

## Housing Condition Complaint Procedures

### Private Sector Landlord

Concerns raised by tenant, Social Prescriber, Housing Advice team, Councillor, Fire Authority etc

1. Gather information. E.g.
  - Check Uniform and property files for subject property
  - Check EPC Register
2. Contact the tenant to discuss concerns. Ask questions which will assist in determining/prioritising next action. E.g.
  - How long has this been an issue?
  - What contact has tenant already had with the landlord about the disrepair/concerns?
  - Who currently lives at the property e.g. any elderly persons or children?
  - If damp and mould growth, can the tenant provide any photos that will assist you to identify severity, extent and exposure? Consider whether providing a condensation leaflet and general advice is an appropriate first response in this case.
3. If an inspection or further actions are required (and for all damp and mould growth cases regardless of next action) create a new Uniform Case type HP\_GEN, HP\_DIS etc in the Housing, Service Request module. Ensure that
  - on the Details tab, that you complete the details field with a descriptor of the main disrepair/hazard alleged e.g. for Damp and Mould Growth or Excess Cold input D & M or EC. This is important to facilitate gathering statistics.
  - on the Details 2 tab, that you complete the Landlord Details field with Private Rented from the pick list
  - on the I.V.A. tab you record ongoing actions and their corresponding dates e.g. inspections, phone calls, letters sent etc by completing the Visit Type, Actual Visit Date and Type of Action fields.
4. For each new Uniform case create a new property file in S Drive/Domestic Team/Housing/Housing Complaints/2022-23 for ongoing correspondence, inspection proformas, photos, assessments, notices etc to be saved within.
5. Prior to any visit to a property to investigate a complaint you must provide the landlord with at least 24 hours' notice of entry (this applies also to RSLs). This can be either by telephone, email or letter You can also provide agents with the

- notification to pass onto owners. An example of this notification can be found on previous property files on S drive.
6. Visit property and undertake HHSRS. Take photos where possible and complete an inspection proforma.
  7. When completing the HHSRS on the Calculator software it is helpful to only place a small amount of text into the justifications section and then save the document as a workbook in which you can then expand on your explanation and justifications, without worrying about lack of space, interruptions or being timed out and losing your work.
  8. Ensure you update the Uniform Case by recording the date and outcome of any inspection on the I.V.A. tab in the Type of Action fields. You must identify if you found both Category 1 and Category 2 hazards and record in the corresponding notes the hazard category and banding.

Contact the landlord via letter or email identifying your findings and making recommendations for action if appropriate. Be clear on what level of action you are considering. If you are serving a Hazard Awareness Notice in the first instance, then follow the enforcement guidance on how to do this. If required provide a copy of your findings and recommendations to the Housing Advice Team. Ensure you provide updates to Housing Advice Team as your investigations/actions progress.

9. Update the tenant as to outcome of inspection. Provide them with a summary of the findings and recommendations sent to the landlord. Where a private sector tenant has requested an inspection from Environmental Health to facilitate a higher banding on their Homelink application, it will be for the tenant to submit a copy of our letter directly to Sanctuary Lettings Team. If Sanctuary Lettings or Housing Advice teams team require any further detail about our findings we can provide hazard bandings and other information/advice on our findings to assist with their assessments.

#### Sanctuary Housing Association or other RSL

1. If a complaint has been received from a tenant of a Housing Association then follow the procedures above. It is important when you set up a new case on Uniform that in the Details 2 tab, you complete the Landlord Details field with the appropriate RSL name from the pick list.
2. Email notification of inspections and any initial enquires about progress of works for Sanctuary HA properties should be sent to [contactus@sanctuary.co.uk](mailto:contactus@sanctuary.co.uk) and cc'd to [Nathan.barlow@sanctuary.co.uk](mailto:Nathan.barlow@sanctuary.co.uk) who manages the Housing Officer Team.

#### Service of Improvement or other notices

Please read the Enforcement Guidance found at

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/safetyratingsystem.pdf>  
and ECDC's Housing Enforcement Policy found at [Private Sector Housing Strategy \(eastcamb.gov.uk\)](#)

If you consider that action is likely to need to progress to service of Improvement Notices or others then consider serving a Section 16 requisition for information notice (under local Government and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976).

Examples of blank notices can be found in S Drive, Domestic, Housing, Housing Act 2004 Notices.