

Multi Agency Hoarding Toolkit



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1. Introduction

This toolkit is intended to be useful for adult social care, housing and other relevant agencies to work in partnership using an outcome focused, solution based models to work with people who hoard and self neglect. This toolkit has been developed in partnership with County Durham (Safeguarding Adults, Environmental Health, Public Health, Housing Providers, Clinical Commissioning Groups, and Local Commissioning)

Compulsive hoarding is highly complex and requires a collaborative and integrated approach. This toolkit aims to ensure that practitioners are equipped with methods of working with people in a manner that is meaningful, co-ordinated multi agency partnership working. The toolkit aims to facilitate positive and sustainable outcomes for customers, by involving them in the process at all stages. The toolkit provides guidance, advice, assessments and methods of working that can be utilised and adapted by organisations to meet the needs of the individuals that they work with.

The toolkit includes reference to pieces of legislation that may be relevant to working with people who hoard. See Mental Capacity Act and Environmental Health powers

2. Who would use the toolkit?

This toolkit can be used by all staff working in Housing, Adult Social Care, Mental Health Services and the partner agencies who make up Durham Safeguarding Adults Board and wider partnerships.

There is an expectation that everyone engages fully in partnership working to achieve the best outcome for the customer, while meeting the requirements and duties of individual agencies.

3. Aims of the toolkit

The aims of this toolkit are to promote:

- Investigation and sharing of information on the problems related to hoarding from different professional and community perspectives.
- Deal with incidents in an evidence based, structured, systematic, co-ordinated and consistent way.
- Develop 'informal' multi-agency solutions which maximise the use of existing services and resources and which may reduce the need for compulsory solutions.
- Ensure that when formal solutions are required, there is a process for planning solutions tailored to meet the needs of the customer. Possible

solutions include professional support and monitoring, property repairs and permanent and temporary re-housing

- To establish best practice and improve knowledge of legislation that relates to hoarding behaviour.

4. Definition of Hoarding

Hoarding is the excessive collection and retention of any material to the point that it impedes day to day functioning (Frost & Gross, 1993). Pathological or compulsive hoarding is a specific type of behaviour characterised by:

- Acquiring and failing to throw out a large number of items that would appear to hold little or no value and would be considered rubbish by other people.
- Severe 'cluttering' of the person's home so that it is no longer able to function as a viable living space;
- Significant distress or impairment of work or social life (Kelly 2010).

5. 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 hoarding believes buying or saving things will relieve the anxiety and fear they feel. The hoarding effectively becomes their comfort blanket.

Any attempt to discard 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 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, require others to perform to excellence while struggling to organise themselves and complete daily living tasks.
- **Socially isolated:** people who hoard will typically alienate family & 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 the hoarding.
- **Extreme clutter:** hoarding behaviour may prevent several or all the rooms of a person property from being used for its intended purpose. **Churning:** hoarding behaviour can involve moving items from one part a person’s property to another, without ever discarding anything.
- **Self-Care:** a person who hoards may appear unkempt and dishevelled, due to lack of toileting 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 behaviour and the impact it has on them and others.

6. How to Talk to Someone who is Hoarding: Dos and Don'ts

DON'T

- **Use judgmental language.** Like anyone else, individuals with hoarding will not be receptive to negative comments about the state of their home or their character (e.g. "What a mess!" "What kind of person lives like this?") Imagine your own response if someone came into your home and spoke in this manner, especially if you already felt ashamed.
- **Use words that devalue or negatively judge possessions.** People who hoard are often aware that others do not view their possessions and homes as they do. They often react strongly to words that reference their possessions negatively, like "trash", "garbage" and "junk".
- **Let your non-verbal expression say what you're thinking.** Individuals with compulsive hoarding are likely to notice non-verbal messages that convey judgment, like frowns or grimaces.
- **Make suggestions about the person's belongings.** Even well-intentioned suggestions about discarding items are usually not well received by those with hoarding.
- **Try to persuade or argue with the person.** Efforts to persuade individuals to make a change in their home or behaviour often have the opposite effect – the person actually talks themselves into keeping the items.
- **Touch the person's belongings without explicit permission.** Those who hoard often have strong feelings and beliefs about their possessions and often find it upsetting when another person touches their things. Anyone visiting the home of someone with hoarding should only touch the person's belongings if they have the person's explicit permission.

DO

- **Imagine yourself in the hoarding client's shoes.** How would you want others to talk to you to help you manage your anger, frustration, resentment, and embarrassment?
- **Match the person's language.** Listen for the individual's manner of referring to his/her possessions (e.g. "my things", "my collections") and use the same language (i.e. "your things", "your collections").
- **Use encouraging language.** In communicating with people who hoard about the consequences of hoarding, use language that reduces defensiveness and increases motivation to solve the problem (e.g. "I see that you have a pathway from your front door to your living room. That's great that you've kept things out of the way so that you don't slip or fall. I can see that you can walk through here pretty well by turning sideways. The thing is that somebody else that might need to come into your home, like a fire fighter or an emergency

responder, would have a pretty difficult time getting through here. They have equipment they're usually carrying and fire fighters have protective clothes that are bulky. It's important to have a pathway that is wide enough so that they could get through to help you or anyone else who needed it. In fact, the safety law states that [insert wording about exits/ways out must be clear], so this is one important change that has to be made in your home".

- **Highlight strengths.** All people have strengths, positive aspects of themselves, their behaviour, or even their homes. A visitor's ability to notice these strengths helps forge a good relationship and paves the way for resolving the hoarding problem (e.g. "I see that you can easily access your bathroom sink and shower," "What a beautiful painting!", "I can see how much you care about your cat.")
- **Focus the intervention initially on safety and organisation of possessions and later work on discarding.** Discussion of the fate of the person's possessions will be necessary at some point, but it is preferable for this discussion to follow work on safety and organisation.

7. What Is Hoarding Disorder?

Hoarding Disorder used to be considered a form of obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD). However, hoarding is now considered a standalone mental disorder and is included in the 5th edition of the DSM 2013. However, hoarding can also be a symptom of other mental 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 hoarders 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 various areas including the resident's property, garden or communal areas. However, commonly hoarded items include but are not limited to:

- Clothes
- Newspapers, magazines or books
- Bills, receipts or letters
- Food and food containers
- Animals
- Medical equipment
- Collectibles such as toys, video, DVD, or CDs

8. Types of Hoarding

There are three types of hoarding:

- **Inanimate objects**

This is the most common. This could consist of one type of object or a collection of a mixture of objects such as old clothes, newspapers, food, containers or papers.

- **Animal Hoarding**

Animal hoarding is on the increase. This is the obsessive collecting of animals, often with an inability to provide minimal standards of care. The hoarder is unable to recognise that the animals are or may be at risk because they feel they are saving them. In addition to an inability to care for the animals in the home, people who hoard animals are often unable to take care

of themselves. As well, the homes of animal hoarders are often eventually destroyed by the accumulation of animal faeces and infestation by insects.

- **Data Hoarding**

This is a new phenomenon of hoarding. There is little research on this matter and it may not seem as significant and inanimate and animal hoarding, however people that do hoard data could still present with same issues that are symptomatic of hoarding. Data hoarding 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.

9. Mental Capacity

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 provides a statutory framework for people who lack capacity to make decisions for themselves. The act has 5 statutory principles and these are the values which underpin the legal requirements of the act. They are:

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 practical steps have been taken without success.
3. A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision merely because he 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, intervention will be required. With the exception of statutory requirements, any intervention or action proposed must be with the customer's consent. In extreme cases of hoarding behaviour, the very nature of the environment *should* lead professionals to question whether the customer has capacity to consent to the proposed action or intervention and trigger a capacity assessment. This is confirmed by The MCA code of practice which states that one of the reasons why people may question a person's capacity to make a specific decision is "the person's behaviour or circumstances cause doubt as to whether they have capacity to make a decision" (4.35 MCA Code of Practice, P. 52). Arguably, extreme hoarding behaviour meets this criterion and an assessment should take place. Consideration must be given where there is dialogue or situations that suggest a person's capacity to make decision with regard to their place of residence or care provision may be in doubt.

Any capacity assessment carried out in relation to hoarding behaviour must be time specific, and relate to a specific intervention or action. The professional responsible for undertaking the capacity assessment will be the person who is proposing the specific intervention or action, and is referred to as the 'decision-maker'. Although the decision-maker may need to seek support from other professionals in the multi-disciplinary team, they are responsible for making the final decision about a person's capacity.

If the customer lacks capacity to consent to the specific action or intervention, then the decision maker must demonstrate that they have met the requirements of the best-interests „checklist“. Due to the complexity of such cases, there *must* be a best interests meeting, chaired by a team manager to oversee the process.

In particularly challenging and complex cases, it may be necessary for the local authority to refer to the Court of Protection to make the best interests decision. Any referral to the Court of Protection should be discussed with legal services and the relevant service manager.

10. Information Sharing

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

All agencies need to ensure that where we do decide it is appropriate to share information about hoarded properties with local fire brigades, we are doing this on a need to know basis. All information should be transferred in a secure format.

For the purpose of this protocol information will be shared in line with the, 'eight golden rules of information sharing' found on the website www.safeguardingdurhamadults.info

“Information will be shared within and between organisations in line with the principles set out below.

- Adults have a right to independence, choice and self-determination. This right extends to them being able to have control over information about themselves and to determine what information is shared. Even in situations where there is no legal requirement to obtain written consent before sharing information, it is good practice to do so.
- The person's wishes should always be considered, however, protecting adults at risk establishes a general principle that an incident of suspected or actual abuse can be reported more widely and that in so doing, some information may need to be shared among those involved.
- Information given to an individual member of staff belongs to the organisation and not to the individual employee. An individual employee cannot give a personal assurance of confidentiality to an adult at risk.
- An organisation should obtain the adult at risk's consent to share information and should routinely explain what information may be shared with other people or organisations.
- Difficulties in working within the principles of maintaining the confidentiality of an adult should not lead to a failure to take action to protect the adult from abuse or harm.
- Confidentiality must not be confused with secrecy, that is, the need to protect the management interests of an organisation should not override the need to protect the adult.
- Staff reporting concerns at work (whistleblowing") are entitled to protection under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

The decisions about what information is shared and with who will be taken on a case by-case basis. Whether information is shared and with or without the adult at risk's consent, the information shared should be:

- Necessary for the purpose for which it is being shared.
- Shared only with those who have a need for it.
- Be accurate and up to date.
- Be shared in a timely fashion.
- Be shared accurately.
- Be shared securely.

11. Fire Safety

Hoarding poses a significant risk to both the people living in the hoarded property and those living nearby. Where a hoarded property is identified regardless of the risk rating, clients need to be advised of the increased risk and identify a safe exit route. Appropriate professional fire safety advice must to be sought. Share information with appropriate emergency services by alerting them to hoarded properties. This will allow crews to respond appropriately. Once properties are cleared the information must be updated. A fire safety check undertaken by the fire brigade may be appropriate.

12. Environmental Health Powers

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 (EH) 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.

The LA may carry out works in default and charge for these.

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.

13. 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 hoarded 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 reflect this. Therefore, where children live in the property, a Safeguarding Children alert should always be raised. Please refer to the following link for guidance: <http://www.durham-lscb.gov.uk/>

14. Adult at Risk

Safeguarding Adult processes described in the [Durham Safeguarding Adults Policies and Procedures](#) should be utilised.

An “adult at risk” may also be living with the hoarder in the property. There may be a safeguarding concern about that adult if they are at risk of harm due to the living circumstances. If in doubt raise a Safeguarding Adult Alert by contacting 03000 267979.

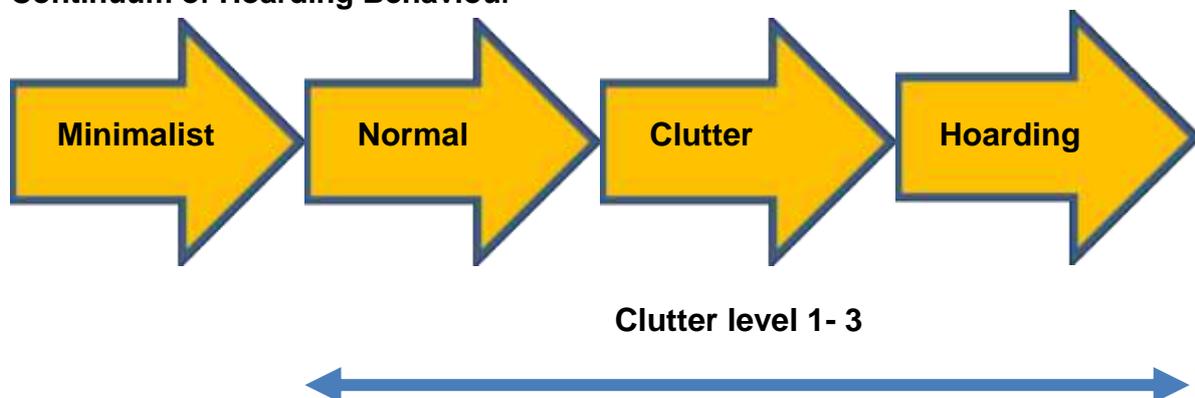
15. Multi-Agency Response

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 customers will receive support from statutory services such as Mental Health.

Any professional working with customers who may have or appear to have a hoarding condition should ensure they complete the Practitioners Assessment and use the clutter image rating tool kit to decide what steps to take.

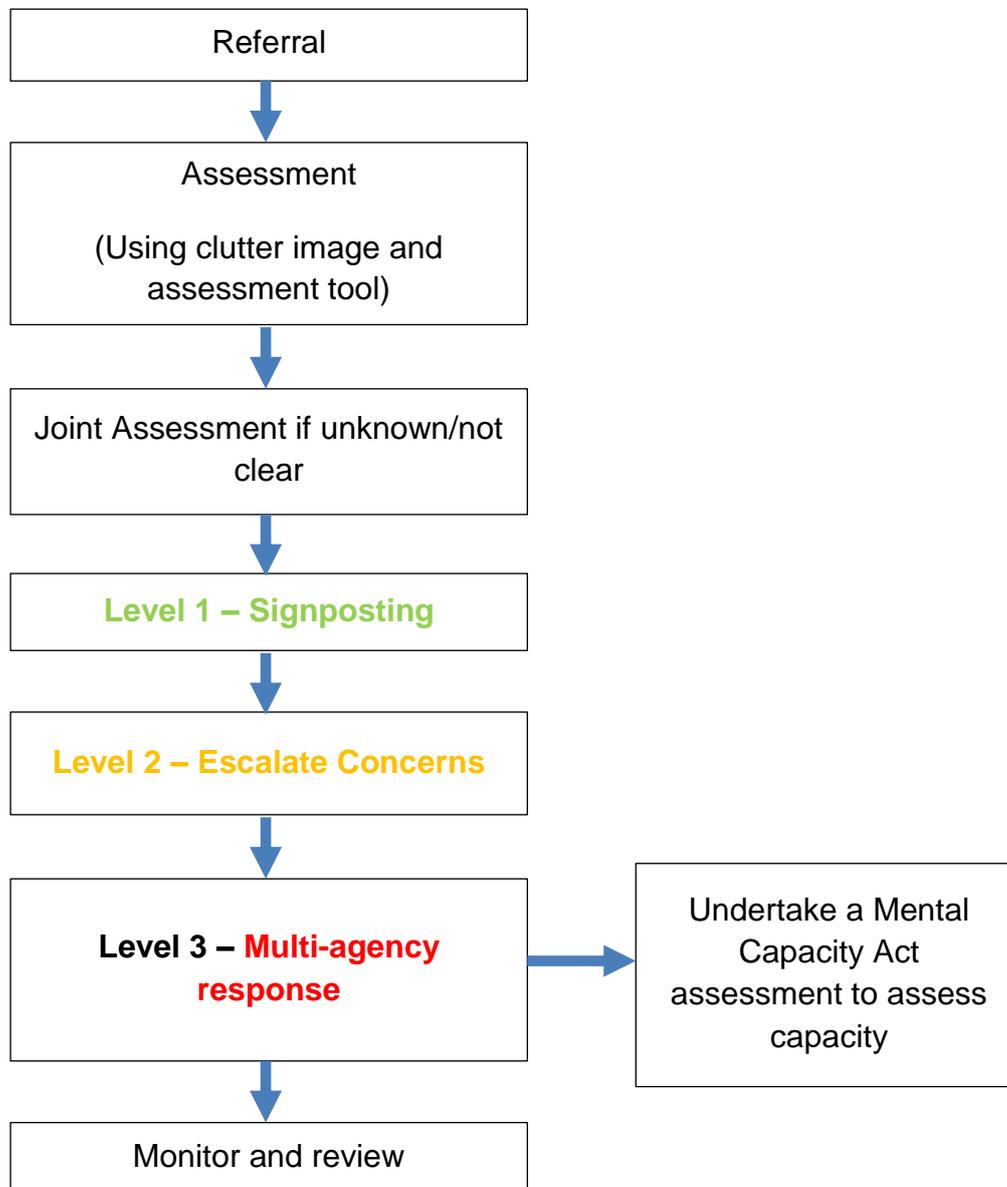
Evidence of animal hoarding at any level should be reported to the RSPCA.

Continuum of Hoarding Behaviour



16. Process for Clutter Image Rating Tool

The flow chart below sets out the process clearly. If in doubt, please ask your supervisor/manager for assistance.



Please use the clutter image rating to assess what level the customer's hoarding problem is at:

Images 1-3 indicate level 1

Images 4-6 indicate level 2

Images 7-9 indicate level 3

Then refer to clutter assessment tool to guide which details the appropriate action you should take. Record all actions undertaken in agency's recording system, detailing conversations with other professionals, actions taken and action yet to be taken.

Clutter Image Rating Scale - Bedroom

Please select the photo that most accurately reflects the amount of clutter in the room



1

2

3



4

5

6



7

8

9

Clutter Image Rating Scale - Lounge

Please select the photo that most accurately reflects the amount of clutter in the room



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9

Clutter Image Rating Scale – Kitchen

Please select the photo that most accurately reflects the amount of clutter in the room



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9

17. Assessment Tool Guidelines

1. Property structure, services & garden area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the access to all entrances and exits for the property. (Note impact on any communal entrances & exits). Include access to roof space. • Does the property have a smoke alarm? • Visual Assessment (non-professional) of the condition of the services (NPVAS) within the property e.g. plumbing, electrics, gas, air conditioning, heating, this will help inform your next course of action. • Are the services connected? • Assess the garden. Size, access and condition.
2. Household Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the current functionality of the rooms and the safety for their proposed use. E.g. can the kitchen be safely used for cooking or does the level of clutter within the room prevent it. • Select the appropriate rating on the clutter scale. • Please estimate the % of floor space covered by clutter • Please estimate the height of the clutter in each room
3. Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the level of sanitation in the property. • Are the floors clean? • Are the work surfaces clean? • Are you aware of any odours in the property? • Is there rotting food? • Does the resident use candles? • Did you witness a higher than expected number of flies? • Are household members struggling with personal care? • Is there random or chaotic writing on the walls on the property? • Are there unreasonable amounts of medication collected? Prescribed or over the counter? • Is the resident aware of any fire risk associated to the clutter in the property?
4. Safeguard of Children & Family members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do any rooms rate 7 or above on the clutter rating scale? • Does the household contain young people or children?
5. Animals and Pests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any pets at the property? • Are the pets well cared for; are you concerned about their health? • Is there evidence of any infestation? E.g. bed bugs, rats, mice, etc. • Are animals being hoarded at the property? • Are outside areas seen by the resident as a wildlife area? • Does the resident leave food out in the garden to feed foxes etc.
6. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following your assessment do you recommend the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at future visits? Please detail • Following your assessment do you recommend the resident is visited in pairs? Please detail

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 age and 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 fire brigade to visit and install. • 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.

Level 1	Actions
Referring Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss concerns with resident • Raise a request to the Fire Brigade to provide fire safety advice • Refer for support assessment if appropriate. • Refer to GP if appropriate
Environmental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Action
Social Landlords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide details on debt advice if appropriate to circumstances • Refer to GP if appropriate • Refer for support assessment if appropriate. • Provide details of support streams open to the resident via charities and self-help groups. • Provide details on debt advice if appropriate to circumstances • Ensure residents are maintaining all tenancy conditions
Practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Hoarding Assessment • Make appropriate referrals for support • Refer to social landlord if the client is their tenant or leaseholder
Emergency Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure information is shared with statutory agencies & feedback is provided to referring agency on completion of home visits.
Animal Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action unless advice requested
Safeguarding Adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action unless other concerns of abuse are noted.
MASH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action unless other concerns of abuse are noted.

Level 2 <i>Clutter Image Rating 4 – 6</i>	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 • Only one of the services is not fully functional • 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 4-5 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 not kept clean • 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. • No rotting food • No concerning use of candles • Resident trying to manage personal care but struggling • No writing on the walls
4. Safeguard of Children & Family members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hoarding on clutter scale 4 -7 doesn't automatically constitute a Safeguarding Alert. • Please note all additional concerns for householders • Properties with children or vulnerable residents with additional support needs may trigger a Safeguarding Alert under a different risk.
5. Animals and Pests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pets at the property are not well cared for • Resident is not unable to control the animals • Animal's living area is not maintained and smells • Animals appear to be under nourished or over fed • Sound of mice heard at the property. • Spider webs in house • Light insect infestation (bed bugs, lice, fleas, cockroaches, ants, etc.)
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. • PPE required.

Level 2	Actions In addition to actions listed below these cases need to be monitored regularly in the future due to RISK OF ESCALATION or RECURRENCE
Referring Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to landlord if resident is a tenant • Refer to Environmental Health if resident is a freeholder • Raise an request to the Fire Brigade to provide fire prevention advice • Provide details of garden services • Refer for support assessment • Referral to GP • Referral to debt advice if appropriate • Refer to Animal welfare if there are animals at the property. • Ensure information sharing with all agencies involved to ensure a collaborative approach and a sustainable resolution.
Environmental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to Environmental Health with details of client, landlord (if relevant) referrer's details and overview of problems • At time of inspection, Environmental Health Officer decides on appropriate course of action • Consider serving notices under Environmental Protection Act 1990, Prevention of Damage By Pests Act 1949 or Housing Act 2004 • Consider Works in Default if notices not complied by occupier
Social Landlord	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit resident to inspect the property & assess support needs • Referral to Floating Support to assist in the restoration of services to the property where appropriate. • Ensure residents are maintaining all tenancy conditions • Enforce tenancy conditions relating to residents responsibilities • Ensure information sharing with all agencies involved to ensure a collaborative approach and a sustainable resolution.
Practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to "Guidance for Hoarding Guidance Questions to Ask" • Complete Practitioners Assessment Tool • Ensure information sharing with all agencies involved to ensure a collaborative approach and a sustainable resolution.
Emergency Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure information sharing with all agencies involved to ensure a collaborative approach and a sustainable resolution. • Provide feedback to referring agency on completion of home visits.
Animal Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit property to undertake a wellbeing check on animals at the property. • Educate client regarding animal welfare if appropriate • Provide advice / assistance with re-homing animals
Safeguarding Adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action unless other concerns of abuse are noted. • If other concerns of abuse are of concern or have been reported, progression to safeguarding referral and investigation may be necessary.
MASH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action unless other concerns of abuse are noted

<p>Level 3</p> <p>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 • Evidence may be seen of extreme clutter seen at windows • Evidence may be seen of extreme clutter 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 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 • Concern for declining mental health • 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 or 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

	<p>from outside.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern with the integrity of the electrics • Inappropriate use of electrical extension cords or evidence of unqualified work to the electrics. • Concern for declining mental health
4. Safeguard of Children & Family members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hoarding on clutter scale 7-9 constitutes a Safeguarding Alert. • 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 may not able to control the animals at the property • Animal's 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

Actions	Level 3
Referring Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a multi-agency meeting • Raise a request to the Fire Brigade within 24 hours to provide fire prevention advice.
Environmental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to Environmental Health with details of client, landlord (if relevant) referrer's details and overview of problems • At time of inspection, EHO decides on appropriate course of action • Consider serving notices under Environmental Protection Act 1990, Prevention of Damage By Pests Act 1949 or Housing Act 2004 • Consider Works in Default if notices not complied by occupier
Landlord	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit resident to inspect the property & assess support needs • Attend multi agency Safeguarding meeting • Enforce tenancy conditions relating to residents responsibilities • If resident refuses to engage serve Notice of Seeking Possession under Ground 13 to Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1988
Practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to "Hoarding Guidance Questions for practitioners" • Complete Practitioners Assessment Tool • Ensure information sharing with all agencies involved to ensure a collaborative approach and a sustainable resolution.
Emergency Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend multi agency meetings on request • Ensure information sharing with all agencies involved to ensure a collaborative approach and a sustainable resolution. • Provide feedback to referring agency on completion of home visits.
Animal Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit property to undertake a wellbeing check on animals at the property. • Remove animals to a safe environment • Educate client regarding animal welfare if appropriate • Take legal action for animal cruelty if appropriate • Provide advice / assistance with re-homing animals
Safeguarding Adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding alert should progress to referral for multi-agency approach and further investigation of any concerns of abuse when identified
Safeguarding Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to children to children's services as within 24 hours

18. Guidance Questions for Practitioners

Listed below are examples of questions to ask where you are concerned about someone's safety in their own home, where you suspect a risk of self-neglect and hoarding?

The information gained from these questions will inform a Hoarding Assessment see appendix and provide the information needed to alert other agencies.

Most clients with a hoarding problem will be embarrassed about their surroundings so adapt the question to suit your customers.

- 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?
- How have you made your home safer to prevent this (above) from happening again?
- How do you move safely around your home (where the floor is uneven or covered, or there are exposed wires, damp, rot, or other hazards)
- Has a fire ever started by accident?
- How do you get hot water, lighting, heating in here? Do these services work properly? Have they ever been tested?
- Do you ever use candles or an open flame to heat and light here or cook with camping gas?
- How do you manage to keep yourself warm? Especially in winter?
- When did you last go out in your garden? Do you feel safe to go out there?
- Are you worried about other people getting in to your garden to try and break-in? Has this ever happened?
- Are you worried about mice, rats or foxes, or other pests? Do you leave food out for them?
- Have you ever seen mice or rats in your home? Have they eaten any of your food? Or got upstairs and be nesting anywhere?
- Can you prepare food, cook and wash up in your kitchen?
- Do you use your fridge? Can I have a look in it? How do you keep things cold in the hot weather?
- How do you keep yourself clean? Can I see your bathroom? Are you able to use your bathroom and use the toilet ok? Have a wash, bath? Shower?
- Can you show me where you sleep and let me see your upstairs rooms? Are the stairs safe to walk up? (if there are any)
- What do you do with your dirty washing?
- Where do you sleep? Are you able to change your bed linen regularly? When did you last change them?
- How do you keep yourself warm at night? Have you got extra coverings to put on your bed if you are cold?
- Are there any broken windows in your home? Any repairs that need to be done?
- Because of the number of possessions you have, do you find it difficult to use some of your rooms? If so which ones?
- Do you struggle with discarding things or to what extent do you have difficulty discarding (or recycling, selling, giving away) ordinary things that other people would get rid of?

19. Guidance for Practitioners

Hoarding Insight characteristics

Use this guide as a baseline to describe the client's attitude towards their hoarding. Provide additional information in your referrals and reports to enable a tailored approach that is relevant to your client.

Good or fair insight:

The client recognises that hoarding-related beliefs and behaviours (relating to difficulty discarding items, clutter or excessive acquisition) are problematic. The client recognises these behaviours in themselves.

Poor insight

The client is mostly convinced that hoarding-related beliefs and behaviours (relating to difficulty discarding items, clutter or excessive acquisition) are not problematic despite evidence to the contrary. The Client might recognise a storage problem but has little self-recognition or acceptance of their own hoarding behaviour.

Absent (delusional) insight

The client is convinced that hoarding-related beliefs and behaviours (relating to difficulty discarding items, clutter or excessive acquisition) are not problematic despite evidence to the contrary. The client is completely excepting of their living environment despite it being hoarded and possibly a risk to health.

Detached with assigned blame

The client has been away from their property for an extended period. The client has formed a detachment from the hoarded property and is now convinced a 3rd party is to blame for the condition of the property. For example a burglary has taken place, squatters or other household members.

20. Practitioner's Hoarding Assessment

This assessment should be completed using the information you have gained using the Practitioner's Guidance Questions. Complete this review away from the client's property and in conjunction with the Multi-Agency Hoarding Protocol Assessment Tool. Text boxes will expand to allow further text

Date of Home Assessment				
Client's Name				
Client's Date of Birth				
Address				
Client's Contact Details				
Type of Dwelling				
Freeholder	Yes/No	Tenant – Name & Address of Landlord		
Household Members		Name	Relationship	DOB
Pets – Indicate what pets and any concerns				
Agencies Currently Involved				
Non-Agency Support Currently in Place				
Client's Attitude Toward Hoarding				

Please Indicate if Present at the Property							
Structural Damage to Property		Insect or Rodent Infestation		Large number of Animals		Clutter Outside	
Rotten Food		Animal Waste in House		Concerns over the Cleanliness of the Property		Visible Human Faeces	
Concerns of Self Neglect		Concerned for the Children at the property		Concerned for Other Adults at the Property			
Using the Clutter Image Scale Please Score Each of the Rooms Below							
Bedroom 1		Bedroom 4		Separate Toilet			
Bedroom 2		Kitchen		Lounge			
Bedroom 3		Bathroom		Dining Room			
Please refer to the Multi Agency Hoarding Protocol. Provide a Description of the Hoarding Problem: (presence of human or animal waste, rodents or insects, rotting food, are utilities operational, structural damage, problems with blocked exits, are there combustibles, is there a fire risk? etc.)							
Please refer to the Multi Agency Hoarding Protocol Tool, based on the information provided above, what level is your case graded?							
Level 1 - Green		Level 2 - Orange			Level 3 - Red		
Name of the practitioner undertaking assessment							
Name of Organisation							
Contact Details							
Next Action to be Taken							
List Agencies Referred to with Dates & Contact Names							

**APPENDIX 1.
FOR USE FOR LEVEL 3**

<p style="text-align: center;">HOARDING</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Multi-Agency Meeting</p>

<p>Name</p> <p>Held at</p>

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

2. THE PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION INCLUDING ISSUES / CONCERNS

4. GENERAL DISCUSSION; WHAT HAS BEEN DONE ALREADY AND BY WHO -
Clutter Image and scale tool to be used and discussed

5. ACTION PLAN

6. AOB

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING IF REQUIRED

APPENDIX 2

Hoarding Support Options – See your own procedures in conjunction with these suggestions

Type of Action	Potential Actions	Provider, Service or Support Service Provider	Possible circumstances of use
Specialist Support	Referral to specialist support where appropriate. This may be in conjunction with GP. Counselling may continue after the clearance to prevent reoccurrence.	Specialist Support	Where bereavement/loss/family breakdown may have triggered hoarding. Support may include cognitive behaviour therapy, or signposting to self-help groups.
Clean and Clearance	Where possible undertaken in partnership with the individual as part of support work, possibly including a timed action plan. However, external cleaning and clearance can be commissioned by Environmental Health etc. Recharges for this work may apply depending on the tenure and individual policies.	Specialist clearance service	Commissioned clearance measures tend to be undertaken where there is a time limit, specific reason for external assistance, or Hoarder is unable to carry out themselves. Specialist clearance or treatment companies may be required where there is infestation, substance abuse etc.
Safeguarding referral	Cases may be alerted to Social Care Direct 0845 8505010 As per procedures detailed at www.safeguardingdurhamadulst.info And for children at http://www.durham-lscb.gov.uk/	Safeguarding Adults Board	Where there is a case of suspected or actual neglect or abuse – ‘adults at risk’ or children. If a safeguarding issue for an over 18 is identified
External storage	Garages may be available, where items other than vehicles are permissible. Otherwise external storage provision may be sought.	External storage companies	Temporary storage solution where clearance is underway, but items are required to be removed quickly to facilitate works e.g. major works programme. (Note – items of value would be stored at resident’s risk). Storage costs would usually need to be met by individuals.

Type of Action	Potential Actions	Provider, Service or Support Service Provider	Possible circumstances of use
Financial Advice or Welfare Benefits Assessment	Referral to type of Advisor will depend on person's circumstances (e.g. Welfare Benefits Advisor, CAB, independent financial advisor)	CAB	Where circumstances include a breakdown in financial area (loss of job/loss of main breadwinner/benefit paperwork lost/not accessed/applied for). Tell-tale signs include lots of unpaid bills, fuel poverty, disconnected utilities etc. CAB as source of general advice.
Aids and adaptations – Occupational Therapy (OT) assessment	Referral to Occupational Therapy for assessment		Where hoarding may be triggered/exacerbated by a mobility or physical impairment.
Relocation	Referral for re-housing assessment Direct let/management move	Housing provider	Where current accommodation is excessive for needs and alternative accommodation would be more suitable (welfare reform bedroom tax)

Hoarding/Condition of Property Referral Form (To be used in conjunction with the assessment tool)

Date of Visit:		Time of Visit:				
Referral Officer:	Name and Job Title	Directorate or Partner:	Directorate / livin or Partner i.e. Mears			
Circumstances leading to hoarding alert:	Include original source of referral – from guidance list i.e. neighbours, GP, routine inspection, gas service, pest control visit					
Property Information						
Address:	Full address details					
Property Type:	House, bungalow, flat etc.	Delete as appropriate	No. Bedrooms			
		Detached / Semi-detached / Terraced				
Property Access:	Has access been granted to the property? Any restrictions?					
Hoarding Details						
Type of Items: (please highlight or insert tick ✓)	Food Items	<input type="checkbox"/>	Newspapers/Magazines	<input type="checkbox"/>	Books	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Animals	<input type="checkbox"/>	Building Materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	Excrement	<input type="checkbox"/>
	CDs/Videos	<input type="checkbox"/>	Electrical Items	<input type="checkbox"/>	Furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Packaging	<input type="checkbox"/>	Boxes/Bags	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Letters/bills	<input type="checkbox"/>	General Rubbish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please State)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Where:					
Personal Information						
Tenant Name(s):						
Age(s):		Gender:	Male / Female			
Safeguarding:	Yes / No	Referral Date:				
Disability or Vulnerability or warning alerts:	<p>Details if already known – for internal use, but sensitive data can only be shared on a need to know basis.</p> <p>Anything important pertaining to vulnerability, language or communication issue, or care need.</p> <p>Presence of any warning alerts held against the individual, i.e. threatening or abusive behaviour. Can include any specific recommendation i.e. do not visit alone.</p>					

Safety Advice:	Any initial safety advice e.g. risk of items collapsing/fire damage	
Details of identified Risk:	i.e. may involve vermin, flammable materials, disconnected facilities etc. – specify issues by room where known	
Other supporting circumstances:	Urgent timeframes e.g. expiring legal notices/imminent eviction/damage to neighbouring property/returning home after hospitalisation etc.	
Photographs Taken:	Yes / No	Attached: <input type="checkbox"/>
Supply details to the best of your knowledge (please delete as appropriate)		
Any imminent fire risks? (Consider: Flammable materials, working smoke alarms, evidence of previous fire/smoke damage anywhere?)	Yes / No / Not Known	
Referral to Health and Safety Team?	Yes / No	
Are hoarding items limiting free movement including entry/exit?	Yes / No / Not Known	
Is the room(s) accessible?	Yes / No / Not Known	
Is functionality of the kitchen/bathroom limited?	Yes / No / Not Known	
Is hoarding spilling over into garden?	Yes / No / Not Known	
Is hoarding spilling over into communal areas?	Yes / No / Not Known	
Are items stacked in such a way to cause risk?	Yes / No / Not Known	
Are all utilities/heating connected?	Yes / No / Not Known	
Any apparent urgent repair issues to address? (drainage, leaks, electrical etc.)	Yes / No / Not Known	
Has the gas safety check been completed?	Yes / No	Date:
Has electric periodic inspection been completed?	Yes / No	Date:
Have repairs been reported recently? (lack of repair history can be a hoarder indicate)	Less than 12 months/More than 12 months/Never	
Have there been complaints from neighbours?	Yes / No / Not Known	
Could neighbouring properties be affected in any way?	Yes / No / Not Known	
Are there pest control issues?	Yes / No / Not Known	

Signature:		Date	
Tenure Type:	Starter Tenancy, Fixed Term Probationary etc.		
Communities Manager:			
Communities Co-ordinator:			
Orchard Updated:	UDC Code		Date:
Rent Account Balance:	Clear, regular payments or rent arrears £		
Repairs History:			
SIT Case:	Open SIT Case yes/no provide details		
Any ongoing legal action:	Notice or Court Action		
No Access			
Visual assessment of property completed after first letter:	Date of visit and summary details of visual external appearance of property i.e. condition of garden, curtains/blinds open or closed, front/back doors' letter boxes block any notice up from tenant, general opinion.		
Visual assessment of property completed after second letter:	Date of visit and summary details of visual external appearance of property i.e. condition of garden, curtains/blinds open or closed, front/back doors' letter boxes block any notice up from tenant, general opinion. Any signs of improvement, deterioration or the same since last visit.		
Visual assessment of property completed after third letter:	Date of visit and summary details of visual external appearance of property i.e. condition of garden, curtains/blinds open or closed, front/back doors' letter boxes block any notice up from tenant, general opinion. Any signs of improvement, deterioration or the same since last visit.		

Name:	Date:
Address:	

Other than this occasion – have there been other incidents of hoarding? If yes, give details:	5 3 1	Yes – frequently (more than 2) Yes – occasionally (more than 1) No
Do you think that these incidents are happening more often and/or are getting worse?	2 1 0	Yes Not known No
Have you or any other agency been allowed access to the property? If yes, give details.	3 0	No/Not known Yes
Do you or any other agency have a reasonable relationship with the tenant?	2 1 0	Do not know the tenant Know the tenant Know each other well
As far as you are aware does the tenant(s) have a history of any of the following vulnerabilities: Provide details:	3 3 2 2 0	Tenant(s) are known or suspected to have poor mental health Tenant(s) are known or suspected to have mobility problems Tenant(s) are known or suspected to have other health problems Tenant(s) are known or suspected to be victims of ASB Tenant(s) have no known physical or mental health problems
Are any of the following due or already out of date: Gas Safety check: Yes/No Date last completed: Electric Safety check: Yes/No Date last completed: Tenancy Visit: Yes/No Date last completed:	3 3 2	Gas safety certificate Electrical safety check Tenancy visit
Have you or any other agency identified any imminent fire risks? Provide details:	5 5 5 2 1 0	Tenant(s) using gas bottles or other non-standard heating/lighting appliances Electrical cables or other wires beneath accumulations of rubbish A high fire load caused by accumulations of combustible material Moderate accumulations of materials Low identified fire risk No risk
Home Fire Risk Assessment completed: Date completed:	3 0	No Yes
Is the tenant known to be currently engaged with family, friends or any support service? Provide details:	3 1 1 1	No Yes – family Yes – friends Yes – Support Worker
Is the accumulation of hoarding materials limiting movement around the property or access to and from the property? Provide details:	5 2 0	Yes – severely Yes – moderately No
Is the tenant prepared to improve the condition of the property? Provide details:	2 1 0	No Do not know Yes

Are any rooms in the property inaccessible or incapable of use for their intended purpose: Provide details:	5 4 3 0	Extremely affected Affected a lot Moderately affected Not at all
Are items stacked in such a way to cause risk? If yes, give details:	3 1 0	Yes – severely Yes – moderately No
Are hoarded materials stored by gardens or communal areas (i.e. flats)? If yes, give details:	3 1 0	Communal areas Gardens No
Are any utilities disconnected?	3 3 1	Yes – Gas supply Yes – Electricity supply No
Are there any urgent repair issues? If yes, give details:	3 3 3 2 0	Yes – water leak Yes – drainage problems Yes – other disrepair Not known No
Are neighbouring properties affected in any way? If yes, give details:	3 1 0	Yes Do not know Yes
Safeguarding issue?	3 0	Yes No
Are there pest control issues?	3 3 2 0	Yes – rat infestation Yes – fly infestation Yes – flea infestation No
Total Score		P1 P2 P3

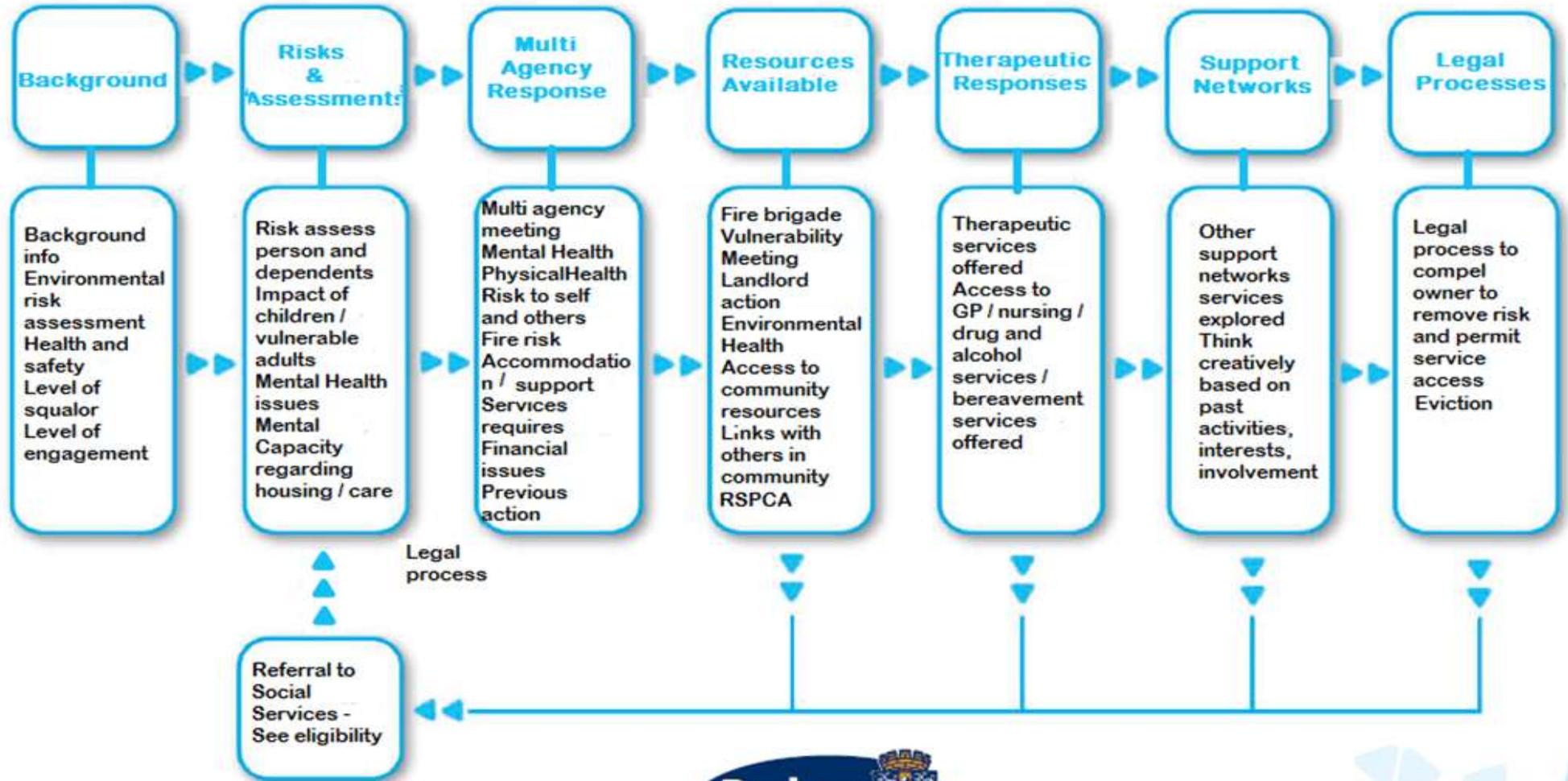
Priority 1	P1: Score between 32 – 100 Note: If P1 identified, distribute copy of referral form and risk assessment to: Executive Director of People and Communities, Head of Communities, Head of Property Services, Health and Safety Team, SIT
Priority 2	P2: Score between 24 – 31
Priority 3	P3: Score between 0 – 23

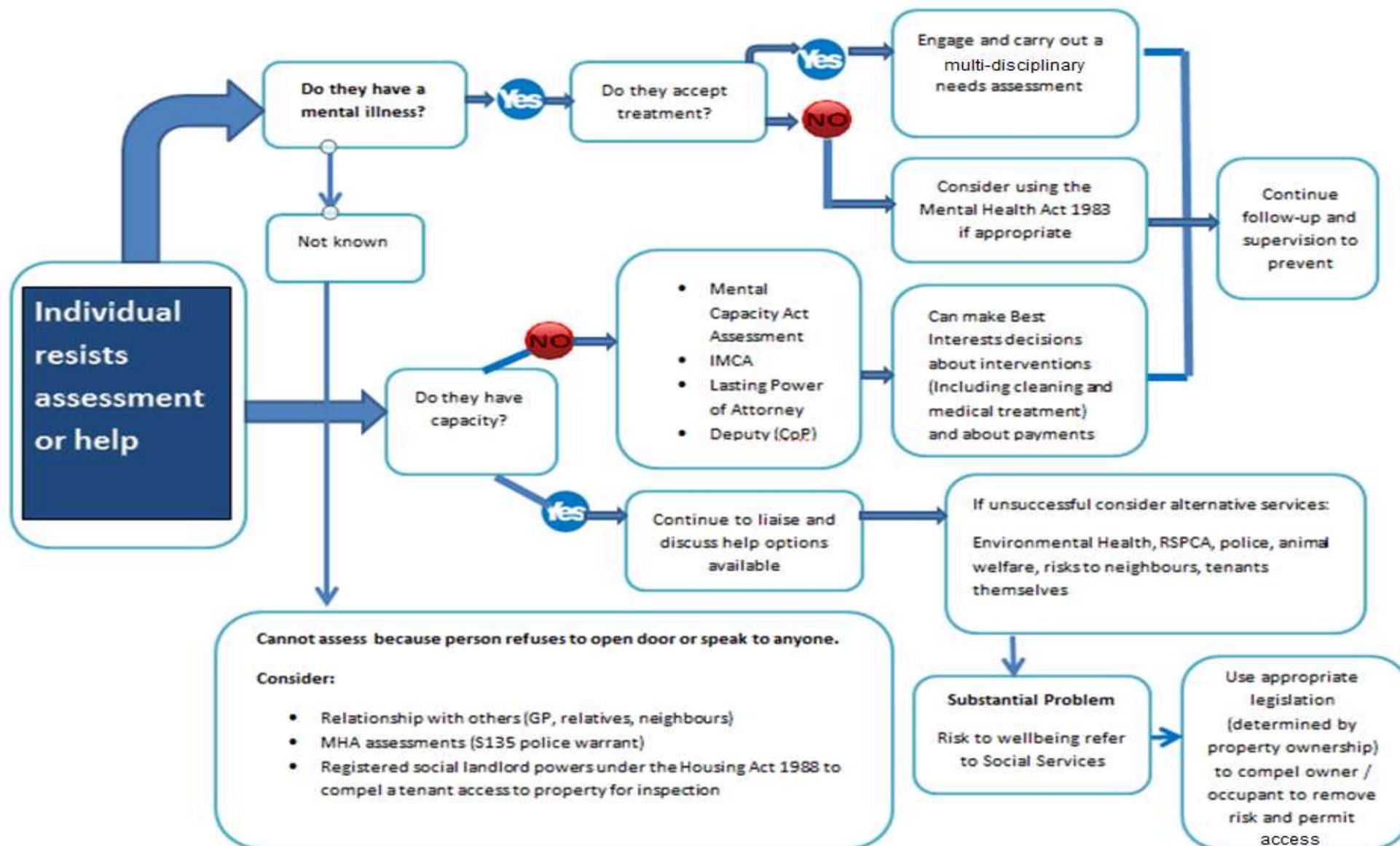
Completed by:

Signature:

Date:

Hoarding - Journey of Support





Case Example

Dee is a 69 year old divorced woman who lives alone in her house. She describes her current hoarding behavior as “difficulty throwing things away”. Dee’s difficulties with organization and discarding of her possessions had resulted in a clutter-filled environment in her home. As a result, her main disability had been complete social isolation due to embarrassment about others seeing her home in this state. She had desired to seek treatment but had not taken that step.

Dee’s problems with hoarding began in childhood. She admitted to hiding things under her bed so her mother would not discard them. She also recalled being a fearful and anxious child. Dee’s symptoms of hoarding had waxed and waned since childhood. Dee’s problems with severe hoarding began to worsen since moving into her new home 16 years ago, and continued to worsen in the last 10 years. Her family history was significant for hoarding behaviors in her mother and maternal grandmother. Dee also described having mild symptoms of depression. She admitted to “crying spells” and “painful emotions” when thinking about being a failure due to wasted time and inability to control her hoarding problem. Her OCD mainly revolved around compulsive hoarding behaviors, as she denied other symptoms of OCD.

Dee’s house consisted of three bedrooms, a bathroom, living room, dining room and a lean too. The volume of cluttered possessions took up approximately 80-90% of the living space. The clutter reached as high as four feet in some areas. No rooms in the house could be used for their intended purpose, especially the kitchen, which was completely unusable secondary to the accumulated clutter. Getting around the house was only partially possible by using trails, as tables, chairs, couches, and floors were almost completely covered with items. In addition, Dee’s car, garage, and garden were almost completely filled with clutter. Rubbish has started accumulating and flies are starting to become hazardous to Dee’s health. There have been rats spotted in the garden.

Dee’s hoarded possessions included newspapers, magazines, bills, videos, pictures, clothing items, and musical instruments, books, and notes. Dee’s main hoarding revolved around musical items accumulated from work and numerous volunteer organizations dating back 15 years. She had not allowed people to visit her home in many years, causing her to lose touch with many friends and relatives. Dee spent a lot of time in her garden as it became difficult to use the house; however, she is now finding the cold weather difficult to manage. Dee was admitted to hospital on four occasions last winter after, falls, pneumonia and chest infections.

Flipchart

Where do you think that Dee might fit on the clutter rating scale?

Which services need to be involved in the multi agency response?

What might be done to support this lady and in what order?

Case Example

John is a thirty five year old man who has attended his GP surgery over the years. The police have been called to the property on three occasions due to local youths taunting John. John appears unkempt, unshaven and his clothes seem dirty. John was known to Mental Health Services 7 years ago but did not engage well, he has also been known to substance misuse services in the past with sporadic engagement.

After falling within his property John was admitted to hospital and ambulance services report to you that the house is filthy, John is hoarding and he is self neglecting.

You look around the property and find that the front door is blocked with junk mail, however, there is access to the back door and all other rooms. The house is dirty and there are piles of things but easy access is still available. The kitchen is very dirty but useable. John tells you that he does not want people interfering in his life and he wants to be left alone. John has no family to offer him support.

What are you going to do?

Durham City Homes	0191 301 8470 / 0800 068 0013	http://www.durham.gov.uk/pages/Service.aspx?ServiceId=7924
Livin	0800 587 4538	http://www.livin.co.uk/
East Durham Homes -	0800 032 0835	http://www.eastdurhamhomes.co.uk/Pages/default.aspx
Dale and Valley	0800 083 0333	http://www.daleandvalleyhomes.co.uk/
Teesdale Housing	03000 11 00 11	http://www.teesdaleha.co.uk/
Environmental Health	(no general number)	http://www.durham.gov.uk/pages/Service.aspx?ServiceId=8588
Housing Solutions	03000 260801	http://www.durham.gov.uk/pages/Service.aspx?ServiceId=112
Fire Brigade	0845 305 8383	https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/
Police	101	https://www.durham.police.uk/Pages/default.aspx
Safeguarding Adults	03000 268 198	http://www.safeguardingdurhamadults.info/Pages/contactus.aspx

County Durham Safeguarding and Practice Development Team would like to thank the representatives of the Safeguarding Adults Board and wider partnerships for their commitment to partnership working in finding sustainable solutions for customers whose lives are affected by hoarding. We are grateful to the London Borough of Merton for enabling us to utilise some of the tools in this toolkit.