

HOARDING PROCEDURE



MONITORING INFORMATION:

POLICY/PROCEDURE/STRATEGY:

DATE APPROVED:

EXPIRY DATE:

OWNER:

APPROVAL ROUTE:

HOARDING PROCEDURE

AUGUST 2022

AUGUST 2025

HEAD OF COMMUNITIES & ESTATES

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM

Hoarding Procedure

1. Procedure

This approach works in tandem with Teign's Hoarding Management Policy

2. Statement of Intent

Teign will promote independent living and the right for all of its customers to make individual choices even when this requires tolerance of unconventional lifestyles or where people appear to act in ways that are against their best interests.

However, where customers display behaviours that pose a risk or have a detrimental impact on themselves or others around them, Teign will, in most cases, take a graded approach to intervention. In the case of hoarding issues this will involve:

Provision of support

It is recognised amongst professionals that taking a multi approach to addressing hoarding has a greater chance of success, particularly given that reoccurrence of hoarding is high.

Teign will first look to provide support from within its own resources.

This may include increased frequency of visits from Neighbourhood or Independent Living Advisers. This approach may also involve contact with known friends, relatives of customers or advocates for low level assistance, where it is appropriate to do so and with the consent of the tenant(s), unless exemptions apply.

When professionals doubt that a person has understanding of the impact their behaviour or circumstances are having on their wellbeing, or that of others, this should prompt a decision specific assessment of capacity in line with the Mental Capacity Act 2005. (see appendix 5)

Raising a safeguarding concern with the Local Authority should happen when all reasonable and proportionate attempts have been made to assess and engage the person in meeting their health and social care needs and despite support/intervention, the person continues to be unable to protect themselves resulting in an ongoing risk to their independence, health and welfare and/or that of others. Or where there is a critically high risk. (Adult Self Neglect and Hoarding Guidance DSAP 2020)

Referral to Local Authority Children's Safeguarding Teams should be considered if children are residing with adults who are self neglecting, and the child is experiencing harm or there is a risk to the child's welfare.

In the most extreme situations, where the individual presents such a risk to themselves and others, and where it is suspected that a mental health condition exists, it may be appropriate to request that a Mental Health Act Assessment is carried out by the appropriate mental health professional. The appropriate person will be able to enter the home with a warrant under Section 135 of the Mental Health Act and remove the individual for an assessment.

Enabling approach

The enabling approach may include engaging specialist clearing and cleansing services to assist.

Referral

This may involve the use of outside agencies including but not exclusive of a referral to General Practitioners (GP), Fire Services, relevant psychiatric professionals, adult and or children's Social Services and Environmental Health Officers. When circumstances are particularly pressing (trying to resolve gas access issues, planned maintenance works and so on) there is a small budget provision to engage with 'decluttering specialists' or 'professionals in addressing hoarding in the home registered with the Association of Professional Declutterer and Organisers UK'

Enforcement

Where the above actions have failed to bring about appropriate improvements and only as a last resort will Teign consider taking enforcement actions which may include legal action to recover tenancies.

Teign will assess each case of hoarding from its customers on an individual basis and will respond appropriately to the circumstances involved. Occasionally it may be necessary to take steps out of sequence.

Teign is committed to working in partnership with multiple agencies to find lasting solutions to the problems created by hoarding and where required case conferencing approaches will be adopted, maintaining Data Protection Act/GDPR requirements at all times (unless exemptions around public /personal safety apply).

3. The Approach to Hoarding Management

- 3.1 In all identified hoarding cases the Head Start Advisers, Independent Living Advisers and Neighbourhood Service Advisers will ensure an objective, sensitive and non-judgemental approach is adopted. There will always be an assumption of mental capacity unless an assessment by a relevant psychiatric professional and diagnosis proves otherwise, in which case the use of qualified advocates must be considered.
- 3.2 A visit will be undertaken within five working days of receiving notification that there could be a hoarding issue. Prior to the visit staff are expected to check the housing management system to establish whether there have been any previous reports of hoarding tendencies.
- 3.3 There are tools in the appendices of this procedure to assist with the completing of an initial hoarding assessment. The clutter rating table and the initial assessment form will help to arrive at a conclusion.
- 3.4 Where necessary, and with the consent of the customer, we should update our computerised records to indicate that there is a hoarding tendency at the property – this will help anyone visiting the property to prepare ahead of the visit.
- 3.5 Following an initial visit to the property (or based on a report of the Neighbourhood Service Advisers/ Independent Living Advisers) a risk assessment will be undertaken to determine the best approach for dealing with the hoarding issue. See Appendix I which gives Clutter Image Ratings to help determine the severity of the issue.
- 3.6 The risk assessment will result in the development of an action plan with a realistic timescale for resolving the problem. This would normally follow the steps identified above but will depend on the severity of the problem and any threats it poses to the customer(s) concerned or their neighbours.
- 3.7 The action plan will, in all cases, be shared with the subject of the hoarding issue and any advocates that may be involved. The emphasis will always be on provision of support and ‘action by consent’ in the first instance, collaborating with the person(s) responsible for the hoarding and getting them to work through their own solutions to the problem.
- 3.8 Where the person(s) responsible for the hoarding fails to stick to plan or there is a sudden worsening of the situation, Teign may have to consider escalation to the next stage in the

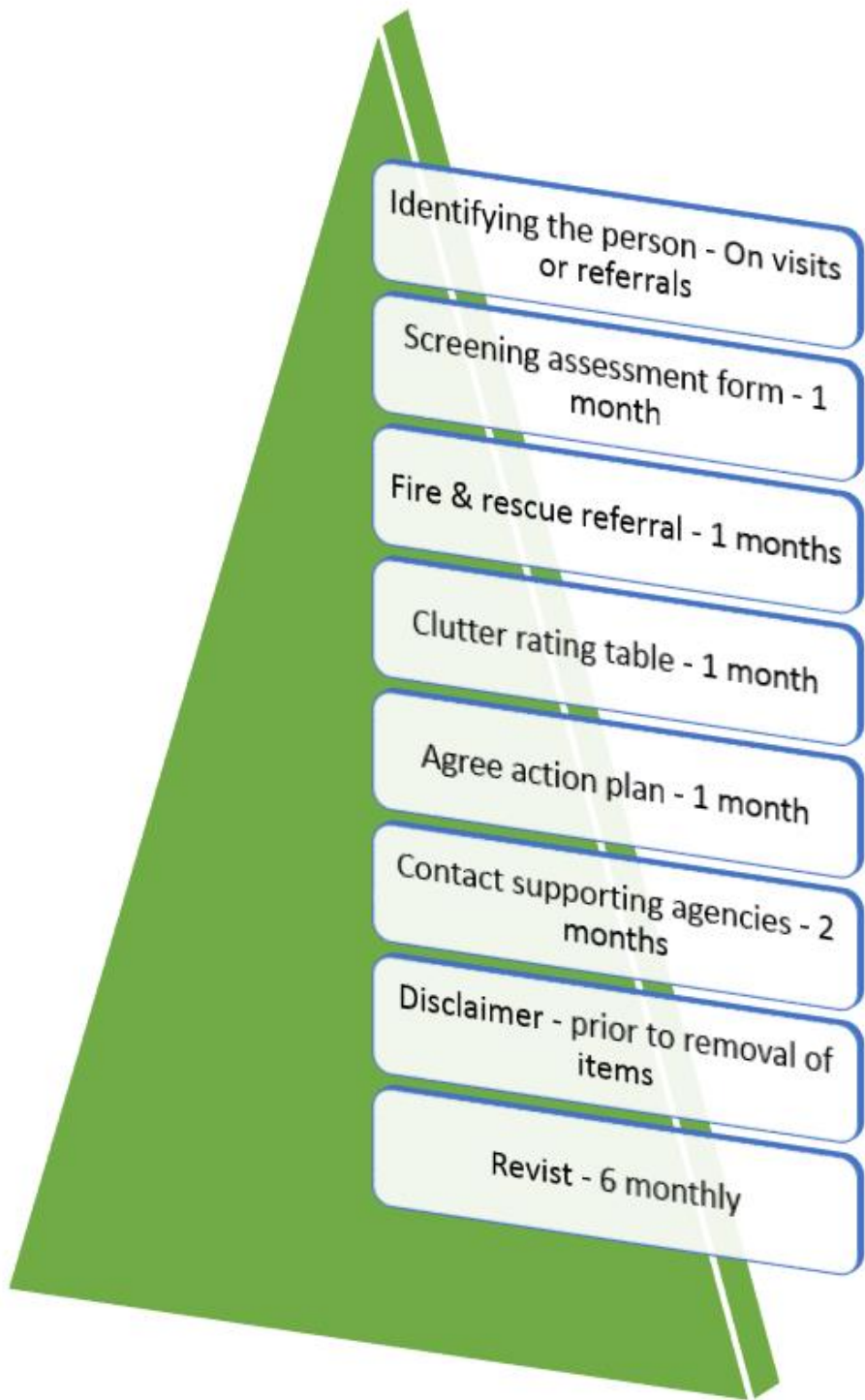
process, which may involve providing some form of enabling service including clearing /cleansing services.

- 3.9 Teign may choose to recharge the customer the costs of any clearing / cleansing works and each case will be considered on its merits. Teign may consider waiving reasonable recharge costs if the customer(s) lack mental capacity / is physically incapable of removing hoarded items or has no friends or advocates that could otherwise assist them.
- 3.10 Teign will ensure any clearing / cleansing of items from properties is carried out with due regard to the legal requirements of the Data Protection Act/GDPR and all relevant environmental legislation.
- 3.11 If customer(s) responsible for hoarding behaviour fail to respond to the above measures or Teign are forced to repeat these measures, referrals may be made to external agencies including General Practitioners, Social Services Departments and for enforcement issues - Environmental Health Officers (if this has not already been previously required).
- 3.12 Where this does occur Teign are likely to adopt a case conferencing approach between the multiple agencies concerned and will, where possible and appropriate, involve the subject of the hoarding concern in any discussions and subsequent revisions to the action plan.
- 3.13 Where all of the above measures have failed to bring about a satisfactory resolution to the hoarding issue and only as a last resort will Teign consider instigating legal action to bring the tenancy to an end.
- 3.14 In all hoarding cases that have some form of detrimental impact to adjoining neighbours, Teign will endeavour to keep those most affected informed of actions taken to resolve the issue, whilst maintaining confidentiality of the person(s) responsible.

4. Related Documents:

- Tenancy Agreement
- Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Anti-social Behaviour Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy







HOARDING FLOW CHART



APPENDIX 1 – Hoarding screening assessment form

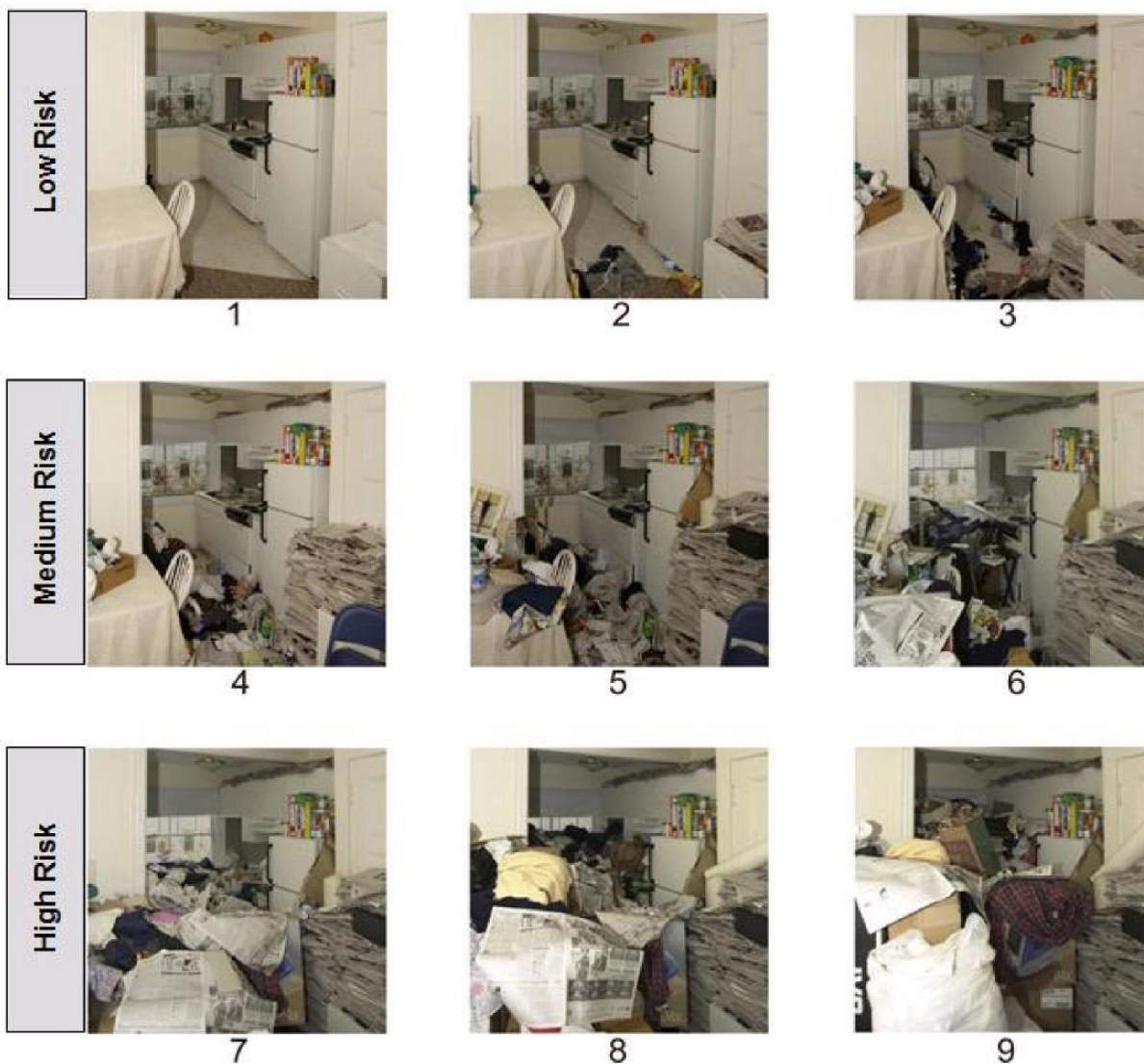
Reference number		Name	
Housing Office		Date	
Personal information			
Name of tenant			
Age		Gender	
Date of birth			
Address being referred			<input type="checkbox"/> House <input type="checkbox"/> Flat <input type="checkbox"/> Bungalow
Please remember to take photos of the property if possible			
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobility Wheelchair user Stick user Short distance	<input type="checkbox"/> Impairment Hearing Sight Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Dementia Limited capacity Any other diagnosis
<input type="checkbox"/> None			
Language			
Screening questions		Yes	No
Are items limiting the free movement and/or entrance/exit to the property?			
Is the functionality of the bathroom/kitchen limited?			
Is the person living in one room?			
Are items spilling over into the garden?			
Are items spilling over into the communal area?			
Are items stacked in such a way that they are a risk?			
Have there been complaints from the neighbours?			
Are neighbouring properties affected in any way?			
Are there pest control issues?			
Are there any urgent health and safety issues e.g. outstanding gas safety check?			
Does this person have a history of hoarding?			
Are there any agencies already involved?			
Person questions			
Are there any rooms that you cannot get into?			
Are your utilities/heating disconnected?			
What are you using for heating?			
Do you have any urgent repairs which need to be done?			
Have you suffered any trauma in the past i.e. loss of family?			
Do you have any regular visitors to your property i.e. family?			
Do you have any support in place from family/friends/support worker?			
Are you aware that this is considered hoarding and is hazardous to your health?			

APPENDIX 2 - Clutter Rating table

Low Risk	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">    </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 5px;"> 1 2 3 </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All doors, stairway and windows accessible ● All utilities functional ● No evidence or pests ● Clutter obstructs some functions of key living area – looks untidy ● Safe and maintained sanitation conditions
Medium Risk	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">    </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 5px;"> 4 5 6 </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Blocking of doors, some windows, possibly a major exit ● Some utilities not being used e.g. shower now blocked/ disconnected ● Light infestation of pests (e.g. bed bugs, lice, fleas, rats etc). ● Cluttering obstructing functions of key living space, stairs, entrances and hallways ● Evidence of non-maintained sanitation conditions (e.g. food preparation surfaces heavily soiled, lots of dirty dishes, obvious odours which irritate). ● Evidence of burns to the carpet, clothing etc.
High Risk	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">    </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 5px;"> 7 8 9 </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Whole rooms not accesible, exits blocked, windows not able to be opened ● Utilities cut off (e.g.no heating, gas capped etc). ● Heavy infestations of pests (rats seen/heard/reported by neighbours, cockroaches, fleas etc). ● Key living spaces not available for use, person living in one room ● Evidence of urine/excrement in room, rotting food, very unsanitary conditions ● Evidence of previous fire or burns in the carpet, clothing etc.

APPENDIX 3 – Clutter Image Rating: Kitchen

Suggested risk is shown at left hand side



APPENDIX 4 - How to identify a person with hoarding tendencies

It can often be difficult to identify a person with hoarding tendencies until the situation has become so severe that it begins to affect surrounding properties. However it does not have to get to this stage if certain criteria are adhered to. If the following questions can be answered with a 'yes', this is often an indication that someone may need additional support.

Does the tenant live alone?

Often people who have hoarding tendencies live alone. This is not always the case however statistics show that people are more likely to have hoarding tendencies if they live alone.

Is the tenant over 50?

Statistics show that people with hoarding tendencies are more likely to be over the age of 50; however this is not always the case.

Does the tenant have a lack of repairs raised?

Often people who have hoarding tendencies will not allow access to their homes. In addition, as items build up, repairs go unnoticed and therefore unreported.

Does the tenant refuse access for home visits?

People with a tendency to hoard can feel embarrassed by the state of their home or can often feel protective about their items that they are keeping therefore will not allow people to see the property in case they are then asked to remove it.

Does the tenant have a disability or limited mental capacity?

Often people with a tendency to hoard have some sort of disability or a limited mental capacity which means that they are either unable to keep on top of cleaning within their property or have a very different view and feel that the property does not need cleaning as they are still able to manoeuvre in some way, however difficult and limited this may be.

Have there been reports of any kind of infestation within the area?

Often people with a tendency to hoard will keep items which most people may consider to be rubbish. Their properties can be unclean and this can draw the attention of vermin such as rats, fleas and cockroaches. This can impact on the whole neighbourhood.

Have utilities been disconnected?

Quite often electrical and gas supplies will have been disconnected at the property.

Are there items spilling over into the garden area?

With severe hoarding, the property will be so over-stocked that the tenant will begin to store items in the garden.

Are access/egress routes obstructed?

This is more relevant for less severe hoarding. Blocked exits are a good indication that hoarding may become a severe issue. Of course, this also depends on gaining access to the property.

Are they living in one room?

Living in one room is often a strong indication of hoarding, or maybe a support issue. To aid with this identification the person will seem to be sleeping and cooking within the one room and, quite often also going to the toilet and storing the waste as there will be nowhere suitable to dispose of it.

Does the property have an infestation of any kind?

Infestations can be rats, fleas, cockroaches or other unpleasant insects.

Use the form in appendix 1 to help identify a person with hoarding tendencies and to begin the process to assist the tenant.

APPENDIX 5 – Initial mental capacity screening form

Record of Mental Capacity Screening				
<p>It should be assumed that every person has the capacity to make decisions, unless they have been tested and found to lack capacity for a particular decision. Initial testing should be recorded on this form whenever there is doubt about a person's ability to make a particular decision, and where a decision is likely to have lasting consequences.</p> <p>If you complete this form and undertake the tests of capacity listed below you are acting as a possible 'decision maker' with regard to the particular decision, on behalf of the named tenant/client.</p> <p>The tests may need to be carried out over more than one occasion and once your initial assessment has been carried out you may wish to make a referral Adult social care or the Mental Health team to support you in this assessment.</p>				
Tenant Name:		Property Ref:		
Completed by:	Job title:	Date:		
Detail the specific decision to be made				
Assessment of capacity		Yes	No	N/A
Is the tenant in comfortable surroundings (i.e. reasonable time of day, at home, calm, quiet, etc.)?				
Can the tenant understand information about the decision to be made?				
Can the tenant retain that information in their mind?				
Can the tenant use or weigh that information as part of the decision making process?				
Can the tenant communicate their decision (e.g. by talking, sign language etc.)?				
Does the tenant have an impairment of the mind or brain (e.g. clinical diagnosis of dementia, learning difficulties, brain				
Referrals and contacts		Yes	No	Date
Referral to Mental Health				
Referral to Local Authority				
Referral to Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service				
Requested Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue to flag on the system as a Teign Housing Property				

APPENDIX 6 – Fire & Rescue Service Referral form Devon (*adapt for your region*)

Referral form for partner agencies to refer to DCFRS

SECTION 1 – DETAILS OF REFERRING AGENCY

Name of person making contact	
Contact telephone number	
Date of request	
Agency Name	
Email	

SECTION 2 – CONTACT DETAILS OF INDIVIDUAL BEING REFERRED

Title		
First Name		
Family name		
Address		
Postcode		
Telephone / mobile		
E-mail		
First language		
If necessary, please include 3 rd person contact, e.g. carer / family.		
Preferred time to contact	AM	PM

Please asterisk (*) your preferred method of contact.

SECTION 3 – ABOUT THE HOUSEHOLD.

	Yes	No
Is this a lone person or single parent household?		
Does anyone smoke inside the property?		
Does anyone have a mobility problem?		
Does anyone suffer from a disability or long term health condition?		
Does anyone light fires inappropriately with matches and lighters?		
Has the occupant had a fire within the last 12 months?		
Are access and exit routes free from obstruction?		
Does the household have working smoke alarms? (one on each level)		
Do you have any other concerns? <i>E.g. scorch or burn marks, cooking practices putting them at risk, threat of arson etc. Please inform us if there is any risk to NFRS employee's e.g. violent behaviour or medical conditions.</i>		

SECTION 4 – PROPERTY TYPE

Type: Detached <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-detached <input type="checkbox"/> Terrace <input type="checkbox"/> Bungalow <input type="checkbox"/> Flat <input type="checkbox"/> Caravan <input type="checkbox"/> Not known <input type="checkbox"/>
Property Ownership: Owner-occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Rented <input type="checkbox"/>
If rented is it: Family occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Shared Accommodation <input type="checkbox"/> Building with common areas (Corridors, staircases, lifts) <input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 5 – CONSENT

Consent for the Fire Service to contact them?	
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Please note we are unable to contact individuals without their consent.

APPENDIX 7 – Action plan form

Name of tenant(s):	
Address:	
Name of NSA/ILA:	
Date of initial assessment:	

Actions agreed		Date agreed	Complete
<i>- Clear access from the front door to the living room -k bags for disposal</i>		<i>01/06/2014</i>	<i>No Yes</i>
Tenant signature	<i>Mr. Bloggs</i>	Property Review Dates	
NSA/ILA signature	<i>Mr. Smith</i>	<i>03/06/14</i>	<i>17/06/14</i>

Actions agreed		Date agreed	Complete
Tenant signature		Property Review Dates	
NSA/ILA signature			

Actions agreed		Date agreed	Complete
Tenant signature		Property Review Dates	
NSA/ILA signature			

Actions agreed		Date agreed	Complete
Tenant signature		Property Review Dates	
NSA/ILA signature			

Actions agreed		Date agreed	Complete
Tenant signature		Property Review Dates	
NSA/ILA signature			

Actions agreed		Date agreed	Complete
Tenant signature		Property Review Dates	
NSA/ILA signature			

Actions agreed		Date agreed	Complete
Tenant signature		Property Review Dates	
NSA/ILA signature			

Actions agreed		Date agreed	Complete
Tenant signature		Property Review Dates	
NSA/ILA signature			

Appendix 8 – Contact List Devon

Organisation	Appropriate Team/Person	Contact Detail	Who we are
Devon & Somerset Fire and Rescue Service	Community Safety Team	Monday to Friday, 9:00 – 17:00 Call Freephone 0800 05 02 999 Text 078 00 00 2476	We provide advice about staying safe in your home and to see if you are eligible for a home safety visit
Adult Social Care	Care Direct	0345 155 1007 or 0845 155 1007	Information and help for older people, adults at risk, and their carers
Children & Young families	Action For Children	Newton Abbot 01 626 354657 Totnes 01 803 847626 Exeter 01392 277205	We help each child have the best start in life
Environmental Health	Environmental Health & Wellbeing	Teignbridge District Council 01 626 361101 Exeter City Council 01 392 277888 Totnes Town Council 01 803 864324	We improve the standards of safety and repair in homes
Pest Control	Environmental Health & Wellbeing	Teignbridge District Council 01 626 361101 Exeter City Council 01 392 277888 Totnes Town Council 01 803 864324	We improve the quality of life and prevent the transmission of diseases by controlling the number of rats, mice and some insect pest
Social Services			We oversee Social Care Services for children and young people
Police	Devon & Cornwall Police	999 Emergency 101 non-emergency	We protect people and uphold the law
Mental Health	Newton Abbot Community Mental Health Team Totnes Community Mental Health Team Exeter Community Mental Health Team	Tel: 01392 388201 Tel: 01803 866225 Tel: 01392 208900	We promote good mental health and wellbeing

