and to ways of working with hoarders.
- To establish best practice and improve knowledge of legislation that relates to hoarding behaviour.
- To enable a preventative approach to be developed.

3. Who Does This Framework Apply To?

This framework applies to all agencies supporting the East Sussex multi-agency hoarding framework.

There is an expectation that everyone in partnership with the protocol engages fully to achieve the best outcome for the individual, while meeting the requirements and duties of their agency or Board.

4. Definition of Hoarding

Hoarding is the excessive collection and retention of any material to the point that living space is sufficiently cluttered to preclude activities for what they are designed for.

Hoarding disorder is a persistent difficulty in discarding or parting with possessions because of a perceived need to save them.

A person with a hoarding disorder experiences distress at the thought of getting rid of the items. Excessive accumulation of items, regardless of actual value, occurs.

The acquisition of, and failure to discard, possessions which appears to be useless or of limited value (Frost & Gross, 1993).

Compulsive hoarding is often considered a form of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) because between 18 and 42 % of people with OCD experience some compulsion to hoard. However, compulsive hoarding can also affect people who don't have OCD.

Hoarding is now considered a standalone mental health disorder and is included in the 5th edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) 2013. However, hoarding can also be a symptom of other medical disorders. Hoarding Disorder is distinct from the act of collecting and is also different from people whose property is generally cluttered or messy. It is not simply a lifestyle choice. The main difference between a hoarder and a collector is that people who hoard have strong emotional attachments to their objects which are well in excess of their real value.

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

Anything can be hoarded in many different areas including the property, garden or communal areas. Items include, but not limited to:

- Clothes
- Newspapers, magazine or books
- Bills, receipts or letters
- Food and/or containers
- Collectables such as toys, DVDs or CDs
- Animals

5. Types of Hoarding

There are typically four types of hoarding as described below. Some people may have a combination of hoarding behaviours:

- **Inanimate objects:** This is the most common. This could consist of one type of object or collection of a mixture of objects, such as old clothes, newspapers, food, containers or papers.
- **Animal hoarding:** This is on the increase and often accompanied with the inability to provide minimal standards of care. The hoarder is unable to recognise that the animals are at risk because they feel they are saving them. The homes of animal hoarders are often eventually destroyed by the accumulation of animal faeces and infestation by insects.
- **Data Hoarding:** This is a relatively new phenomenon. It could present with the storage of data collection equipment such as computers, electronic storage devices or paper. A need to store copies of emails, and other information in an electronic format.
- **Diogenes syndrome:** A condition where a person (usually an older person) fails to look after their personal cleanliness and hygiene and tend to retain and fail to throw away rubbish.

6. General Characteristics of Hoarding

- **Fear and anxiety:** compulsive hoarding may have started as a learnt behaviour or following a significant event such as bereavement. The person who is hoarding feels that buying or saving things will relieve the anxiety and fear they feel. The hoarding effectively becomes their comfort blanket. Any attempt to discard the hoarded items can induce feelings varying from mild anxiety to a full panic attack with sweats and palpitations.
- **Long term behaviour pattern:** possibly developed over many years or decades of 'buy and drop'. Collecting and saving with an inability to throw away items without experiencing fear and anxiety.
- **Excessive attachment to possessions:** people who hoard may hold an inappropriate emotional attachment to items.
- **Indecisiveness:** people who hoard may struggle with the decision to discard items that are no longer necessary, including rubbish.
- **Unrelenting standards:** people who hoard will often find faults with others; requiring others to perform to excellence while struggling to organise themselves and complete daily living tasks.
- **Socially isolated:** people who hoard will typically alienate family and friends and may be embarrassed to have visitors. They may refuse home visits from professionals, in favour of office based appointments.

- **Large number of pets:** people who hoard may have a large number of animals that can be a source of complaints by neighbours. They may be a self-confessed 'rescuer of strays'.
- **Mentally competent:** people who hoard are typically able to make decisions that are not related to hoarding.
- **Extreme Clutter:** hoarding behaviour may be in a few or all rooms and prevent them from being used for their intended purpose.
- **Churning:** hoarding behaviour can involve moving items from one part of the property to another, without ever discarding them.
- **Self-care:** a person who hoards may appear unkempt and dishevelled, due to lack of bathroom or washing facilities in their home. However, some people who hoard will use public facilities in order to maintain their personal hygiene and appearance.
- **Poor insight:** a person who hoards will typically see nothing wrong with their behaviours and the impact it has on them and others.

7. Key Facts

- It is estimated that between 2 and 5% of the population hoard.
- This equates to at least 1.2 million households across the UK.
- It is estimated that only 5% of hoarders come to the attention of statutory agencies.
- Hoarding cases can cost up to anywhere from £1000 to £60,000.
- 20-30% of OCD sufferers are hoarders (Chartered Institute of Environmental Health).
- Often, people who hoard can stop landlords from meeting their statutory duties - i.e. Gas safety checks and other certification required for registered Social Landlords.

8. Mental Capacity

The Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005 provides a statutory framework for people who lack the capacity to make decisions by themselves. The Act has five statutory principles and these are legal requirements of the Act:

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

When a person's hoarding behaviour poses a serious risk to their health and safety, professional intervention will be required. With the exception of statutory requirements, the intervention or action proposed must be with the individual's consent. Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (The right to respect for private and family life) - is engaged. Interference with a person's life must be lawful, necessary and pursue a legitimate aim.

In extreme cases, taking statutory principle 3 (above) into account, the very nature of the environment may lead the professional to question whether the adult has capacity to consent to the proposed action or intervention and trigger a capacity assessment. All interventions must be undertaken in accordance with the 5 statutory principles and using the 'two stage' test of capacity (see MCA Code 4.11 – 4.25).

The MCA Code of Practice states that one of the reasons why people may question a person's capacity to make a specific decision is that "the person's behaviour or circumstances cause doubt as to whether they have capacity to make a decision" (MCA Code of Practice, 4.35). Extreme hoarding behaviour may therefore in the specific circumstances of the case, prompt an assessment of capacity.

9. Information Sharing

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, we all have the responsibility to ensure that personal information is processed lawfully and fairly. Everyone has a right to view any information held about them. Practitioners should consider this when they are recording information about that person.

When working with a client, the aim should always be to involve them fully in decision making and to share information about them with other agencies on the basis of consent. However there may be times when consent has not been gained and due to risk it is appropriate to share information. Consent is not needed to raise a safeguarding concern to Adult Social Care.

10. Fire Safety

Hoarding increases the risk of a fire occurring and makes it more difficult for people living within the property to evacuate safely. Fire can also spread to neighbouring properties if the level of hoarding is severe or if flammable items such as gas containers are being stored. It also poses a high risk to fire fighters when attending the scene.

The sharing of information is extremely important for operational firefighter crew safety. East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service is required to be compliant with the Fire Services Act, 2004, Regulation 7.2d to make arrangements for obtaining information needed for the purpose of extinguishing fires and protecting life and property in their area. The multi-agency approach to sharing information about hoarding enables compliance with the Act and also strengthens the operational risk assessment when dealing with incidents and fires where hoarding is present.

11. Environmental Health Powers

Environmental Health has certain powers which can be used in hoarding cases. Some are mentioned below. There is also a link to the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health which notes the growing list of statutory powers available to address hoarding and by means of a case study and the results of a survey, reviews the incidence and diversity of cases coming to the attention of environmental health authorities in the hope that, eventually, that may lead to better ways to resolve them.

Public Health Act 1936

Section 79: Power to require removal of noxious matter by occupier of premises

The Local Authority (LA) will always try and work with a householder to identify a solution to a hoarded property, however in cases where the resident is not willing to co-operate the LA can serve notice on the owner or occupier to "remove accumulations of noxious matter". Noxious not defined, but usually is "harmful, unwholesome". No appeal available. If not complied with in 24 hours, The LA can do works in default and recover expenses.

Section 83: Cleansing of filthy or verminous premises

Where any premises, tent, van, shed, ship or boat is either;

a) filthy or unwholesome so as to be prejudicial to health; or

b) verminous (relating to rats, mice other pests including insects, their eggs and larvae)

LA serves notice requiring clearance of materials and objects that are filthy, cleansing of surfaces, carpets etc. within 24 hours or more. If not complied with, Environmental Health can carry out works in default and charge. No appeal against notice but an appeal can be made against the cost and reasonableness of the works on the notice.

Section 84: Cleansing or destruction of filthy or verminous articles

Any article that is so filthy as to need cleansing or destruction to prevent injury to persons in the premises, or is verminous, the LA can serve notice and remove, cleanse, purify, disinfect or destroy any such article at their expense.

Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949

Section 4: Power of LA to require action to prevent or treat Rats and Mice

Notice may be served on owner or occupier of land/ premises where rats and/ or mice are or may be present due to the conditions at the time. The notice may be served on the owner or occupier and provide a reasonable period of time to carry out reasonable works to treat for rats and/or mice, remove materials that may feed or harbour them and carry out structural works.

Environmental Protection Act 1990

Section 80: Dealing with Statutory Nuisances (SNs)

SNs are defined in section 79 of the Act and include any act or omission at premises that prevents the normal activities and use of another premises, including the following:

Section 79 (1) (a) any premises in such a state as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance

(c) fumes or gases emitted from [private dwellings] premises so as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance

(e) any accumulation or deposit which is prejudicial to health or a nuisance

(f) any animal kept in such a place or manner as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance

The LA serves an Abatement Notice made under section 80 to abate the nuisance if it exists at the time or to prevent its occurrence or recurrence.

For further guidance and information please refer to the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health Officers Professional Practice Note: Hoarding and How to Approach it

http://www.cieh.org/uploadedfiles/core/policy/publications_and_information_service/s/policy_publications/publications/hoarding_ppn_may09.pdf

12. Planning Powers

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Section 215: Power to require proper maintenance of land

(1) If it appears to the local planning authority that the amenity of a part of their area, or of an adjoining area, is adversely affected by the condition of land in their area, they may serve on the owner and occupier of the land a notice under this section.

(2) The notice shall require such steps for remedying the condition of the land as may be specified in the notice to be taken within such period as may be so specified.

(3) Subject to the following provisions of this Chapter, the notice shall take effect at the end of such period as may be specified in the notice.

(4) That period shall not be less than 28 days after the service of the notice.

13. Animal Welfare Act

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 came into force on 6 April 2007.

The aim of the Act is to improve the welfare of animals, impose greater responsibility on their carers, and provide greater investigation and entry powers for police and local authority staff to deal with offences.

Under section 9 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006, it is the duty of any person responsible for an animal to ensure that its welfare needs are met. These include:

- The need for a suitable environment (how it is housed).
- The need for a suitable diet (what it eats and drinks).
- The need to exhibit normal behaviour patterns.
- Any need to be housed with or apart from other animals, and
- The need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease

14. Safeguarding Children

Safeguarding Children refers to protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of their health or development and ensuring that they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care. Growing up in a hoarding property can put a child at risk by affecting their development and, in some cases, leading to the neglect of a child, which is a safeguarding issue.

The needs of the child at risk must come first and any actions we take must reflect this. Where children live in the property, a Safeguarding Children alert should always be raised. Please refer to the following link for guidance:

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies/>

<http://www.eastsussexlscb.org.uk/>

15. Safeguarding Adults

Safeguarding Adults means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop, both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.

An adult with care and support needs may also be living with a hoarder in a property. There may be a safeguarding concern about the adult if they are at risk of harm due to the way the hoarder is choosing to live in the property. If in doubt, discuss the issue with Adult Social Care and Health.

This framework accepts the guidance as supplied by East Sussex County Council and the East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board for raising a safeguarding concern in order to safeguard an adult with care and support needs from abuse and neglect, and works in conjunction with the Sussex Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures, see links below for guidance:

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/socialcare/>

<http://sussexsafeguardingadults.procedures.org.uk/>

16. The Care Act 2014

The Care Act 2014 builds on recent reviews and reforms, replacing numerous previous laws, to provide a coherent approach to adult social care in England. Local authorities (and their partners in health, housing, welfare and employment services) must now take steps to prevent, reduce or delay the need for care and support for all local people.

The Care Act introduced three additional types of abuse and neglect to Adult Safeguarding. The most relevant to this framework is self-neglect. The guidance states that self-neglect covers a wide range of behaviour by an adult neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. In practise, this means that when an adult has care and support needs as a result of a physical or mental impairment or illness, concern about their welfare may require a safeguarding enquiry and this will be determined on a case by case basis.

17. Multi-Agency Response

It is recognised that hoarding is a complex condition and that a variety of agencies will come into contact with the same person. It is also recognised that not all the individuals that hoard will receive support from statutory services such as a Mental Health team.

The initial intervention from Adult Social Care and Health might be to offer an individual an assessment of their care and support needs. It is recognised that not all individuals that hoard will have care and support needs and an assessment may result in a more appropriate pathway being followed to support the adult, such as referring them on to other support services, instead of a safeguarding enquiry being carried out.

Any professional working with individuals who may have, or appear to have, a hoarding condition should use the clutter image rating and assessment questions to assess risk and identify the primary help needed and work with partner organisations, if appropriate, to form a multi-agency response.

Evidence of animal hoarding at any level should be reported to the RSPCA as well as other relevant agencies.

18. Managing Risk

The Hoarding Steering Group set up in Brighton & Hove ran quarterly to monitor and evaluate activity in relation to the framework as it was being developed and from that a sub group was created to discuss individual cases.

In addition, professionals can call a meeting themselves as appropriate to discuss individual cases, these meetings will be tailored to the needs of the individual client inviting the most relevant agencies and more timely than waiting for the sub group quarterly meeting.

In East Sussex where an individual client is not engaging with agencies, and there is concern over high risk, any agency can call a meeting under the self-neglect guidance contained within the Sussex Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures, which carries an expectation for partner agencies to attend.

19. Clutter Image Rating Tool Guidance

Clutter Image Rating (CIR) – BEDROOM

Please select the CIR which closely relates to the amount of clutter



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9

Clutter Image Rating (CIR) – LOUNGE

Please select the CIR which closely relates to the amount of clutter



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9

Clutter Image Rating (CIR) – KITCHEN

Please select the CIR which closely relates to the amount of clutter



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9

20. Description of Risk - Level One

Level 1 Clutter image rating 1 - 3	Household environment is considered standard. No specialised assistance is needed. If the resident would like some assistance with general housework or feels they are declining towards a higher clutter scale, appropriate referrals can be made subject to circumstances.
1. Property structure, services & garden area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All entrances and exits, stairways, roof space and windows accessible. • Smoke alarms fitted and functional or referrals made to East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service to visit and install if criteria met. • All services functional and maintained in good working order. • Garden is accessible, tidy and maintained
2. Household Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No excessive clutter, all rooms can be safely used for their intended purpose. • All rooms are rated 0-3 on the Clutter Rating Scale. • No additional unused household appliances appear in unusual locations around the property. • Property is maintained within terms of any lease or tenancy agreements where appropriate. • Property is not at risk of action by Environmental Health.
3. Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property is clean with no odours, (pet or other). • No rotting food. • No concerning use of candles. • No concern over flies. • Residents managing personal care. • No writing on the walls. • Quantities of medication are within appropriate limits, in date and stored appropriately.
4. Safeguard of Children & Family members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No concerns for household members.
5. Animals and Pests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any pets at the property are well cared for. • No pests or infestations at the property.
6. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No PPE required. • No visit in pairs required.

Description of Risk - Level Two

Level 2 Clutter Image Rating 4 – 6	Household environment requires professional assistance to resolve the clutter and the maintenance issues in the property.
1. Property structure, services & garden area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only major exit is blocked. • Concern that services are not well maintained. • Smoke alarms are not installed or not functioning. • Garden is not accessible due to clutter, or is not maintained • Evidence of indoor items stored outside. • Evidence of light structural damage including damp. • Interior doors missing or blocked open.
2. Household Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clutter is causing congestion in the living spaces and is impacting on the use of the rooms for their intended purpose. • Clutter is causing congestion between the rooms and entrances. • Room(s) score between 4-6 on the clutter scale. • Inconsistent levels of housekeeping throughout the property. • Some household appliances are not functioning properly and there may be additional units in unusual places. • Property is not maintained within terms of lease or tenancy agreement where applicable. • Evidence of outdoor items being stored inside.
3. Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kitchen and bathroom are difficult to utilise and access. • Offensive odour in the property. • Resident is not maintaining safe cooking environment. • Some concern with the quantity of medication, or its storage or expiry dates. • Has good fire safety awareness with little or no risk of ignition. • Resident trying to manage personal care but struggling. • No risk to the structure of the property.
4. Safeguard of Children & Family members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hoarding on clutter scale 4 -6. Consider a Safeguarding Assessment. • Properties with adults presenting care and support needs should be referred to the appropriate Social Care referral point. • Please note all additional concerns for householders.
5. Animals and pests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hoarding is impacting the welfare of any pets at the property • Infestation may be beginning at the property
6. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latex Gloves, boots or needle stick safe shoes, face mask, hand sanitizer, insect repellent. • Is PPE required?

Description of Risk - Level Three

<p>Level 3 Clutter image rating 7 - 9</p>	<p>Household environment will require intervention with a collaborative multi-agency approach with the involvement from a wide range of professionals. This level of hoarding constitutes a Safeguarding alert due to the significant risk to health of the householders, surrounding properties and residents. Residents are often unaware of the implication of their hoarding actions and oblivious to the risk it poses.</p>
<p>1. Property structure, services & garden area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited access to the property due to extreme clutter. • Extreme clutter may be seen at windows. • Extreme clutter may be seen outside the property. • Garden not accessible and extensively overgrown. • Services not connected or not functioning properly. • Smoke alarms not fitted or not functioning. • Property lacks ventilation due to clutter • Evidence of structural damage or outstanding repairs including damp. • Interior doors missing or blocked open. • Evidence of indoor items stored outside.
<p>2. Household Functions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clutter is obstructing the living spaces and is preventing the use of the rooms for their intended purpose. • Room(s) scores 7 - 9 on the clutter image scale. Rooms are not used for intended purposes or very limited. • Beds inaccessible or unusable due to clutter or infestation. • Entrances, hallways and stairs blocked or difficult to pass. • Toilets, sinks not functioning or not in use. • Resident at risk due to living environment. • Household appliances are not functioning or inaccessible. • Resident has no safe cooking environment. • Resident is using candles. • Evidence of outdoor clutter being stored indoors. • No evidence of housekeeping being undertaken. • Broken household items not discarded e.g. broken glass or plates. • Property is not maintained within terms of lease or tenancy agreement where applicable. • Property is at risk of notice being served by Environmental Health.
<p>3. Health and Safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human urine and excrement may be present. • Excessive odour in the property may also be evident from the outside. • Rotting food may be present. • Evidence may be seen of unclean, unused and or buried plates & dishes. • Broken household items not discarded e.g. broken glass or plates. • Inappropriate quantities or storage of medication. • Pungent odour can be smelt inside the property and possibly from outside. • Concern with the integrity of the electrics.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate use of electrical extension cords or evidence of unqualified work to the electricians. • Concern for declining mental health.
4. Safeguard of Children & Family members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Properties with adults presenting care and support needs should be referred to the appropriate Social Care referral point. • Please note all additional concerns for householders.
5. Animals and Pests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animals at the property at risk due the level of clutter in the property. • Resident not able to control the animals at the property. • Animals living area is not maintained and smells. • Animals appear to be under nourished or over fed. • Hoarding of animals at the property. • Heavy insect infestation (bed bugs, lice, fleas, cockroaches, ants, silverfish, etc.) • Visible rodent infestation.
6. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latex Gloves, boots or needle stick safe shoes, face mask, hand sanitizer, insect repellent. • Visit in pairs required.

21. Assessment Tool Guidance

Guidance for practitioners

Listed below are examples of questions you may wish to ask where you are concerned about someone's safety in their own home, where you suspect a risk of self-neglect and/or hoarding. The questions should be used alongside the clutter rating and professional judgement to identify level of risk. The questions are designed to help you ascertain what the primary issue or concern is for the individual and therefore what the most appropriate route for support may be. The question set should be taken as a whole, and it should always be remembered to consider whether mental health and wellbeing support is needed alongside other solutions.

Most clients with a hoarding problem will be embarrassed about their surroundings. Try to ascertain information whilst being as sensitive as possible. The client should be engaged in the process of seeking further support and their consent gained for referrals to be made. If the client is considered high-risk and the client is not engaging a self-neglect meeting can be called to work with partners to develop a way forward.

Please see section 23 and appendices for support contact details and referral forms.

Any child or adult safeguarding concerns, a safeguarding alert must be raised.

Practical

- How do you get in and out of your property?
- Do you feel safe living here?
- Have you ever had an accident, slipped, tripped up or fallen? How did it happen?
- Is there hot water, lighting and heating in the property? Do these services work properly?
- Are you able to use all the rooms in your property e.g. the bathroom and toilet ok?
- Where do you sleep?
- Has a fire ever started by accident? Is the property at risk from fire?
- Do you have a housing support worker? Do you have any support from Adult Social Care?

Consider

- Referral for ESFRS Home Safety Visit
- Is a Lifeline linked alarm system needed?
- Referral to de-cluttering services
- Is housing support needed?
- Is a referral to environmental health needed?
- Consider referral for debt advice
- Animal welfare concerns or animal hoarding can be referred to the RSPCA

Physical

- Do you have any physical health needs, mobility supports etc?
- Does your physical health prevent you from clearing your property?
- Do you have anyone helping you with your current situation?

Consider:

- Is a referral to Adult Social Care and Health needed?
- Does the person need to see their GP?

Psychological

- Do you have any difficulty with throwing things away? If so what stops you? If I was to throw something away right now how would you feel?
- Do you ever feel upset by your living situation?
- Do you ever feel down, depressed or hopeless?
- Do you ever have thoughts that you would be better off dead or thoughts of hurting yourself?
- Have you ever had any support for your mental health before?

Consider

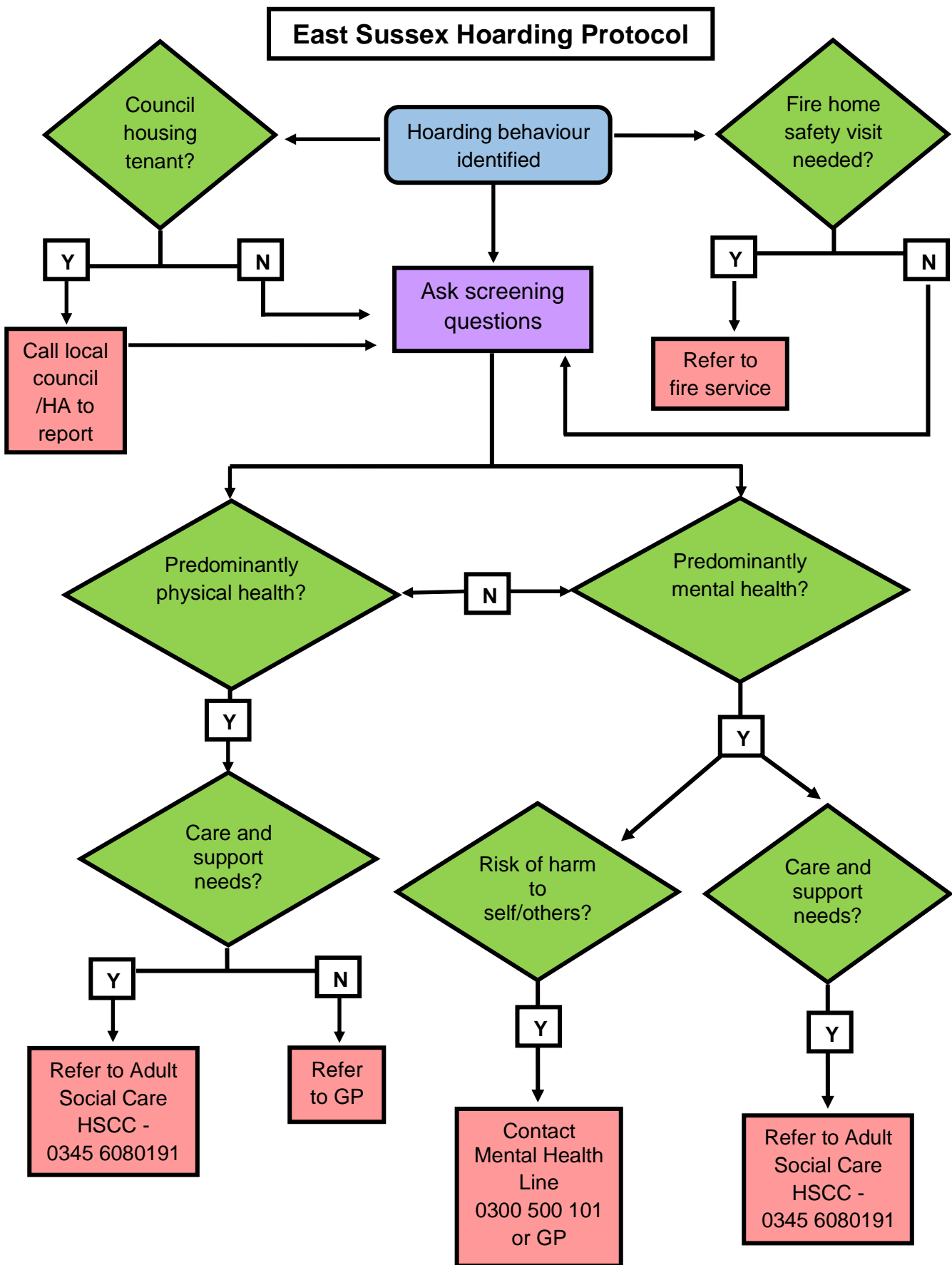
- Checking for current mental health support via Adult Social Care and Health
- Support to self-refer into Health in Mind
- Does the person need to see their GP? (for acute mental health issues person should be referred to their GP)
- Consider leaving self-help pack

Provision

- Would you like some support to manage your current situation?
- Are you happy for us to share your information with other professionals who may be able to help you?

Ask person to sign consent form and liaise with other agencies as appropriate.

22. Hoarding Flowchart



23. Local Contact Details

Organisation	Support Offered	Contact Details
Adult Social Care – East Sussex – Health & Social Care Connect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment of need. - Consideration of safeguarding enquiry. - Self-neglect multi-agency meeting. - Carers Assessment 	<p>Telephone: 0345 6080191</p> <p>Email: HSCC@eastsussex.gov.uk</p>
East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (ESFRS)	<p>Free Home Safety Visits offering the occupier a wide range of advice around home safety, the checking and fitting of smoke alarms and specialist equipment if required.</p> <p>Possibility of follow up visits once client has been discharged from other services to ensure situation has not declined.</p>	<p>Community Safety Team</p> <p>Telephone: 0800 177 7069</p> <p>Email: homefire.safetyvisits@esfrs.org</p>
East Sussex Warm Home Check Service	<p>The Warm Home Check service offers anyone finding it difficult to keep warm at home with advice and help to access the support available.</p> <p>The service is available all year round and also offers a home visit for those on a low income or receiving certain benefits. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an assessment of the home to identify how to keep warm • small works such as improving insulation or repairing boilers • emergency temporary heating • advice on getting help to pay for heating. <p>Installation of replacement boilers, central heating systems or home insulation is also possible subject to eligibility and limited availability.</p> <p>The service is commissioned by East Sussex Public Health and provided by RetrofitWorks and Citizens Advice East Sussex.</p>	<p>Website / online referral: www.warmeastsussex.org.uk</p> <p>Text: WARM to 81400</p> <p>Telephone: 03444 111 444</p>
Environmental Health	<p>Environmental Health has certain powers which can be used in hoarding cases. The Local Authority will always try and work with a householder to identify a solution to a hoarded property, however in cases where the resident is</p>	<p>Rother –</p> <p>Telephone: 01424 787550</p> <p>Email: envhealth@rother.gov.uk</p> <p>Website/Report online: <a 454="" 552="" 927="" 943"="" data-label="Page-Footer" href="http://www.rother.gov.uk/article/192/Environment-issues>Wealden</p> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <div data-bbox="> <p>Page 28 of 41</p> </p>

	not willing to co-operate the LA can serve notice on the owner or occupier.	<p>Hastings - Telephone: 01424 451079 Website/ Report on online: https://www.hastings.gov.uk/environmentalhealth/</p> <p>Eastbourne & Lewes – Telephone: 01323 410000 Website/ Report online: https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/environmental-problems/</p> <p>Wealden – Telephone: 01323 443322 / 01892 653311 Website/ Report online: http://www.wealden.gov.uk/Wealden/Residents/Environment_and_Pollution/Res_EnvironmentPollution.aspx</p>
Joint Community Rehabilitation Service (JCR)/Falls Prevention Service	This is a short term re-enablement programme which aims to provide support to people in their own homes; by working closely with users and their representatives to reduce dependency by encouraging and promoting independence to make the most of their abilities and improve their quality of life.	<p>Telephone: 0345 6080191</p> <p>Email: HSCC@eastsussex.gov.uk</p>
Health In Mind (NHS)	Health in Mind is a free NHS service for anyone in East Sussex experiencing emotional or psychological difficulties such as stress, anxiety and depression.	<p>Website/ Online referral: www.healthinmind.org.uk Email: General and non- urgent enquiries spnt.healthinmind@nhs.net</p> <p>Out of Hours - Sussex Mental Healthline (NHS) – For support and information available Monday to Friday 5pm – 9am, and 24 hours at weekends and Bank Holidays. Telephone: 0300 5000 101</p>
Homeworks	Home Works is for you if you are aged 16 to 64 (a single person, a couple or a family), homeless or at risk of losing of your home, and need support to live independently. It is a free service which provides flexible and tailored support to prevent homelessness. We work with you to help you keep or access safe and affordable housing that you can call	<p>For a copy of the referral form https://www.southdown.org/housing-support/home-works-east-sussex</p> <p>Telephone: 01273 898700 Text: 07773 377 754 Fax: 01273 898 701 Email: referrals@home-works.org.uk</p>

	home.	
Optivo Housing Association	Optivo staff provide direct support and guidance to residents identified as hoarding. Using a non-judgemental, person-centred approach we engage with residents to improve the health and safety of the resident, and the impact on others who may be affected. Where appropriate, we refer to external agencies/organisations to get the relevant support for residents. We work in partnership with these agencies to help the resident manage and maintain their tenancy.	Tenancy Sustainment Officer Telephone: 0800 1216060 Email: reba.turner@optivo.org.uk
RSPCA	For animal hoarding and animal welfare concerns	Telephone: 0300 1234 999
STAR – East Sussex Drug and alcohol recovery service	We are a free dedicated drug and alcohol community recovery service for those aged 18+ We are commissioned to deliver drug and alcohol services across East Sussex working with the local community and partnership agencies to achieve best outcomes for the service users that we work with.	Telephone: 0300 3038 160 Email: EastSussex.star@cgl.org.uk Website: https://www.changegrowlive.org/content/east-sussex-drug-and-alcohol-recovery-service-star
STEPS	STEPS provides a free floating support service for those aged 65+ with housing needs, and a free floating support service (short term navigator style) to those aged 18+ with a long term physical health condition	STEPS West – Eastbourne Lewes & Wealden Telephone: 01323 436414 STEPS East – Hastings & Rother Telephone: 0300 123 2422
Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	SPFT provide NHS care across Sussex for people with mental health problems and learning disabilities. They provide a range of specialist services. We care for people all of ages, from children and young people through to older people with conditions such as dementia.	Referrals to services are made via GP Out of Hours - Sussex Mental Healthline (NHS) – For support and information available Monday to Friday 5pm – 9am, and 24 hours at weekends and Bank Holidays. Telephone: 0300 5000 101 For our services in East Sussex see website: www.sussexpartnership.nhs.uk/ea

		st-sussex
Welbeing – Telecare	Telecare, such as smoke detectors and CO detectors, can safeguard people, manage risk and help them with greater self-care and independence. We provide a 24 hour, 365-day monitoring service that enables someone to get help at the press of a button if there is an accident or emergency in the home.	Telephone: 01323 644422 Email: info@welbeing.org.uk Referrals via East Sussex County Council Adult Social Care Teams: https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/socialcare/support-to-stay-at-home/technology-to-stay-safe-and-independent/
Lewes District & Eastbourne Borough Councils	Working in partnership to provide details on help with money and debt, paying your council tax/rent, applying for housing, how to claim housing benefit or council tax reduction, bin collection days/reporting missed collections and searching and viewing planning applications.	Neighbourhood Housing, Homes First: Telephone: 01273 471600, www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk

24. Websites and Further Reading

Cloud’s End CIC www.cloudsend.org.uk

Resources to help hoarders and housing associations dealing with hoarding.

Help for Hoarders www.helpforhoarders.co.uk

Information support and advice for hoarders and their families. Including and an online support forum.

OCD UK www.ocduk.org/hoarding

Information and support about Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, which includes hoarding.

Hoarding UK www.hoardinguk.org

Information and support for hoarders and agencies, including local support groups.

The Association of Professional De-Clutterers and Organisers (UK)

www.apdo-uk.co.uk

Provide support, networking and promotion for members of the Professional Organising & De-cluttering industry and information and services for their clients.

25. Appendices

Please find the following documents attached as appendices for this document. Please note that action plan documents are designed to be used when it is felt appropriate.

1. East Sussex Fire and Rescue Home Safety Visit Referral Form
2. Self-Help Information Sheet
3. Hoarding Initial Assessment Form
5. Hoarding Action Plan

Referral Form
(To be emailed)

Name	
Organisation Address	
Postcode	
Telephone number	
Client's details:	
Name	
Address	
Postcode	
Telephone number	
Any additional comments	

The client understands that the home safety visit provided by East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service is completely FREE of charge and consent been given Yes

Fire risk factors (please tick all that apply):

80 years or older	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sight impaired	<input type="checkbox"/>
65 years or older	<input type="checkbox"/>	Heavy smoker	
Lives alone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hearing impaired	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reduced mobility/immobile	<input type="checkbox"/>	Suffering mental health issue (e.g. Dementia) Please state issue	<input type="checkbox"/>
Long-term medication/sedatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	A single parent (with one or more children 0-5 years age)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Occupier has no working smoke alarms	<input type="checkbox"/>	Victim of arson or threats of arson	<input type="checkbox"/>
Previous fire incident	<input type="checkbox"/>	Victim of domestic violence and/or hate crime	<input type="checkbox"/>
History of fire setting in own dwelling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Heavy alcohol consumption	<input type="checkbox"/>
Property Privately Owned	<input type="checkbox"/>	Property Privately Rented	<input type="checkbox"/>
Property Owned by Housing Ass / Council	<input type="checkbox"/>	No Lone Working to Premise: Please state reason	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please State: _____			

Comments:

East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service needs to gather the following information in order to provide a Home Safety Visit. This information will not be shared with anyone outside of the Fire Service. You have the right to see this information and can do so by contacting 01323462435. The data will be held securely in electronic format.

On completion, please return this form to: Email: Homefire.Safetyvisits@esfrs.org
Home Safety Visits Tel: 0800 177 7069

Hoarding self-help resources

Websites

All of these organisations have information on hoarding. Search for 'hoarding' in the search box.

- Help For Hoarders <http://www.helpforhoarders.co.uk/>
- Hoarding UK <http://www.hoardinguk.org>
- MIND <http://www.mind.org.uk>
- OCD UK <http://ocduk.org/>
- NHS <http://www.nhs.uk>
- Age UK <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/>
- Royal college of psychiatry <http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/>

Books

This is a selection of the many books available. We do not endorse any specific book

- Overcoming Hoarding: a self-help guide using cognitive behavioural techniques
- Overcoming Compulsive Hoarding: why you save and how you can stop
- The Hoarder in You: how to live a happier healthier, uncluttered life
- Stuff: compulsive hoarding and the meaning of things

Professional help

For a referral to mental health services contact your GP.

Hoarding Initial Assessment Home Audit Clutter Rating

Investigating Officers who have concerns about the condition of a property or garden must use the following checklist to determine whether the condition meets the threshold to be categorised as 'hoarding'.

To be considered:

1. Whether the **room can be used for its purpose**, e.g. can the kitchen be used for cooking, or can the bathroom be used for washing or to go to the toilet?
2. Whether there are any **health and safety concerns**, e.g. storage of gas bottles, or storing items that could attract pests and vermin, are the conditions unsanitary, self-neglect issues?

Part 1: Personal Details:

Name & Surname			
Address:			Phone:
Date of birth/Age:		Gender:	Postcode
Joint occupant; (if applicable)			
Property type:		No. of bedrooms:	
Date report received:		Reported by:	
Circumstances leading to hoarding alert:			
Warning Alerts or known Risks:			

Part 2: Hoarding Details:

Not disposing of household rubbish		Collecting of certain favourites ie. elephants, cuddly toys, mugs	
Books		Hobby collector ie. trains, cars, figurines	
Animals		Excessive amount clothes	
Food		Buying of new items	
Newspapers / Magazines		Buying multiple items of one type	
Junk Mail		Faeces / Urine	
Keeping of general household items			

Part 3: Property Checks:

Room	Photo(s) (Please tick)	OCD Clutter Image Rating (1 to 9)	Can the room be used for its purpose?		Are there any health and safety concerns?		Comments
			Yes	No	Yes	No	
Kitchen							
Bathroom							
Separate W.C (if appropriate)							
Lounge							
Dining room (if appropriate)							
Bedroom 1							
Bedroom 2							
Bedroom 3							
Access from front door							
Access from back door							
Stairs (if appropriate)							
Garden							
Loft space (RHP will not permit storage in lofts)							

Please supply the following details to the best of your knowledge:		
Any imminent fire risks? (consider: flammable materials, working smoke alarms, evidence of previous fire/smoke damage anywhere?)		
Are there pest control issues?		
Is hoarding spilling over to the garden?		
Is hoarding spilling over into communal areas?		
Are items stacked in such a way that they cause a risk ie fall on person, fall onto heated surfaces, block doors?		
Are all utilities / heating connected?		
Can heating and hot water be utilised? ie are radiators obscured? Is the boiler ventilated?		
Any apparent urgent repair issues to address? (drainage, leaks, electrical, etc.)		
Has there been an annual gas safety check? (and were there any concerns raised?)		Inspection date:
Has an electrical periodic inspection been completed? (and were there any concerns raised?)		Inspection date:
Have there been complaints from neighbours?		
Could neighbouring properties be affected in any way?		
Do the occupants smoke?		
Do any occupants have known alcohol or substance misuse issues?		
What type of fire is in the living room? (gas, electric or solid fuel)		If it is solid fuel, is the tenant using the correct fuel?
Does the person use portable heaters?		If so, what type?
Is the person improvising heat & light ie using cooker, candles etc		

Part 3A: CLIENT CONSENT

- I consent to the taking and storing of photographs of the interior and exterior of my property.
- I consent to contact with my General Practitioner for consulting in support with my home.
- I consent to a referral being made to a multi-agency Hoarding Investigation Panel working in partnership to create an action plan to help me sustain my tenancy in addressing issues around my home

DR.

SURGERY

PHONE

Signed by client:

Print name:

Date:

Investigating Officer

Organisation

Date:

Part 4: Support Checks: Background checks to form Multi-Agency Partnership Team

These will help those developing the Hoarding Action Plan if required

	Yes	No	Comments
Are any existing support networks? (Tenancy Officer, Carer, Social Worker etc.) or external support agency staff currently supporting the tenant?			
Suggest: check your system of client records to identify potential vulnerability and previous history: each support agency will have similar systems with different names			
Existing Client Record			
Housing Information			
<i>Check any existing statutory support and alert to partnership approach</i>			
Carepoint 1 (Social Care First Level Enquiry)			
Carepoint 2 (Allocated Social Worker or Duty)			
Preventative Assessment Team			
GP/Proactive Care Team			
Sussex Partnership Mental Health			
Fire & Rescue Service			

Part 5: Staff Member Checklist – Hoarding Initial Assessment

- Check client consent to take photographs obtained – Part 3A as above**
- Photographs taken and uploaded to Client Records linked to HOARD01**
- Client consent to contact GP & work with linked partnership services**
- Does the overall Clutter Rating cause concern and indicate an MA Meeting?**
- Upload HOARD01 to the Client Records**

Name:

Date:

Hoarding Action Plan,

Identifying tasks required and forecast of costs

Multi-Agency Group Person Centred Action Plan and Agreement by Client

Part 1: Person Details:

Person Name & Surname		FWi Ref:	
Joint Occupant Name: (if applicable)		WSCC HIT ID Ref:	
Address:			
Telephone number		Postcode	

Part 2: Details of Involved Partnership Services/Agencies: Working in Partnership

Multi-Agency Lead

Tenancy Sustainment Service

Housing Officer

Drug and Alcohol Team

Social Care Worker

Mental Health Worker

Support Service Worker

Fire & Rescue Service

Disability support

Environmental Health

Care Support Staff

GP

Advocate/Family/Friend

Part 3: HOARDING ACTION PLAN - TASKS/SERVICES/COST FORECAST

POINTS TO ADDRESS		HOARDING ACTION PLAN TASKS (Consider issues arising & proposed solutions)	FORE CAST COST	ACTUAL COST TO DATE
Multi-Agency Team	Identify support agencies & specialist services Explore specific actions of MA Team			
Counselling	Plan involvement of professional counselling			
Sorting	Best practice is to continue counselling with practical sorting, to encourage the person to sort items, not to take them away under coercion. Creating a working relationship based on trust and understanding.			
Resident Actions	Resident specific tasks to clear or clean, with measured & time specific deadlines			
Additional personnel	Extra hands required for heavy lifting etc			
Removal of cleared items	Practical removal of agreed items, signed over by disclosure document. Removed by general rubbish, skip, man and van, donation to charity etc as appropriate.			
Sourcing of essential items	Replacement damaged/removed essential items such as bedding, kitchen goods as required.			
Cleaning	General clean or deep clean as needed.			
Follow up	Monitoring for signs of hoarding and ongoing support.			
Domiciliary Care Needs	Assess for personal care & support needs and plan actions to provide			
Support Needs	Assess for additional help & support with daily household tasks, socialisation etc			
Financial Considerations	explore ability to pay & resourcing charitable funding (consider recovery of costs)			

Part 4: Personal Contracted Agreement (to be attached)

Registered Housing Provider & Private Tenancies – Acceptable Behaviour Contract
Private Homeowners – Personal Resolution Actions Agreement

Part 5: Tenant Consent - Information Sharing

(Please tick to confirm you agree)

- I consent to the above agencies obtaining and sharing information as part of the multi-agency partnership work to secure my safety and that of my family.
- If there are child protection or safeguarding concerns, information will be shared regardless of whether this form is signed.
- Any neglected animals will be reported for assessment by the RSPCA

Part 6: Tenant Agreement for Agreed Actions & Timescales

Please tick to confirm you agree

- I have signed the ‘Personal Contracted Agreement’ (as attached)
- I agree to comply with the agreed actions and timescales set out in Part 3 (as above) of the Hoarding Action Plan.
- I agree to allow reasonable access for home visits and to positively engage and co-operate with any support services provided.

Part 7: Fire Risk Assessment

HOARD 04 East Sussex Fire Service – Cause for concern referral completed

Date Submitted:

Signed

Date:

Name Printed

Address

Signed Officer

Date:

Name Printed

Organisation