

# High Risk Homes Policy

## 1. Summary

- 1.1. This policy is in place to ensure that all Shal staff are aware of any property within our stock which needs intensive housing management. This could be for variety of reasons which are specified within this policy.

## 2. Objectives

- 2.1. To ensure all Shal staff know which homes are currently undergoing intensive housing management
- 2.2. To ensure tenants feel supported in their homes to achieve their best and the tenancy agreement is not being breached
- 2.3. To ensure staff work with tenants in a trauma informed way, to understand any causes of their current situation and to work with them to improve this

## 3. Details

- 3.1. Shal homes are visited by a range of staff members for multiple reasons, including both the Housing and Maintenance Teams. If a Shal home is visited by a member of the Maintenance Team and found to be in a poor condition, or if there is evidence within the home of a breach of the tenancy agreement or the family situation raises a concern; this information should be referred to the Housing Team as soon as possible.
- 3.2. If the home is visited by the Housing Officer and found to be in a poor condition, or if there is evidence within the home of a breach of the tenancy agreement or the family situation raises a concern; this information will be referred to the Housing Manager.
- 3.3. The Housing Officer and Housing Manager will arrange a visit to the property within a maximum timeframe of 5 days.

3.4. Following this visit, if the home is found to be in a poor condition or where a potential safeguarding concern is identified, the Housing Officer and Housing Manager will band the home either Red, Amber or Green.

3.5. Red

3.5.1. A home will be banded 'red' if more than one of the following is identified and is deemed excessive, or where one of the following is identified and is assessed as significant:

- a Property damage i.e. holes in a wall, missing doors, broken windows, damage to the fixtures and fittings
- b Poor cleanliness in the home i.e. daily housekeeping concerns, soiled/stained bedlinen or clothing
- c Damp and mould
- d Hoarding
- e Excessive rubbish inside the home and garden(s)
- f Overgrown garden(s)
- g Excessive pets or pet condition concerns i.e. malnourished pets, matted fur
- h Children or adults presenting unkempt/ untidy
- i Children not in school
- j Rent arrears
- k Anti-social behaviour
- l Domestic violence

3.5.2. If a home is banded 'Red', the Housing Officer and Housing Manager will discuss the areas of concern identified. An action plan should be agreed with the tenant(s).

3.6. Safeguarding

3.6.1. If there are children living in the home, it may be necessary to refer to Children's Services. The Housing Officer or Housing Manager will discuss this with the tenant(s) and will complete an Early Help Assessment

(EHA). The EHA document is available via Professional Choices (<https://professionalchoices.org.uk/>) and the guidance notes should always be referred to.

- 3.6.2. If it is not possible to gain consent from the tenant(s), or if the tenant(s) is not engaging with Shal and we have been unable to gain access to the home, the Housing Manager or CEO (Shal's Safeguarding Leads) should contact the Early Help Consultation Line to discuss the referral.
- 3.6.3. Depending on the areas of concern (listed above), this referral may then be escalated to Level 4 in conversation with the Early Help Consultation Line. A referral at Level 4 should only be considered when you are concerned that a child may be suffering or at risk of significant harm. A statutory assessment of the family is required at Level 4 and will be completed by Children's Social Care.
- 3.6.4. It may also be necessary to refer to other support providers such as Adult Social Care, The Mental Health Team, Somerset Drug & Alcohol Service (SDAS), Somerset Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (SIDAS) or The Nelson Trust. If the home is within a One Team area, this should also be referred to.
- 3.6.5. Shal can offer additional support to the tenant(s), which may include:
  - a Help to clean the home and remove rubbish
  - b Help with gardening and removal of rubbish
  - c Decorating vouchers
- 3.6.6. Any support package should be agreed with the Housing Manager and be included within the action plan to address the areas of concern.
- 3.6.7. All homes banded as 'Red' must be regularly visited by the Housing Officer or Housing Manager, with an action plan updated at each visit to agree the next steps to be taken.
- 3.6.8. Trauma informed approaches

a We understand that trauma is common, and most people will have some form of trauma in their lives. We do not need to question tenant(s) about their experiences, instead we will ask what's happened, and we'll explain why we may be asking sensitive questions.

- 3.6.9. We will always work to consider the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's) on a tenant's current circumstances and help to ensure any support needs identified are met.
- 3.6.10. Once the Housing Officer and Housing Manager have visited the home, and the tenant(s) are engaging, further information may be given around the tenant's circumstances. This may lead to additional actions or support being provided, either by Shal or another support agency.
- 3.6.11. It may be necessary to issue a Notice of Seeking Possession and to remove the home from Shal's planned investment programme i.e. kitchen and bathroom replacement, until the home has been brought up to an appropriate standard, or the tenant can demonstrate the steps they are taking to remedy any breaches of the tenancy agreement.
- 3.6.12. If another member of staff visits the home and disagrees with the red or amber banding, they should speak with both the Housing Officer and Housing Manager as soon as possible. This open and honest conversation will identify any other information which should be considered and will help to ensure that all Shal staff are aware of the reason for the banding and the steps being taken to address the areas of concern.

### 3.7. Amber

- 3.7.1. A property will be banded 'Amber' when one of the areas listed above apply.
- 3.7.2. If a home is banded 'Amber' the Housing Officer and Housing Manager will discuss the areas of concern with the tenant(s) and agree the steps

they need to take in order to resolve the issue. They will speak with the tenant(s) about any support they may require to achieve this.

3.7.3. Support can be offered to the tenant(s) which may include:

- a Help to clean the home and remove rubbish
- b Help with gardening and removal of rubbish
- c Decorating vouchers

3.7.4. Any support package should be agreed with the Housing Manager and be closely monitored by the Housing Officer.

3.7.5. It may be necessary to refer to other support providers (see above)

3.8. Green

3.8.1. A home will be banded 'Green' when there are no obvious signs of property neglect and the home & tenancy are being managed well. Any home banded 'Green' will be visited in line with Shal's usual visit schedule, or whenever necessary.

#### 4. Outcomes

- 4.1. Shal staff will know which homes are banded 'Red' and are subject to intensive housing management
- 4.2. Tenants will feel supported in their homes to achieve their best and any breaches of the tenancy agreement will be remedied
- 4.3. Shal will continue to work in a trauma informed way, tenants will continue to receive support from us and other support providers

#### 5. Consultation

- 5.1. A draft copy of this policy will be available on our website to allow members of the public an opportunity to comment on its contents prior to being submitted for approval by Shal's Board
- 5.2. All tenants will be contacted by text to let them know of its availability online and also a draft copy will be made available on request
- 5.3. We will consult with Tenants Together and ask for any suggested amendments or recommendations prior to this policy being approved by Shal's Board

## 6. Equality and Diversity

- 6.1. SHAL celebrates diversity and recognises the needs of a diverse population. This policy will be applied in a way which complies with our own Equality and Diversity Policy, which states that we will not discriminate on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief and gender.
- 6.2. The policy will also comply with the Human Rights Act 1998, and Equalities Act 2010.
- 6.3. SHAL works closely with its partners and other agencies to ensure it has a clear understanding of its resident community with clear regularly updated service user profiles.

## 7. Value for Money

- 7.1. SHAL is committed to delivering excellent services which offer value for money. This policy will achieve value for money by ensuring tenants are offered tenancies appropriate to their needs and which will help SHAL make best use of its homes.

**8. Owner**

8.1. Housing Manager

**9. Version and Revisions**

9.1. This policy will be reviewed every 3 year(s).

9.2. Revisions

New version	Date	Revision details