

Private Housing and Public Health Service Standards

(ha) Illegal Eviction

- 1) *We will respond to complaints by:*
 - a) *Contacting the owner of the property and the tenant, normally by telephone, advising on the legal position and discussing possible outcomes [MOP: ideally on same working day, but certainly by the end of the next working day].*
 - b) *We will also liaise with the Housing Needs and Advice Unit to determine rehousing options and availability.*
 - c) *We will give advice and attempt to mediate between landlord and tenant. We will not be responsible for the tenant regaining possession, but will obtain relevant evidence and consider the situation in line with the Environmental Health Enforcement Policy.*

(hb) Harrassment

- 1) *We will respond to complaints by:*
 - a) *Contacting the tenant and landlord by telephone or, if possible, in person. [MOP: same working day if possible, but certainly by the end of the next working day].*
 - b) *Contact will be confirmed in writing. Information will be provided both to the tenant and to the landlord, including any relevant leaflets available.*
 - c) *Rights, duties and expectations will be explained and co-operation sought to resolve matters amicably.*
 - d) *We will take evidence as necessary and consider this in line with the Environmental Health Enforcement Policy.*

(hc) Complaints Concerning Imminent Risk to the Health & Safety of Tenants

- 1) *We will respond to complaints by:*
 - a) *Contacting the complainant by telephone, in person or by letter. [MOP: same working day if possible, but certainly by the end of the next working day (except by letter when within 7 working days)].*
 - b) *Following initial contact, the degree of risk will be ascertained and a visit made to the property as necessary, to bring about corrective action and establish exact details of ownership. [MOP: 7 working days].*
 - c) *In severe cases where re-housing maybe required, the Housing Needs and Advice Unit will be contacted to determine re-housing options and availability.*
 - d) *Evidence will be obtained in line with the Environmental Health Enforcement Policy as appropriate.*

(hd) General Housing Conditions

- 1) *We will respond to such complaints by:*

- a) *Contacting the complainant by letter, personal visit or telephone. [MOP: within 7 working days].*
- b) *Details of the complaint will be confirmed and a suitable visit arranged.*
- c) *Following the visit, we will consider the correct course of action, whether formal or informal, in line with any legal requirements and our Enforcement Policy.*
- d) *The tenant will be kept informed of the action being taken.*
- e) *All relevant conversations with the landlord will be confirmed in writing and the legal situation fully explained. Supporting information will be provided as appropriate, e.g. a Landlords' Information Pack.*
- f) *If formal action has been taken, then the complainant will be contacted again within one month of the information action to ascertain the current situation.*

(he) Drainage Complaints

- 1) *We will respond to complaints of blocked or damaged drains by:*
 - a) *Contacting the complainant by telephone, in person or by letter. [MOP: same working day if possible, but certainly by the end of the next working day (except by letter when within 7 working days)].*
 - b) *Visiting the property as necessary, determining the extent of the blockage/damage and properties affected.*
 - c) *Determining the responsible person(s)/agency.*
 - d) *Contacting the responsible person(s)/agency to advise them of their responsibilities.*
 - e) *Contact will be in person if at all possible or in writing where a large number of residents are involved.*
 - f) *In order to expedite clearance or repair, Notices will normally be served as soon as responsibility is clear. This will be done in accordance with our Enforcement Policy.*
 - g) *When a Notice has been served, we will make arrangements through our Contractors, for the clearance of the blockage or repair where the Notice has not been complied with.*
 - h) *We will recharge our Contractor, Officer and administrative costs to those responsible for the drainage system.*

(hf) Disconnections of Services

- 1) *We will respond to complaints or notifications of disconnections of water gas or electricity by:*
 - a) *Contacting the occupier by letter, telephone or in person. [MOP: within 7 working days].*
 - b) *Determine the situation in relation to type of occupation, i.e. age, disability, number of children.*
 - c) *Advise the occupiers of the appropriate action that they can take.*

d) Consider any action available to Arun District Council, e.g. advice to occupiers, representation to the Utility Company, referral to consumer focus, formal action in line with our Enforcement Policy, etc.

(hg) Illegal Occupation of land by Travellers

1) We will respond to notification/complaints by:

a) Visiting the site. [MOP: same working day if possible, but certainly by the end of the next working day].

b) Determining the land ownership and taking appropriate action, in accordance with "Arun Council's Guiding Principles and Strategy for Managing Unauthorised Camping". This action would include notifying the owner of the land by telephone or in person, confirming such conversation in writing.

c) If the land is owned by Arun District Council, we will visit the site (same working day), carry out a welfare assessment, liaise with Legal Services and organise repossession, and liaise with the relevant Department responsible for the land.

d) If the land is owned by West Sussex County Council, we will notify them and ask them to keep us informed of dates for Court Hearings, etc. so that we can advise any members of the public who contact us.

e) We will also liaise with West Sussex County Council in case joint visits are required to determine social health and educational requirements of travellers.

f) We will liaise with the Police, local Councillors and local residents as appropriate.

(hh) Rubbish/Overgrown Gardens

1) We will respond to such complaints by:

a) Telephoning the complainant and obtaining full details, to assess the nature of the problem, if these are not known. [MOP: within 7 working days].

b) All complaints concerning general overgrown gardens or dumping of materials or items which are NOT putrescible and/or outside the boundary of residential premises will be referred to Environmental Amenities or Planning Services as appropriate.

c) If we believe that there is a Public Health nuisance, then the owner of the land will be contacted by telephone, in person or by letter. [MOP: Within 7 working days].

d) An appropriate Notice will be issued, if necessary, in line with our Enforcement Policy.

(hi) Ship Sanitation Certificates

1) We will respond to requests for Certificates by:

a) Visiting the ship and carrying out an inspection. [MOP: same working day if possible, but certainly by the end of the next working day, depending on length of stay in Littlehampton].

b) Carry out an inspection and issue the Certificate, if appropriate. [MOP: within 1 working day of inspection].

- c) *Send out invoice for recharging appropriate fee.*
- d) *If the Certificate cannot be issued due to defects, then the ships master will be advised of the steps he should take to remedy the situation and the next port to be advised. [MOP: this advice must be confirmed in writing within 7 days to the owning Company. Principal EHO/Chief Environmental Health Officer to carry out random checks - these requests are extremely rare and so can readily be monitored].*

(hj) Inspections of Houses in Multiple Occupation

- 1) *We will inspect all properties which require a license or renewal of a license under the Government's mandatory scheme as part of an annual inspection programme, to ensure properties meet the Council's standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) in relation to amenities, fire safety, repair and management.*
- 2) *We will work with landlords and owners of properties to ensure HMOs meet with the council's standards. Where landlords do not license their property formal action will be instigated in accordance with the enforcement policy.*
- 3) *We will inspect student shared houses in partnership with the University of Chichester to ensure they meet agreed accreditation scheme standards.*

(hl) Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants

- 1) *We will assist in adapting homes of disabled occupiers to meet their needs by:*
 - a) *Following receipt of recommendations from West Sussex County Council Social Services Occupational Therapist, the referral will be prioritised and progressed when resources are available.*
 - b) *Advice applicants of assistance/organsiations that are available for supporting them through the disabled facilities grant process*
 - c) *Once a complete application is received, it will be processed within the statutory time period of 6 months.*
 - d) *Once satisfactory invoices have been received, works inspected and the client is also satisfied with the works, payment will be made within 28days, except where notice of deferred payment has been issued.*
 - e) *We will work closely with other Local Authorities in West Sussex through the Disabled Facilities Grant Research Group in order to develop a consistent approach to adapting homes through the Disabled Facilities Grant process.*

(hm) Discretionary Loans/Grants

- 1) *Discretionary loans/grants are subject to funds being available. The types of financial assistance available are detailed in the Council's Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy and cover:*
 - a) *Renovation Loan*
 - b) *Repair Loan*

- c) *Empty Property Grant*
- d) *Energy Efficiency Grant*
- e) *Landlord Energy Efficiency Grant in Licensed HMO*
- f) *Warmfront Top Up Loan*
- g) *Renewable Loans*

(hn) Energy Conservation

1) *We will promote energy efficiency and renewable energy in residential premises throughout the District by working in partnership with others and in accordance with objectives contained in the Private Sector Housing Strategy, Energy Efficiency Strategy, Fuel Poverty Strategy.*

(ho) Empty Properties

- 1) *We will:*
 - a) *Set up and maintain a database of identified empty properties and investigate background/reasons for voids [MOP: Database]*
 - b) *Establish priorities and an "action list" based upon agreed criteria [MOP: Criteria]*
 - c) *Intiate investigation into complaints reporting properties as "empty" [MOP: Within 7 working days]*
 - d) *Work with owners of empty properties to return them back to use through encouragement, informal and formal action [MOP: subject to available resources we will aim to bring 10 properties back into use]*

(hp) Requests for Immigration Inspections

- 1) *We will respond to requests for inspections by:*
 - a) *Contacting the person requesting the inspection. [MOP: within 2 working days if possible, but certainly within 7 working days].*
 - b) *Explaining the procedure and what documents he/she will be required to produce.*
 - c) *Inspecting the property with the person requesting the inspection by arrangement and advising of our findings.*
 - d) *Producing the necessary documentation and sending it to the relevant High Commission and a copy to the person requesting service, within 7 working days of our inspection.*
 - e) *Sending out invoice for recharging the appropriate fee.*

(hq) Pigeons

- 1) *We will respond to complaints by:*
 - a) *Contacting the complainant and informing them that the policy of the Council is not to treat pigeons and they should therefore contact a private Pest Control Company if they need their premises treating. [MOP: within 2 working days if possible, but certainly within 7 working days].*

b) *If the complainant alleges a statutory nuisance, a visit will be made as necessary, although the complainant will be told that due to the legal problem with proof, it is most likely that no action will be taken and only advice/contact information will be given.*