

NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting:	HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
Date and Time:	WEDNESDAY, 22 JANUARY 2025 AT 6.00 PM
Place:	COUNCIL CHAMBER - APPLETREE COURT, BEAULIEU ROAD, LYNDHURST, SO43 7PA
Enquiries to:	Email: karen.wardle@nfdc.gov.uk Karen Wardle Tel: 023 8028 5071

PUBLIC INFORMATION:

This agenda can be viewed online (<https://democracy.newforest.gov.uk>). It can also be made available on audio tape, in Braille and large print.

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting. The seating capacity of our Council Chamber public gallery is limited under fire regulations to 22.

Members of the public can watch this meeting live, or the subsequent recording, on the [Council's website](#). Live-streaming and recording of meetings is not a statutory requirement and whilst every endeavour will be made to broadcast our meetings, this cannot be guaranteed. Recordings remain available to view for a minimum of 12 months.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Members of the public may speak in accordance with the Council's [public participation scheme](#):

- (a) on items within the Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel's terms of reference which are not on the public agenda; and/or
- (b) on individual items on the public agenda, when the Chairman calls that item. Speeches may not exceed three minutes.

Anyone wishing to attend the meeting, or speak in accordance with the Council's public participation scheme, should contact the name and number shown above no later than 12.00 noon on Friday, 17 January 2025.

Kate Ryan
Chief Executive

Appletree Court, Lyndhurst, Hampshire. SO43 7PA
www.newforest.gov.uk

AGENDA

Apologies

1. MINUTES

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2024 as a correct record.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To note any declarations of interest made by members in connection with an agenda item. The nature of the interest must also be specified.

Members are asked to discuss any possible interests with Democratic Services prior to the meeting.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To receive any public participation in accordance with the Council's public participation scheme.

4. CORPORATE PLAN: KEY PERFORMANCE DATA FOR QUARTER 1 AND 2 (Pages 5 - 18)

To review the key performance data for Quarter 1 and 2 against the Key Performance Indicators and associated targets for the Corporate Plan.

5. COMMUNITY GRANTS 2025/26 (To Follow)

To consider the recommendations for Community Grant allocation for 2025/26 from the Task and Finish Group.

6. DRAFT AIR QUALITY STRATEGY (Pages 19 - 72)

To consider the draft Air Quality Strategy.

7. HOUSING LANDLORD ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB) STRATEGY AND POLICIES (Pages 73 - 186)

To consider the proposed draft Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy for public consultation and associated policies.

8. CONDENSATION, DAMP AND MOULD POLICY FOR HOUSING (LANDLORD SERVICES) (Pages 187 - 236)

To consider the proposed Condensation, Damp and Mould Policy for Housing (Landlord Services).

9. SOCIAL HOUSING REGULATION ACT (2023) PROGRESS REPORT (Pages 237 - 254)

To receive a progress report on the work related to the Social Housing Regulation Act.

10. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET AND THE HOUSING PUBLIC SECTOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PROGRAMME FOR 2025/26 (To Follow)

To consider the HRA budget and the housing public sector capital expenditure programme for 2025/26.

11. PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S UPDATE

An opportunity for the Portfolio Holder's to provide an update to the Panel on developments within their portfolio.

12. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 255 - 258)

To agree the work programme to guide the Panel's activities over the coming months.

13. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

To: **Councillors**

Steve Clarke (Chairman)
Ian Murray (Vice-Chairman)
Hilary Brand
Kate Crisell
Sean Cullen

Substitutes

Allan Glass
Colm McCarthy
Adam Parker

Councillors

Patrick Mballa
Neville Penman
Janet Richards
Neil Tungate

Substitutes

Barry Rickman
Alex Wade

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Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 22 January 2025

Corporate Plan: Key Performance Data for Quarter 1 and 2

Purpose	For Review
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	Following a recent review by the Executive Management Team (EMT) of targets for the Corporate Plan Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), we now present available data in the form of a dashboard report. This report covers Q1 and Q2 data of 2024-25.
Recommendation(s)	That the Panel consider and review the Q1 and Q2 dashboards.
Reasons for recommendation(s)	These Key Performance Indicators are integral to our Corporate Plan 2024-2028. Reporting and accountability for the commitments set out in the plan are described in our Performance Management Framework (approved at Cabinet on the 7 th August 2024). As part of this accountability, Q1 and Q2 data, where available is now presented back in the form of our dashboards.
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Jill Cleary, Leader
Strategic Director(s)	Alan Bethune, Strategic Director Corporate Resources S151 and Transformation
Officer Contact	Saqib Yasin Performance and Insight Manager 023 8028 5495 saqib.yasin@nfdc.gov.uk

Introduction and background

1. Following the approval of a suite of performance documents, at Cabinet last year, EMT were asked to consider the list of Key Performance Indicators and associated targets. This work was concluded at EMT on the 10th October 2024. At that meeting, it was agreed that the quarterly dashboards of approved measures and targets be fed into the reporting cycle which includes all panels.
2. We are now able to present KPI data (where available for reporting), for quarters 1 and 2, 2024-2025. This report represents our first performance report of our new Corporate Plan and in line with our new Performance Management Framework.

The following should be read in conjunction with the Q1 and Q2 dashboard referenced in the appendix.

Layout of the dashboard.

3. There are 48 KPIs in total presented in the dashboard. Each is organised by Corporate Plan theme and then priority. The Portfolio Holder, associated panel and data owner for each KPI is given. Data metadata is shown as follows:
 - Desired direction of travel – indicates whether good performance is typified by an increasing or decreasing value
 - Return format – shows the unit of the value being reported
 - Frequency – shows how often the KPI is to be reported.
 - Target – shows the desired value
 - This period – shows the value for the given reporting period
 - RAG status are as per our Performance Management Framework
 - Green, on target or above target
 - Amber, up to 10% below target
 - Red, over 10% below target

Quarter 1

4. Data is presented for 36 of the KPIs, including some annual figures. Where possible, a baseline position is given. This provides a value as we step into the new reporting year (from April 2024) and gives

numerical context to any KPIs reported at the start of the reporting year.

Highlights

ID	Observation
Housing and Communities	
1	Homelessness duty cases successfully prevented continues good form from the baseline position.
2	This control is also reflected in the number of households in external emergency accommodation being low.
3	Number of families with children under 16 in external emergency shared accommodation over 6 weeks. Small numbers mean this is amber in numerical terms. Some staffing availability has impacted on this result.
8	Education and awareness sessions are underway in relation to serious crime, focussing on weapons control.
10	Thirteen cultural events were supported by NFDC against our target of six.
13	Our tenant satisfaction measure reports well with an 81% overall satisfaction level.
Place and Sustainability	
16-19	All our planning measures performed well. Although major and minor applications determined in time are amber, our local targets are set much higher than the government prescribed targets.
20	The total outstanding net dwelling supply is forecast to fall short of its target. Remedial actions are planned as per the Housing Delivery Action Plan.
24	It is thought at least in part, the significant increase in household waste sent for recycling is due to the move to wheeled bins for garden waste. Seasonal variations will likely impact this over the next two quarters.

27	Cooler weather over spring and summer meant lower visitor numbers utilising our water-filling stations.
28	The conversion from commercial to residential countered the development of industrial / employment land developed.
Resources and Transformation	
39	Where staff are unwell, appropriate notifications are sent to managers for action, in line with our agreed policy.

Quarter 2

- Data is presented for 27 of the KPIs. In quarter 2, we are able to reflect on the quarter 1 position.

Highlights

ID	Observation
Housing and Communities	
1	Homelessness duty cases successfully prevented has dipped from a strong starting position in Q1. Advice and practical support continues to be offered while solutions are being sought by the team.
2	Households in external emergency accommodation has accordingly increased from 44 to 59 (with a target of below 50).
3	Number of families with children under 16 in external emergency shared accommodation over 6 weeks. This is now on target from an amber-rated position last quarter.
4	The number of Appletree Careline services to customers continues to fluctuate against a revised set of challenging targets.
7	CCTV – a number of new cameras have been deployed and this is reflected in our spend.

10	Six further cultural events were supported by NFDC in the last quarter.
15	There are very high compliance rates for our five safety and compliance management, Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).
Place and Sustainability	
16-19	Performance for our planning measures continue to perform well, however major applications determined in time is below target. Our locally set target of 85% is 25 percentage points above the government prescribed target of 60%. 2 of our 15 appeals were allowed, 13 being dismissed. These small numbers give large variances (against target).
22	Households using our chargeable garden waste service performs well to our (cumulative) targets.
25	Fly-tipping remains green-rated.
27	Cooler weather over spring and summer meant lower visitor numbers utilising our water-filling stations. This remains amber in that it is lower than our target, albeit by 4.5%.
Resources and Transformation	
37	Although our vacancies filled first time figure has fallen (and this is red-rated), there are a number of pending appointments.
39	Employee absence remains a challenge, being reported red-rated over the first two quarters this year. There has been a drop in short term absences but an increase in long term absence. HR have capacity to support managers to resolve.

Corporate plan priorities

6. The dashboard presents the KPIs ordered by our new corporate plan priorities.

Options appraisal

7. The KPI list 2024-2028 has been developed following extensive work and consideration of alternative KPIs and targets. This work

was completed in conjunction with the development of the Corporate Plan 2024-2028.

Consultation undertaken

8. The performance team have worked closely with data owners, responsible service managers and Strategic Directors to form the KPI list 2024 / 28. We have sought to identify KPIs which align with corporate plan objectives. Consideration was given to setting a baseline and reviewing benchmarking data (where applicable) for the setting of SMART targets.

Financial and resource implications

9. There are no financial or resource implications arising from this report.

Legal implications

10. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Risk assessment

11. There are no new risks arising from this report. The nature of KPI reporting means performance is scrutinised at a service level as data becomes available and any associated risks and mitigation are put in place and reported in the KPI narrative as appropriate.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

12. There are no environmental / climate and nature implications arising from this report.

Equalities implications

13. There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

Crime and disorder implications

14. There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

15. There are no data protection / information governance / ICT implications arising from this report.

Conclusion

16. Review of our key performance indicators, ultimately provides Cabinet with a sense check of progress against our corporate plan commitments. Passing the scorecard through the levels of governance outlined in our Performance Management Framework promotes accountability. We look forward to bringing back quarters 3 and 4, leading to our end of year performance report.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Corporate
Performance Dashboards 2024-25

Background Papers:

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APPENDIX 1

Quarter 1 Corporate Performance Dashboard | Transformation and performance | April - June 2024

Theme	Priority	NFDC ID	Short Name	Overview and Scrutiny Panel	Portfolio holder	Data owner	Desired DOT	Return Format	Freq.	Baseline	Q1 Target	This period	RAG Status	Supporting Narrative
13 People	Helping those in our community with the greatest need	1	Percentage of homelessness duty cases successfully prevented.	Housing and Communities	Cllr Steve Davies	Chris Pope	Up	%	Q	50%	>50%	52.40%	-	
		2	Number of households in external emergency accommodation.	Housing and Communities	Cllr Steve Davies	Chris Pope	Down	Num	Q	50	<50	44	-	
		3	Number of families with children under 16 in external emergency shared accommodation over 6 weeks	Housing and Communities	Cllr Steve Davies	Chris Pope	Down	Num	Q	7	<7	12	-	The main reason for this is finding suitable temporary accommodation (TA) in locations where families need to live. The team continue to work hard to find accommodation to move families to, searching our own TA stock initially. Performance has been impacted by staff availability due to the time of year and annual leave.
		4	Number of Appletree careline services provided to customers.	Housing and Communities	Cllr Dan Poole	Carrie Hesp	Up	Num	Q	3,942	3,991	3,974	-	Seventeen more services would bring this measure to target. It should be noted this represents less than half a percentage point below target.
	Empowering our residents to live healthy, connected and fulfilling lives	5	Resident perception that their quality of life is affected by the fear of crime	Housing and Communities	Cllr Dan Poole	Saq Yasin	Down	%	2 years	24.5%	N/A	N/A	-	Data not available until completion of next resident survey.
		6	Resident perception that they feel safe when outside in their local area	Housing and Communities	Cllr Dan Poole	Saq Yasin	Up	%	2 years	85%	N/A	N/A	-	Data not available until completion of next resident survey.
		7	Investment in and rollout of public space CCTV system	Housing and Communities	Cllr Dan Poole	Brian Byrne	Up	£	Q	£0	£10,000	£0	-	The CCTV expansion report was reviewed at the Housing and Community Scrutiny panel on July 17th, receiving full support prior to full cabinet in August. Once agreed at Cabinet the programme of installation can commence.
		8	Number of education and awareness sessions in relation to serious crime.	Housing and Communities	Cllr Dan Poole	Nikki Swift	Neutral	Num	Q	0	Monitor	68	-	Sessions delivered on Weapons prevention between April 1st and June 30th. Preparation work has commenced on the roll out of a district wide, weapons intervention programme facilitated by the Community Safety Team. Following engagement with the Head Teachers network and youth engagement services, we are receiving nominations for training in the autumn of 2024.
		9	Number of positive interventions in response to Public Spaces Protection Orders (1 and 2).	Housing and Communities	Cllr Dan Poole	Nikki Swift	Neutral	Num	Q	953	Monitor	429	-	In the first quarter, there were 429 interventions with the public relating to PSPO 1 and 2. 313 engagements related to animals and 116 related to fire. One fixed penalty notice was issued.
		10	Number of cultural events and activities supported by New Forest District Council.	Housing and Communities	Cllr Dan Poole	Kealy Whenray	Up	Num	Q	0	6	13	-	8 projects funded by NFDC, 3 projects managed and lead by NFDC. Projects include managing Folio, and supporting Culture in Common, funding projects such as the BBC Gardeners World, Elevate creative work experience programme, Future First youth climate play production, creative drop-ins at the Totton creative hub and a new LGBTQ+ artist hub.
	Meeting housing needs	11	Number of affordable social housing homes delivered by NFDC and its partners.	Housing and Communities	Cllr Steve Davies	Catherine Bonnett	On forecast	Num	Annual	133	N/A	0	-	
		12	Number of affordable council homes delivered against the 2026 Target set.	Housing and Communities	Cllr Steve Davies	Tim Davis	On forecast	Num	Annual	339	N/A	4	-	4 properties were acquired through NFDC's Buy Back programme in Q1.
		13	Percentage score for overall tenant satisfaction with the Council as a landlord, as determined in the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)	Housing and Communities	Cllr Steve Davies	David Brown	Up	%	Annual	81.1%	N/A	81%	-	This 81% is the final TSM 'overall satisfaction' for the 2023/24 reporting period. There are no new or updated figures to report on for Q1 2024/25.
		14	Number of council homes achieving Energy Performance Certification band C.	Housing and Communities	Cllr Steve Davies	Callum Ranger	Up	Num	Annual	2,546	N/A	2,546	-	Reported annually, figure unchanged for this period.
		15	Percentage scores for the 5 safety and compliance management Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)	Housing and Communities	Cllr Steve Davies	Callum Ranger	Up	%	Q	96.08%	96.80%	96.85%	-	

Theme	Priority	NFDC ID	Short Name	Overview and Scrutiny Panel	Portfolio holder	Data owner	Desired DOT	Return Format	Freq.	Baseline	Q1 Target	This period	RAG Status	Supporting Narrative
Place	Shaping our place now and for future generations	16	Percentage of major planning applications determined in time	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Derek Tipp	Martine Parkes	Up	%	Q	86%	85%	80%	Amber	Although this is flagged as amber, it should be noted the local target is set at 25% above the Government prescribed target of 60%.
		17	Percentage of minor planning applications determined in time	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Derek Tipp	Martine Parkes	Up	%	Q	94%	95%	90%	Amber	The local target is set at 25% above the Government prescribed target of 70%
		18	Percentage of other planning applications determined in time	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Derek Tipp	Martine Parkes	Up	%	Q	97%	95%	96%	Green	The local target is set at 15% above the Government prescribed target of 80%
		19	Percentage of allowed planning appeals	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Derek Tipp	Martine Parkes	Down	%	Q	25%	<10%	0%	Green	No planning appeals were allowed
		20	The total outstanding net dwelling supply as set out in our development plan.	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Derek Tipp	James Smith / Peter McGowan	Down	Num	Annual	8,443	N/A	6,285	Red	Total net completions 2016/17 to 2023/24: 2,179 dwellings which is shortfall of 521 against Local Plan Housing Delivery target to date (2,700). Total outstanding housing supply needed to meet Local Plan Housing Delivery target (10,420) by 2036 is 8,241. Currently the housing supply which is considered achievable by 2036 is 6,285 meaning a likely shortfall of 1,956. The 2024 Housing Delivery Action Plan explains in detail and sets out actions we intend to take to encourage housing delivery.
	Protecting our climate, coast, and natural world	21	Kilogrammes of non-recycled waste produced per household	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Geoffrey Blunden	Nicola Plummer	Down	Kg	Q	475.18kg	114	109.2kg	Amber	Q1 figure is estimated at this stage.
		22	Households using our chargeable garden waste service as a percentage of total properties in NFDC.	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Geoffrey Blunden	Samantha Marrache	Up	%	Q	26%	25%	27%	Green	-
		23	Emissions from the council's vehicle fleet.	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Geoffrey Blunden	Simon Cooper	Down	Tonnes of CO2e	Annual	1,696	Monitor	N/A	Grey	-
		24	Percentage of household waste sent for recycling.	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Geoffrey Blunden	Nicola Plummer	Up	%	Q	33.9%	38.5%	40.64%	Green	The increase in recycling rate, is mostly due to the increased tonnages of garden waste collected with the move to wheeled bins. This will be influenced by seasonal garden growth so may not continue to remain this high.
	Caring for our facilities, neighbourhoods and open spaces in a modern and responsive way	25	Number of fly-tipping incidents per 1,000 people	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Geoffrey Blunden	Stewart Phillips	Down	Num	Q	13.94	<13.94	4.4	Green	The reported figure is based on the total of 775 fly-tipping incidents occurring in Q1, (divided by 175,942 people (2022 media population estimate; source: Nomis) * 1,000 = number of incidents per 1,000 people).
26		Percentage customer satisfaction with the appearance of their local area.	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Geoffrey Blunden	Saq Yasin	Up	%	2 years	93%	N/A	N/A	Grey	-	
27		Equivalent number of 0.5 litre bottles filled at water-filling stations – waste averted	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Geoffrey Blunden	Stewart Phillips / Neil Passmore	Up	Num	Q	22,880	9,200	8,370	Amber	Cooler weather than usual throughout spring and early summer, visitor numbers lower than usual. 3 water meters not registering.	
Prosperity	Maximising the benefits of inclusive economic growth and investment	28	Squared metres of industrial/employment land developed.	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Derek Tipp	James Smith / Peter McGowan	Up	Sqm	Annual	21,209 sqm	N/A	-5sqm	Red	Low levels of gross completions (only 678sqm) and former office changed to residential (losing 683sqm) resulting in a net loss in employment floorspace of -5sqm in 2023/24. Employment completions are difficult to predict as they can involve the building/demolition of large amounts of floorspace in a single building and can often rely on the release of single large employment sites which leads to a surge in development when they become available.
		29	Level (£) of retained business rates (at source)	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Kevin Green	Up	£	Annual	£0	N/A	£0	Green	-
	Supporting our high-quality business base and economic centres to thrive and grow	30	Resident perception of our highstreets and town centres	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Geoffrey Blunden	Saq Yasin	Up	%	2 years	-	N/A	N/A	Grey	-
		31	Vacancies of retail premises within town/local centres	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Derek Tipp	James Smith / Peter McGowan	Down	%	Annual	10%	N/A	N/A	Grey	-
	Championing skills and access to job opportunities	32	Employment rate percentage of working age adults (aged 16-64).	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Derek Tipp	Sally Igra	Up	%	Annual	80%	N/A	82.30%	Green	Last updated by ONS: 14 May 2024
33		Proportion (in percentage terms) of employee jobs with hourly pay below the living wage.	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Derek Tipp	Sally Igra	Down	%	Annual	14.2%	N/A	N/A	Grey	2024 figures to be released early 2025	

Theme	Priority	NFDC ID	Short Name	Overview and Scrutiny Panel	Portfolio holder	Data owner	Desired DOT	Return Format	Freq.	Baseline	Q1 Target	This period	RAG Status	Supporting Narrative
Putting our customers at the heart		34	Resident satisfaction with Council services	Resources and Transformation	Leader, Cllr Jill Cleary	Saq Yasin	Up	%	2 years	62%	N/A	N/A	-	
		35	Staff satisfaction score with NFDC ICT services.	Resources and Transformation	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Rich Bird / Kim Gray	Maintain	Num	Annual	-	N/A	N/A	-	
		36	Resident satisfaction score with the quality of NFDC digital services	Resources and Transformation	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Rich Bird / Kim Gray	Maintain	Num	Annual	-	N/A	N/A	-	
Being an employer of choice		37	Percentage of vacancies filled first time.	Resources and Transformation	Leader, Cllr Jill Cleary	Heleana Aylett	Up	%	Q	73.5%	80%	90%	Green	41 Vacancies with only 4 not filled first time
		38	Percentage staff turnover.	Resources and Transformation	Leader, Cllr Jill Cleary	Heleana Aylett	Down	%	Annual	13.48%	N/A	N/A	-	
		39	Average number of days sickness absence per employee.	Resources and Transformation	Leader, Cllr Jill Cleary	Sophie Taylor	Down	Num	Q	9.88	8	9.27	Red	There are ongoing instances of sickness and our absence management policy requires these are followed up appropriately by managers. Automated notifications are sent to managers to support the application of the policy.
		40	Number of council apprenticeships	Resources and Transformation	Leader, Cllr Jill Cleary	Heleana Aylett	Up	Num	Annual	12	N/A	N/A	-	
Being financially responsible		41	Percentage variance to Council budget +/- (General fund budget variations).	Resources and Transformation	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Kevin Green	Up or Down	%	Q	-8.1%	+/- 3%	0%	-	No budget variation report until Q2
		42	Percentage variance to Housing Revenue budget +/- (HRA budget variations).	Resources and Transformation	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Kevin Green	Up or Down	%	Q	3.89%	+/- 3%	0%	-	No budget variation report until Q2
		43	Percentage of Council Tax collected in year	Resources and Transformation	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Ryan Stevens	Up	%	Q	98.65%	29.9%	29.68%	Green	Collection is slightly down when compared to 23/24, this could be due to extending instalments (and last year there was the also the Council Tax Support Fund payments).
		44	Percentage of Non-domestic Rates collected in year	Resources and Transformation	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Ryan Stevens	Up	%	Q	98.96%	29.6%	29.64%	-	
Designing modern and innovative services		45	Benefit realisation from ICT investment	Resources and Transformation	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Rich Bird	Maintain	%	Every 6 Months	-	N/A	87.5%	-	
		46	Percentage of ICT incidents resolved within SLA.	Resources and Transformation	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Kim Gray	Up	%	Q	98.8%	95%	99%	-	
		47	Percentage of annual ICT work programme delivered on time and on budget.	Resources and Transformation	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Rich Bird	Maintain	%	Q	-	70%	100%	-	
		48	Percentage unscheduled downtime for critical systems	Resources and Transformation	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Kim Gray	Down	%	Q	-	<5%	0%	-	

Quarter 2 Corporate Performance Dashboard | Transformation and performance | July - September 2024

Theme	Priority	NFDC ID	Short Name	Overview and Scrutiny Panel	Portfolio holder	Data owner	Desired DOT	Return Format	Freq.	Previous Period	Q2 Target	This period	RAG Status	Supporting Narrative	
People Helping those in our community with the greatest need		1	Percentage of homelessness duty cases successfully prevented.	Housing and Communities	Cllr Steve Davies	Chris Pope	Up	%	Q	52.4%	>50%	41%	Red	The Prevention Duty is where we try to prevent people from becoming homeless by either securing their current accommodation or seeking new accommodation for them. Despite the challenges in the private sector rented sector, the team work hard to support clients by providing advice or practical support.	
		2	Number of households in external emergency accommodation.	Housing and Communities	Cllr Steve Davies	Chris Pope	Down	Num	Q	44	<50	59	Red	The number of people in Emergency Accommodation (EA) fluctuates throughout the year. The reason for the jump in EA usage is due to the number of people being asked to leave family accommodation or private landlords ending tenancies. In these scenarios we try to prevent homelessness by searching for new private accommodation or using our own TA which is an enormous challenge currently as there are not many available in the price range that our clients can afford and our own TA is at capacity.	
		3	Number of families with children under 16 in external emergency shared accommodation over 6 weeks	Housing and Communities	Cllr Steve Davies	Chris Pope	Down	Num	Q	12	<7	7	Green	We had a higher number of households with large numbers of children, often with complex needs, requiring accommodation.	
		4	Number of Appletree careline services provided to customers.	Housing and Communities	Cllr Dan Poole	Carrie Hesp	Up	Num	Q	3,974	4,040	3,968	Red	Due to the fluctuation in client base and services being delivered changing daily, The highest service by volume was 4004 at the end of July with 3965 at the end of August. In addition to dispersed alarms and services delivered, the service also provides fixed careline monitoring alarms in Housing Extra Care stock to 112 flats which does not form part of this data.	
	People Empowering our residents to live healthy, connected and fulfilling lives		5	Resident perception that their quality of life is affected by the fear of crime	Housing and Communities	Cllr Dan Poole	Saq Yasin	Down	%	2 years	N/A	N/A	N/A	Grey	Data not available until completion of next resident survey.
			6	Resident perception that they feel safe when outside in their local area	Housing and Communities	Cllr Dan Poole	Saq Yasin	Up	%	2 years	N/A	N/A	N/A	Grey	Data not available until completion of next resident survey.
			7	Investment in and rollout of public space CCTV system	Housing and Communities	Cllr Dan Poole	Brian Byrne	Up	£	Q	£0	£20,000	£66,000	Green	Target is cumulative. 66K has been spent on securing 10 x 4g PTZ cameras for rural locations which also includes transmission costs for 2 years. A camera has been installed in Calshot Play park as part of the upgrade to St. Georges Hall providing 24 hour monitoring, live linked to the control room.
			8	Number of education and awareness sessions in relation to serious crime.	Housing and Communities	Cllr Dan Poole	Nikki Swift	Neutral	Num	Q	68	Monitor	47	Yellow	Sessions delivered on weapons prevention between 1st July and 30th September 2024 included workshops and assemblies to 130 young people and 47 sessions delivered to 15 individual participants on a 1:1 basis. Lower figure of 47 sessions confirmed and awaiting final number of sessions delivered to 130 people. Final numbers delayed and will be updated at a later date once clarified with partners.
			9	Number of positive interventions in response to Public Spaces Protection Orders (1 and 2).	Housing and Communities	Cllr Dan Poole	Nikki Swift	Neutral	Num	Q	429	Monitor	522	Yellow	Quarterly data is collated by Forestry England and includes data from the National Parks Authority and the Verderers.
			10	Number of cultural events and activities supported by New Forest District Council.	Housing and Communities	Cllr Dan Poole	Kealy Whenray	Up	Num	Q	13	12	19	Green	Target is cumulative. This quarter we have funded the development of Suitcase Stories, a school based theatre project via SPF funding. Aswell as providing funding for improved music production at this years New Forest Pride in Lyminster. We have also provided project support to Waterside Arts Festival, Artful Scribe's Play on Words festival in New Milton, and the NFDC Litter Nest project. We have also lead Folio in developing their new project ROAM, as well as continued funding, project support and leadership on multiple projects from Q1.
People Meeting housing needs		11	Number of affordable social housing homes delivered by NFDC and its partners.	Housing and Communities	Cllr Steve Davies	Catherine Bonnett	On forecast	Num	Annual	0	N/A	N/A	Yellow	Data last reported 2023/24 EOY position to determine a baseline figure.	
		12	Number of affordable council homes delivered against the 2026 Target set.	Housing and Communities	Cllr Steve Davies	Tim Davis	On forecast	Num	Annual	4	N/A	N/A	Yellow	Data last reported 2024/25 Q1 Corporate Dashboard.	
		13	Percentage score for overall tenant satisfaction with the Council as a landlord, as determined in the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)	Housing and Communities	Cllr Steve Davies	David Brown	Up	%	Annual	81%	N/A	N/A	Yellow	Data last reported 2024/25 Q1 Corporate Dashboard.	
		14	Number of council homes achieving Energy Performance Certification band C.	Housing and Communities	Cllr Steve Davies	Callum Ranger	Up	Num	Annual	2,546	N/A	N/A	Yellow	Data last reported 2024/25 Q1 Corporate Dashboard.	
		15	Percentage scores for the 5 safety and compliance management Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)	Housing and Communities	Cllr Steve Davies	Callum Ranger	Up	%	Q	96.85%	96.8%	99.27%	Green	High compliance rates for the end of September for all 5 Safety Measures.	

Theme	Priority	NFDC ID	Short Name	Overview and Scrutiny Panel	Portfolio holder	Data owner	Desired DOT	Return Format	Freq.	Previous Period	Q2 Target	This period	RAG Status	Supporting Narrative
Place	Shaping our place now and for future generations	16	Percentage of major planning applications determined in time	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Derek Tipp	Martine Parkes	Up	%	Q	80%	85%	75%	Amber	Although this is flagged as amber, it should be noted the local target is set at 25% above the Government prescribed target of 60%.
		17	Percentage of minor planning applications determined in time	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Derek Tipp	Martine Parkes	Up	%	Q	90%	95%	95%	Green	The local target is set at 25% above the Government prescribed target of 70%
		18	Percentage of other planning applications determined in time	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Derek Tipp	Martine Parkes	Up	%	Q	96%	95%	97%	Green	The local target is set at 15% above the Government prescribed target of 80%
		19	Percentage of allowed planning appeals	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Derek Tipp	Martine Parkes	Down	%	Q	0%	<10%	13%	Red	2 appeals allowed; 13 appeals dismissed.
		20	The total outstanding net dwelling supply as set out in our development plan.	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Derek Tipp	James Smith Peter McGowan	Down	Num	Annual	6,285	N/A	N/A	Grey	Data last reported 2024/25 Q1 Corporate Dashboard.
	Protecting our climate, coast, and natural world	21	Kilogrammes of non-recycled waste produced per household	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Geoffrey Blunden	Nicola Plummer	Down	Kg	Q	109.2kg	228kg	220.9kg	Grey	Target is cumulative. Data is only available around 2 months after the end of the quarter when it is returned from HCC. Data will be updated at a future date.
		22	Households using our chargeable garden waste service as a percentage of total properties in NFDC.	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Geoffrey Blunden	Samantha Marrache	Up	%	Q	27%	26%	28%	Green	Target is cumulative.
		23	Emissions from the council's vehicle fleet.	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Geoffrey Blunden	Simon Cooper	Down	Tonnes of CO2e	Annual	N/A	Monitor	N/A	Grey	Data last reported 2023/24 EOY position to determine a baseline figure.
		24	Percentage of household waste sent for recycling.	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Geoffrey Blunden	Nicola Plummer	Up	%	Q	40.64%	38.5%	39%	Grey	Data is only available around 2 months after the end of the quarter when it is returned from HCC. Data will be updated at a future date.
	Caring for our facilities, neighbourhoods and open spaces in a modern and responsive way	25	Number of fly-tipping incidents per 1,000 people	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Geoffrey Blunden	Stewart Phillips	Down	Num	Q	4.4	<13.94	3.8	Green	The reported figure is based on the total of 670 fly-tipping incidents occurring in Q2.
26		Percentage customer satisfaction with the appearance of their local area.	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Geoffrey Blunden	Saq Yasin	Up	%	2 years	N/A	N/A	N/A	Grey	Data not available until completion of next resident survey.	
27		Equivalent number of 0.5 litre bottles filled at water-filling stations – waste averted	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Geoffrey Blunden	Stewart Phillips Neil Passmore	Up	Num	Q	8,370	23,000	21,954	Amber	Target is cumulative. Cooler weather than usual throughout spring and early summer, visitor numbers lower than usual. 3 water meters not registering.	
Prosperity	Maximising the benefits of inclusive economic growth and investment	28	Squared metres of industrial/employment land developed.	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Derek Tipp	James Smith Peter McGowan	Up	Sqm	Annual	-5sqm	N/A	N/A	Grey	Data last reported 2024/25 Q1 Corporate Dashboard.
		29	Level (£) of retained business rates (at source)	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Kevin Green	Up	£	Annual	£0	N/A	N/A	Grey	Data last reported 2023/24 EOY position to determine a baseline figure.
	Supporting our high-quality business base and economic centres to thrive and grow	30	Resident perception of our highstreets and town centres	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Geoffrey Blunden	Saq Yasin	Up	%	2 years	N/A	N/A	N/A	Grey	Data not available until completion of next resident survey.
		31	Vacancies of retail premises within town/local centres	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Derek Tipp	James Smith Peter McGowan	Down	%	Annual	N/A	N/A	N/A	Grey	Data last reported 2023/24 EOY position to determine a baseline figure.
	Championing skills and access to job opportunities	32	Employment rate percentage of working age adults (aged 16-64).	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Derek Tipp	Sally Igra	Up	%	Annual	82.30%	N/A	N/A	Grey	Annual data released November 2024.
33		Proportion (in percentage terms) of employee jobs with hourly pay below the living wage.	Place and Sustainability	Cllr Derek Tipp	Sally Igra	Down	%	Annual	N/A	N/A	N/A	Grey	2024 figures to be released early 2025.	

Theme	Priority	NFDC ID	Short Name	Overview and Scrutiny Panel	Portfolio holder	Data owner	Desired DOT	Return Format	Freq.	Previous Period	Q2 Target	This period	RAG Status	Supporting Narrative
Future New Forest	Putting our customers at the heart	34	Resident satisfaction with Council services	Resources and Transformation	Leader, Cllr Jill Cleary	Saq Yasin	Up	%	2 years	N/A	N/A	N/A		Data not available until completion of next resident survey.
		35	Staff satisfaction score with NFDC ICT services.	Resources and Transformation	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Rich Bird Kim Gray	Maintain	Num	Annual	N/A	N/A	N/A		Plan to work with colleagues to identify best way to capture this metric.
		36	Resident satisfaction score with the quality of NFDC digital services	Resources and Transformation	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Rich Bird Kim Gray	Maintain	Num	Annual	N/A	N/A	N/A		Plan to work with colleagues to identify best way to capture this metric.
	Being an employer of choice	37	Percentage of vacancies filled first time.	Resources and Transformation	Leader, Cllr Jill Cleary	Heleana Aylett	Up	%	Q	90%	80%	63%	Red	We had 57 vacancies, 15 of those we are still waiting for outcomes as they were September recruitments.
		38	Percentage staff turnover.	Resources and Transformation	Leader, Cllr Jill Cleary	Heleana Aylett	Down	%	Annual	N/A	N/A	N/A		Data last reported 2023/24 EOY position to determine a baseline figure.
		39	Average number of days sickness absence per employee.	Resources and Transformation	Leader, Cllr Jill Cleary	Sophie Taylor	Down	Num	Q	9.27	8	9.78	Red	Between Q1 and Q2, there has been a decrease in short term absence (4.22 to 4.17), but an increase in long term (5.06 to 5.61) which has subsequently increased total sickness days per FTE. As HR now have more capacity, we are able to work more closely with managers to support them in assisting their team back to work sooner following absences.
		40	Number of council apprenticeships	Resources and Transformation	Leader, Cllr Jill Cleary	Heleana Aylett	Up	Num	Annual	N/A	N/A	N/A		Data last reported 2023/24 EOY position to determine a baseline figure.
	Being financially responsible	41	Percentage variance to Council budget +/- (General fund budget variations).	Resources and Transformation	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Kevin Green	Up or Down	%	Q	0%	+/- 3%	0%	Green	Indicative figures as at 16 October 2024, final figures will be confirmed as set out in the Financial Monitoring Report taken to Cabinet 6 November 2024.
		42	Percentage variance to Housing Revenue budget +/- (HRA budget variations).	Resources and Transformation	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Kevin Green	Up or Down	%	Q	0%	+/- 3%	0.55%	Green	Indicative figures as at 16 October 2024, final figures will be confirmed as set out in the Financial Monitoring Report taken to Cabinet 6 November 2024.
		43	Percentage of Council Tax collected in year	Resources and Transformation	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Ryan Stevens	Up	%	Q	29.60%	57.6%	57.40%	Green	Target is cumulative.
		44	Percentage of Non-domestic Rates collected in year	Resources and Transformation	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Ryan Stevens	Up	%	Q	29.60%	57.9%	57.50%	Green	Target is cumulative.
	Designing modern and innovative services	45	Benefit realisation from ICT investment	Resources and Transformation	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Rich Bird	Maintain	%	Every 6 Months	87.50%	70%	N/A		Data last reported 2024/25 Q1 Corporate Dashboard.
46		Percentage of ICT incidents resolved within SLA.	Resources and Transformation	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Kim Gray	Up	%	Q	99%	95%	98%	Green	-	
47		Percentage of annual ICT work programme delivered on time and on budget.	Resources and Transformation	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Rich Bird	Maintain	%	Q	100%	70%	93.33%	Green	-	
48		Percentage unscheduled downtime for critical systems	Resources and Transformation	Cllr Jeremy Heron	Kim Gray	Down	%	Q	0%	<5%	2.89%	Green	-	

Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel - 22 January 2025

Draft Air Quality Strategy

Purpose	For review
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	<p>New Forest District Council has no declared Air Quality Management Areas and as directed by The Environment Act 2021; the council must proceed to publish an Air Quality Strategy to ensure air quality remains a high priority.</p> <p>Following the consultation process, and consideration of the responses, the draft Air Quality Strategy will be recommended for adoption.</p>
Recommendations	<p>1. That Panel review the draft Air Quality Strategy which will be considered by Cabinet in February 2025; and</p> <p>2. That the Panel supports the process for implementing the Air Quality Strategy and the recommendation that Cabinet approves the draft Strategy for public consultation.</p>
Reasons for recommendation(s)	It is a legal requirement to develop an Air Quality Strategy by Local Authorities with no declared Air Quality Management Areas.
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Dan Poole – Portfolio Holder for Community, Safety and Wellbeing
Strategic Director(s)	Richard Knott – Strategic Director of Housing & Communities
Officer Contact	<p>Rachel Higgins Environmental Protection Team Manager 02380 285339 rachel.higgins@nfdc.gov.uk</p>

	Joanne McClay Service Manager – Environmental and Regulation 02380 285325 joanne.mcclay@nfdc.gov.uk
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Introduction

1. This report advises on the development of a draft Air Quality Strategy (AQS) for New Forest District Council and provides an overview of the content of the draft Strategy. The report and draft AQS were presented to EMT prior to proceeding to the Housing and Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel, where recommendations are sought for supporting the process to implement the AQS for New Forest District Council and approval for public consultation of the draft Strategy.
2. Following consideration of the draft AQS at Panel, the report will be taken to Cabinet on 5 February 2025. A public consultation period of 8 weeks will then be undertaken and after consideration of the comments, a finalised AQS will be progressed for adoption in mid-2025.

Background

3. Local Authorities have a statutory duty through the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) regime to review and assess local air quality in their district in accordance with legislation, Government policy and guidance. Where an air quality objective is being, or likely to be, exceeded, an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) must be declared.
4. New Forest District Council (NFDC) - Environmental Protection, has undertaken the review and assessment of local air quality proactively since 1998 using a combination of desktop, monitoring and modelling techniques. All assessments have been submitted as required to Government and all necessary action taken.
5. The Environment Act 2021 updated the LAQM regime to require local authorities from 2023 with no declared AQMA's to produce an AQS for their district.
6. In August 2023, after consultation with Defra and other relevant stakeholders, NFDC revoked its remaining AQMA (Lyndhurst) due to pollutant concentrations meeting the air quality objectives within

the AQMA for 8 consecutive years. Officers have subsequently progressed work to develop a draft AQS.

7. The draft AQS has been developed with the assistance of air quality consultants Ricardo-AEA Ltd and relevant stakeholders. The stakeholders included officers from NFDC (planning, climate change and health and well-being), New Forest National Park (planning), Hampshire County Council (public health and transport), local industry (Exxonmobil) and the Environment Centre. All stakeholders proactively contributed to the development and text of the draft AQS.
8. NFDC is one of the two Local Authorities in Hampshire (without an AQMA) who are leading on developing an AQS, due in part to our local air quality expertise and the priority to continue to improve air quality across the district.

Overview of draft Air Quality Strategy

9. The aim of the AQS is to continue to improve local air quality beyond the air quality objectives set by Government. This will be achieved through the identification of specific action areas for development in partnership with relevant stakeholders.
10. The AQS is a working document which provides a framework of action areas for development, with the aim for an evidence-based approach to assess and improve local air quality where relevant.
11. The Strategy identifies areas of alignment with other strategies, plans and policies at a national, regional and local level, for example with the Hampshire Public Health Strategy 2023-2026 (Hampshire CC) and the Climate Change and Nature Emergency Annual Update 2023/24 (NFDC).
12. The draft AQS advises on air pollution and the harm to human health and provides details on air quality within the New Forest district. Ricardo has undertaken air quality modelling to identify the potential sources of airborne pollutants within the New Forest district.
13. The modelling work provided the base evidence for the development of some of the priority action areas of the AQS, for example, the focus on wood burning and transport emissions. Other action areas were identified by officers and stakeholders as areas requiring further development to obtain improvements in public health, such as improving public awareness and behaviour change, and reducing health inequalities with regards to exposure to air pollution.

14. Six action areas are identified within the draft AQS which are:
 - Public awareness and behaviour change
 - Reducing health inequalities
 - Improving our understanding of particulate matter pollution
 - Wood burning and indoor air pollution
 - Reducing road traffic emissions, and
 - Reducing the impact of new developments

Each action area details why that area is important, what actions are already being undertaken by the council and stakeholders and identifies potential future areas of work.

15. The work to forward the Strategy action areas will be undertaken by a Steering Group of stakeholders with Member support. Actions will be progressed via agreed annual work plans.
16. The LAQM regime of review and assessment of local air quality against the air quality objectives remains and will be maintained alongside the implementation of the AQS.
17. The draft Air Quality Strategy is attached (**Appendix 1**).

Corporate plan priorities

18. The adoption of the AQS for New Forest District Council is a statutory requirement and relates to the following corporate priorities.
19. **Theme:**
Empowering our residents to live healthy, connected and fulfilling lives and protecting our climate.
20. **Corporate Plan Objective:**
Protect and improve the health and wellbeing of our communities.
21. **Service Objective:**
Adoption and implementation of the AQS for New Forest District Council.

Options appraisal

22. **Option 1:**
It is recommended Panel approve the draft Air Quality Strategy and recommend that it progresses to Cabinet in February and public consultation.

23. **Option 2:**

The alternative is to not prioritise the publication of an Air Quality Strategy. However, the Council is legally required to adopt an AQS. Failure to approve and adopt an AQS may leave the Council open to legal challenge, including by Defra. This option was not considered appropriate given the Council's corporate plan commitments to the health of its residents.

Consultation undertaken

24. There is no guidance or recommendation from Defra regarding how to develop an Air Quality Strategy and who to consult with. As advised in paragraph 7, internal and external stakeholders were consulted and involved in the development of the draft AQS. These stakeholders proactively engaged with the development of the text and actions noted within the Strategy.
25. There will also be further opportunities to engage with other relevant stakeholders as the AQS is progressed, for example the UKHSA, Environment Agency, NHS and Forestry England.
26. Consultation is recommended prior to approval of the AQS, and the next proposed step is for public consultation. All comments received will be reviewed and the draft AQS amended as required prior to final adoption.

Financial and resource implications

27. The cost to develop the draft AQS has been funded from existing budgets, however there is likely to be an annual cost to implement the actions arising from the Strategy. The cost for implementation of the Strategy will be determined through work plans and stakeholder involvement. Future work may include additional monitoring of pollutants within the district and potential consultancy costs to assess and model pollutants, when necessary, to further develop the Strategy priorities and assess the impact of any measures implemented.
28. Existing budgets will fund part of the costs to implement the AQS. However, further funding opportunities will need to be explored such as securing additional funding from Government grant funding schemes either individually or by working collaboratively with neighbouring authorities to reduce costs and the possibility of funding from planning contributions.
29. There is also resource implication for officer engagement to implement the AQS. This work would be completed by current positions within the Service and across the Council. However, there

may be some opportunity for collaborative working with other local authorities to develop and implement specific schemes. There is also an option to continue work with Southampton University using their expertise in air quality data analysis.

Legal implications

30. In accordance with The Environment Act 2021 the Council is required to develop and adopt an AQS where there are no AQMA's within their district. Legal implications of failing to adopt an Air Quality Strategy may result in challenge from Defra.

Risk assessment

31. There is no requirement for a formal risk assessment. Any risks in delivering the Strategy will be reviewed in terms of task-based actions and staffing and financial resources required to deliver the actions which will continue to improve local air quality.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

32. The development and implementation of an AQS for New Forest should align with policies concerning health, climate and nature, reducing emissions from vehicles and by working with local industry. Actions forwarded within the Strategy will be developed by the steering group and address impacts on the environment, climate and nature.

Equalities implications

33. The Environment Act 2021 has been assessed by Government as being compliant with United Kingdom equalities and human rights legislation. Furthermore, the action areas identified within the draft AQS aim to link areas of health inequalities with air quality to enable suitable targeting of action to reduce the impacts of airborne pollution on those most vulnerable in the New Forest district.

Crime and disorder implications

34. No specific implications.

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

35. No specific implications.

New Forest National Park implications

36. The AQS for New Forest covers both the New Forest District Council and New Forest National Park areas. The aim of the Strategy is to improve air quality and therefore benefit these areas, however the development of specific actions needs to ensure any potential negative impacts are identified and appropriately considered.
37. The inclusion of the New Forest National Park in the development of the Strategy, and on the strategy steering group should ensure all partner agencies are included in the development of actions, decision making and delivery. Therefore, avoiding duplications, conflicts of policy or unreasonable impacts.

Conclusion

38. The Council is legally required to develop an AQS for New Forest following the revocation of its remaining Air Quality Management Area in 2023. The draft strategy has been consulted on with stakeholders and is now seeking approval to consult more widely on the draft document.

Appendices:

Appendix 1

Draft Air Quality Strategy

Background Papers:

Defra LAQM Policy:

[England \(exc. London\) Policy Guidance | LAQM](#)

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New Forest District Council: **Air Quality Strategy 2025**

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1

Introduction



The New Forest district covers a wide and diverse area, including towns, industrial areas, and rural regions. The natural beauty of our district, including many protected areas and the majority of the New Forest National Park, enriches the lives of residents, supports businesses, and draws many visitors each year.

Following progress at a local and national level in recent years, large parts of the New Forest now enjoy good air quality. Concentrations at all our monitoring sites are now below National UK Air Quality Objectives for all measured pollutants, so in 2023 we were able to revoke our last Air Quality Management Area in Lyndhurst.

However, we need to keep making improvements to safeguard the health and wellbeing of everybody who lives and works here.

Our vision is to continuously improve the quality of the environment in our district, in support of the council's Corporate Plan priorities to deliver a vibrant and prosperous district for the residents of our unique place.

1.1 WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THIS STRATEGY?

This Air Quality Strategy explains why we need to improve air quality, describes current air quality in our district, and sets out New Forest District Council’s plans for improving air quality in the New Forest district. The focus of the Strategy is on the impacts of air quality on human health in the district.

We have identified a number of action areas to focus on over the next decade. These include targeting key sources of pollution and improving the information that we provide to our residents and businesses to empower them to reduce their air pollution footprint and their exposure to air pollution.



1.2 HOW WAS THIS STRATEGY DEVELOPED?

This Strategy has been developed with the support of an Air Quality Steering Group. This Steering Group includes New Forest District Council – Environmental Health, Planning, Health and Wellbeing and Climate Change, Hampshire County Council - Public Health and Transport, the UK Health Security Agency, New Forest National Park Authority, the Environment Centre, the Environment Agency, and representatives from local industry.

Furthermore, prior to formal adoption of the Strategy by New Forest District Council, a public consultation was undertaken to enable residents and businesses to provide their feedback on the Strategy.

Working collaboratively allows us to ensure our commitments and actions are inclusive and fair for everyone living in, working in, and visiting the district, and to guarantee that it represents the priorities and perspectives of the local community.

1.3 HOW DOES THIS STRATEGY ALIGN WITH OTHER POLICIES?

Air pollution in the New Forest doesn't only come from inside the district; pollution from other nearby areas also has an impact on our air quality. At the same time, the pollution we produce also affects air quality for our neighbours, so it is important to address air quality at a national and regional level as well as at a local level. We have designed our Air Quality Strategy to align with other strategies, plans and policies at national, regional, and local levels as shown below.

National

- The Clean Air Strategy 2019
- DEFRA Local Air Quality Management Policy Guidance

Regional

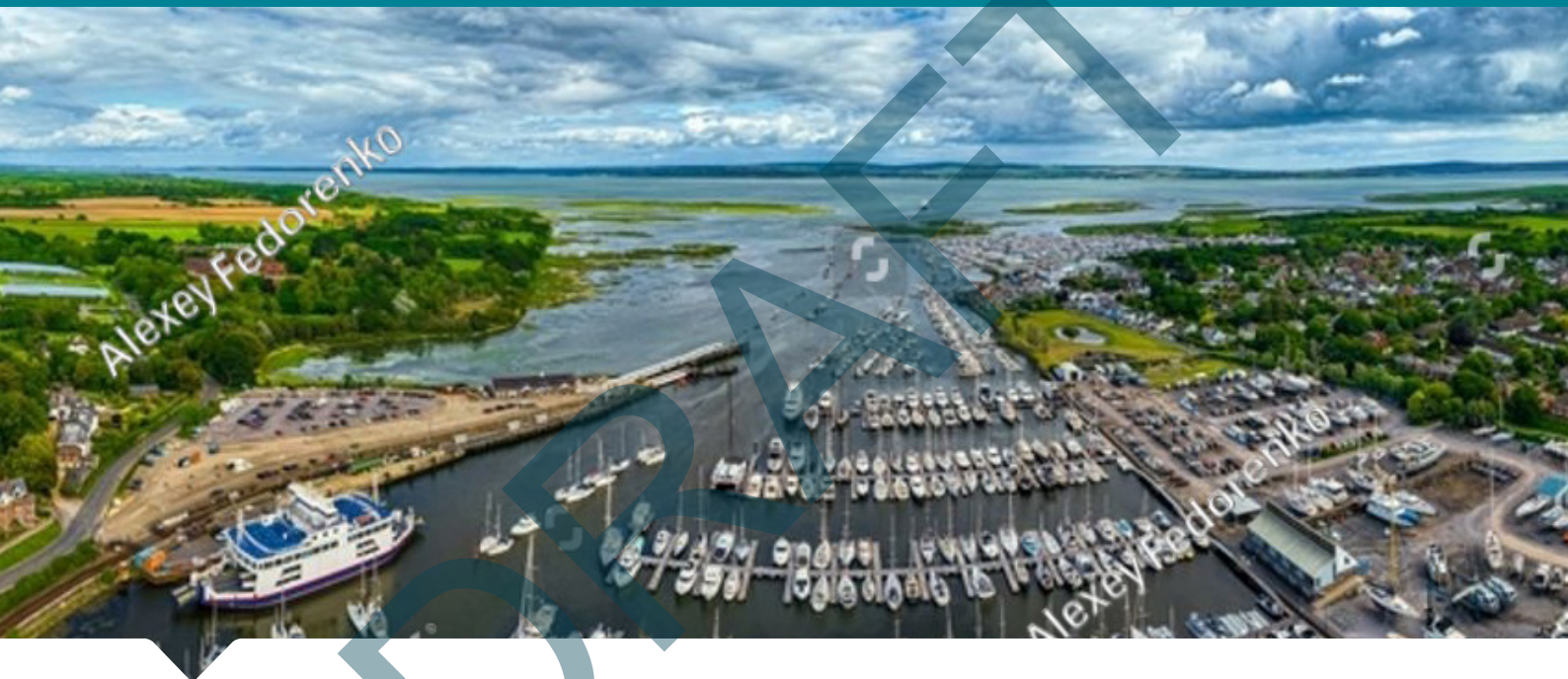
- Hampshire County Council Climate Change Strategy 2020–2025
- Hampshire County Council Air Quality Framework Phase 1 Manual
- Hampshire County Council Local Transport Plan 4
- Hampshire County Council Air Pollution and Air Quality Report
- Partnership for South Hampshire
- Hampshire Public Health Strategy 2023–2026

Local

- Air Quality SPD 2022
- Climate Change SPD draft 2023
- Climate Change and Nature Emergency Annual Update 2023/24
- Greener Housing Strategy 2022 to 2032
- Local Plan 2016–2036
- New Forest National Park Local Plan (2019)

2

Why do we need to improve air quality?



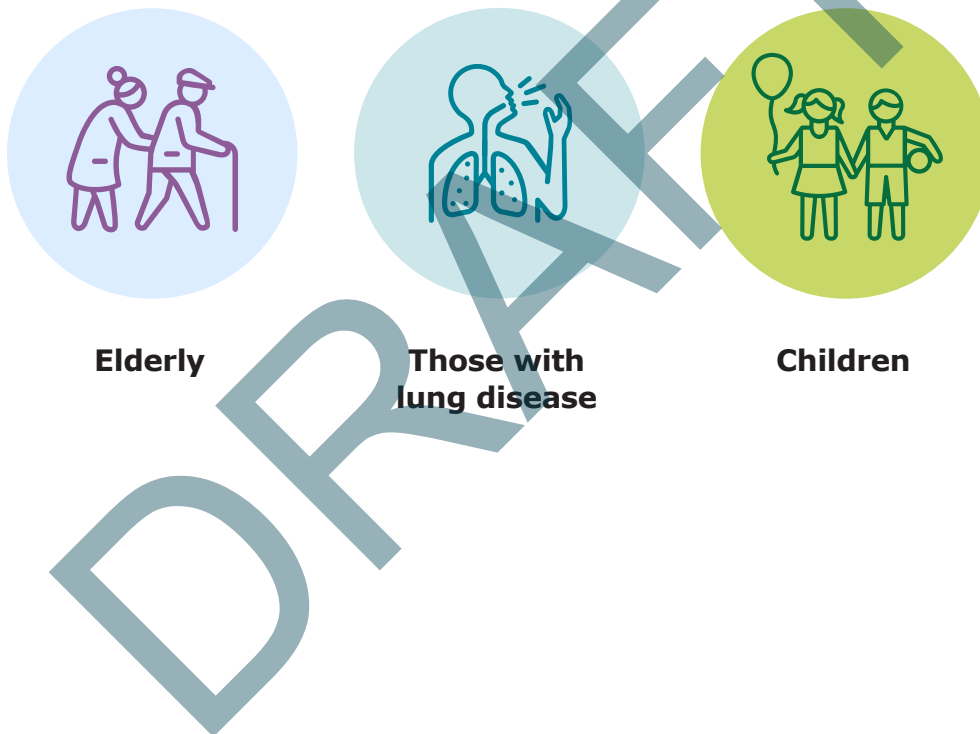
Air pollution in the UK has seen significant improvements in recent decades due to the introduction of policies and measures designed to reduce emissions from transport, industry, businesses, and homes. However, although ambient air quality in the UK is generally considered good, elevated pollution levels still occur in many towns and cities across the country.

2.1 HEALTH AND AIR QUALITY

It is estimated that human-made air pollution in the UK leads to 28,000 to 36,000 premature deaths every year.¹ Episodes of higher air pollution increase hospital admissions and mortality, with harmful short-term effects including exacerbating symptoms for those with pre-existing heart and lung conditions, such as asthma.

There is also growing evidence that air pollution is associated with other long-term ailments which are related to reduced life expectancy such as stroke, lung cancer, respiratory conditions and cardiovascular disease, dementia, diabetes, and adverse pregnancy outcomes.^{2,3}

Air pollution affects everyone who lives and works in the New Forest throughout their lives. The most vulnerable groups include young children, the elderly, pregnant women, those living in deprived communities, and those with pre-existing heart or lung conditions.⁴



Elderly

**Those with
lung disease**

Children

-
- 1 Office for Health Improvement & Disparities, Air Pollution: applying All Our Health 2022 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/air-pollution-applying-all-our-health/air-pollution-applying-all-our-health>
 - 2 Public Health England (2014), PHE-CRCE-010: Estimating local mortality burdens associated with particulate air pollution. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/estimating-local-mortality-burdens-associated-with-particulate-air-pollution>
 - 3 World Health Organisation. (2022) Ambient (outdoor) air pollution. Available at: [https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/ambient-\(outdoor\)-air-quality-and-health](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/ambient-(outdoor)-air-quality-and-health)
 - 4 Office for National Statistics. (2020) Local authority ageing statistics, based on annual mid-year population estimates (2019). Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/ageing-population-estimates/editions/time-series/versions/1>

2.2 WHICH POLLUTANTS AFFECT OUR HEALTH?

The key pollutants that have an impact on our health are nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM).

Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂)



What is it?

- Colourless gas with one nitrogen atom and two oxygen atoms
- One of a group of gases called nitrogen oxides (NO_x)

Where does it come from?

- Formed during combustion e.g. from power generation, industrial combustion and road transport
- Other nitrogen oxides can convert to NO₂ in the atmosphere

Where is it found?

- High concentrations are often seen near busy roads

How does it affect me?

- Frequent exposure to high NO₂ concentrations increases risk of **respiratory illnesses, cardiopulmonary effects, asthma attacks, and decreased lung function**

Particulate Matter (PM)



What is it?

- Solid particles (dust) and liquid droplets suspended in the air
- Made up of a range of chemicals, some of which can be toxic to human health
- PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, PM_{0.1} are different sizes of particles

Where does it come from?

- Burning fossil fuels and wood, tyre and brake wear
- Also formed by reactions between other pollutants in the air

Where is it found?

- Across wide areas, but particularly near roads and industry

How does it affect me?

- Large particles can irritate the eyes, nose and throat, and lead to increased risk of cardio-respiratory illnesses
- Smaller particles can enter the lungs and into the bloodstream, affecting the heart and the brain, and have been associated with numerous health impacts

5 PHE. Estimation of costs to the NHS and social care due to the health impacts of air pollution. London: Public Health England; 2018. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/air-pollution-a-tool-to-estimate-healthcare-costs>

PM_{2.5} is the air pollutant that causes most significant health problems and premature deaths. National modelling estimates suggest that a reduction of 1 µg/m³ of PM_{2.5} in 2017 in England could prevent 50,900 cases of coronary heart disease, 16,500 strokes, 4,200 lung cancers and 9,300 cases of asthma in people aged over 18 by 2035.⁵

Sulphur dioxide (SO₂) is also an important pollutant which is associated with industry. This was historically an issue near the Fawley refinery, but SO₂ concentrations are now well below safe limits in the New Forest.

2.3 HOW IS AIR QUALITY PROTECTED?

Safe levels for each pollutant are determined based on the latest health evidence. In our Air Quality Strategy, we refer to two sources for these safe levels.

UK air quality objectives

In the UK, air pollution concentrations must comply with national Air Quality Objectives. Limit values are set for individual pollutants and are made up of a concentration value, an averaging time over which it is to be measured, the number of exceedances allowed per year, if any, and a date by which it must be achieved.⁶ Some pollutants have more than one limit value covering different averaging times.

Through the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) system local authorities are required to assess air quality in their area and to designate Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) if improvements are necessary.

In 2023, the UK Air Quality Standards for PM_{2.5} were reviewed to reflect the new WHO guidelines under the UK Environment Act 2021.⁷ The new annual mean PM_{2.5} concentration target is 10 µg/m³ to be met across England by 2040, a 50% decrease from the current UK PM_{2.5} air quality standard.⁸ The Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 for England also set an interim annual mean PM_{2.5} concentration target of 12 µg/m³ at all monitoring stations by January 2028.

Local authorities are expected to contribute to meeting these targets by taking action to reduce emissions and the precursors of PM_{2.5}, and we expect to see a larger focus on actions to reduce particulate matter emissions in the coming years.

In 2021, the World Health Organisation (WHO) set out updated guidelines for air quality that are based on the latest body of evidence on the effects of different air pollutants on human health.

6 Defra, UK Air Quality Limits, accessed at <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/air-pollution/uk-limits>

7 UK Environment Act 2021. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents/enacted>

8 Defra, Air quality targets in the Environment Act, 2022. <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/library/air-quality-targets>

9 World Health Organisation, WHO global air quality guidelines: particulate matter (PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀), ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide and carbon monoxide, 2021. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240034228>

WHO guidelines

The World Health Organization (WHO) Air Quality Guidelines are a set of global recommendations aimed at reducing the adverse health effects of air pollution. These guidelines are set based on the latest available health evidence. In 2021, the World Health Organisation (WHO) set out updated guidelines for air quality that are based on the latest body of evidence on the effects of different air pollutants on human health.⁹ The new guidelines for PM_{2.5} are based on there being no evidence for a safe level of exposure to PM_{2.5}. Concentrations currently exceed these guidelines across much of the UK and Europe.

Table 2-1: Annual mean pollutant concentration limit values in micrograms per cubic metre (µg/m³)

Pollutant	UK Air Quality Standard	Government Target	World Health Organisation Air Quality Guideline
Nitrogen dioxide (NO ₂)	40	-	10
Particulate matter (PM ₁₀)	40	-	15
Particulate matter (PM _{2.5})	20	10 µg/m ³ to be achieved by 2040	5

3

Air quality in the New Forest



In the New Forest, air quality is generally good and in compliance with the legal limits set by the UK Government.

On average, air quality in the New Forest is better than in other local authorities in Hampshire, excluding the Isle of Wight. In particular, average concentrations in the New Forest are significantly lower than in neighbouring Southampton and Bournemouth. However, there are noted differences across the New Forest and concentrations in our towns are similar to those seen in other towns across Hampshire.

Table 3-1 shows the average PM2.5 concentration in each Local Authority in Hampshire, and the percentage of mortality attributable to particulate air pollution.

Table 3-1: Population weighted average PM_{2.5} concentration and fraction of mortality attributable to particulate air pollution in local authorities in Hampshire in 2022.

Source: Office for Health Improvement & Disparities

Local Authority	Air pollution: fine particulate matter	Percentage of mortality attributable to particulate air pollution
Basingstoke and Deane	8.1	6.1%
East Hampshire	7.1	5.3%
Eastleigh	8.0	5.9%
Fareham	7.8	5.8%
Gosport	7.7	5.7%
Hart	8.0	6.0%
Havant	7.4	5.6%
Isle of Wight	6.4	4.8%
New Forest	7.0	5.2%
Portsmouth	8.3	6.2%
Rushmoor	9.0	6.7%
Southampton	8.2	6.1%
Test Valley	7.6	5.7%
Winchester	7.4	5.6%

In 2022, 5.2% of deaths among individuals aged 30 and older in New Forest were associated with long term exposure to particulate air pollution at current levels.¹⁰ This is slightly lower than the national average of 5.8% and is the lowest of all local authorities in Hampshire excluding the Isle of Wight.

3.1 HOW DO WE MONITOR LOCAL AIR QUALITY?

Monitoring air quality provides evidence of air pollution concentrations across New Forest, which helps us to take action if any concerning increases in pollutant concentrations are noted. Air quality is currently measured using four automatic monitors, which assess NO₂, PM₁₀ and SO₂ concentration levels. We do not currently monitor PM_{2.5} concentrations at continuous monitors in the New Forest.

We also monitor NO₂ at 46 diffusion tube sites as of 2024. Most of these sites are in urban areas near roads. Diffusion tube readings are taken once a month and are quality assured following national guidance.¹¹

¹⁰ Office for Health Improvements & Disparities, Public Health Outcomes Framework: D01 – Fraction of mortality attributable to particulate air pollution (new method), 2021 <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/public-health-outcomes-framework/data#page/4/gid/1000043/pat/6/par/E12000002/atj/402/are/E06000009/iid/93861/age/230/sex/4/cat/-1/ctp/-1/yrr/1/cid/4/tbm/1>

¹¹ [National Bias Adjustment Factors | LAQM \(defra.gov.uk\)](https://www.defra.gov.uk/air-quality/laqm/)

We publish the results of our monitoring each year in an Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR). These can be found on our website.¹²

The council has also secured a number of portable Zephyr sensors which can be deployed around the district to carry out short-term monitoring of PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} levels. The results of this monitoring can be used to provide advice and educational resources to residents.



3.2 RECENT SUCCESSES

In recent years, measured NO₂ and PM₁₀ concentrations in the New Forest District have reduced due to a combination of national, regional, and local policies, together with the introduction of cleaner technologies over time. Some recent successes are highlighted below.



Redbridge Causeway

- Defra models NO₂ concentrations along all major roads in the UK to identify roads which exceed the UK Air Quality Objectives.
- High levels of NO₂ were identified on a short stretch of the A35 over the Redbridge Causeway into Southampton.
- As a result, in 2017 New Forest District Council was named in the UK plan for tackling roadside concentrations.
- New Forest District Council and Southampton City Council collaborated on the implementation of measures to improve air quality.
- Detailed local air quality modelling was undertaken and determined that compliance would be achieved by 2019 in a business-as-usual scenario.
- Monitoring since 2019 has demonstrated that concentrations on this road are compliant with the UK Air Quality Objectives.



Revoking the Lyndhurst AQMA

- New Forest District Council declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Lyndhurst due to an exceedance of the annual mean NO₂ UK Air Quality Objective in 2005.
- We determined that the main cause was traffic congestion in narrow streets.
- Between 2010 and 2022, NO₂ levels decreased by 10 µg/m³, so concentrations in the AQMA had been compliant with the Air Quality Objective for eight consecutive years leading into 2022.
- This was due to a combination of improvements in traffic sequencing improving traffic flow through the narrowest portions of the road, and improved vehicle emissions technology.
- We commissioned a forecasting study to demonstrate that no new exceedances were likely in future.
- Using this evidence, we revoked the Lyndhurst AQMA in August 2023.

¹² Air pollution – New Forest District Council, <https://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/1002/Air-pollution>

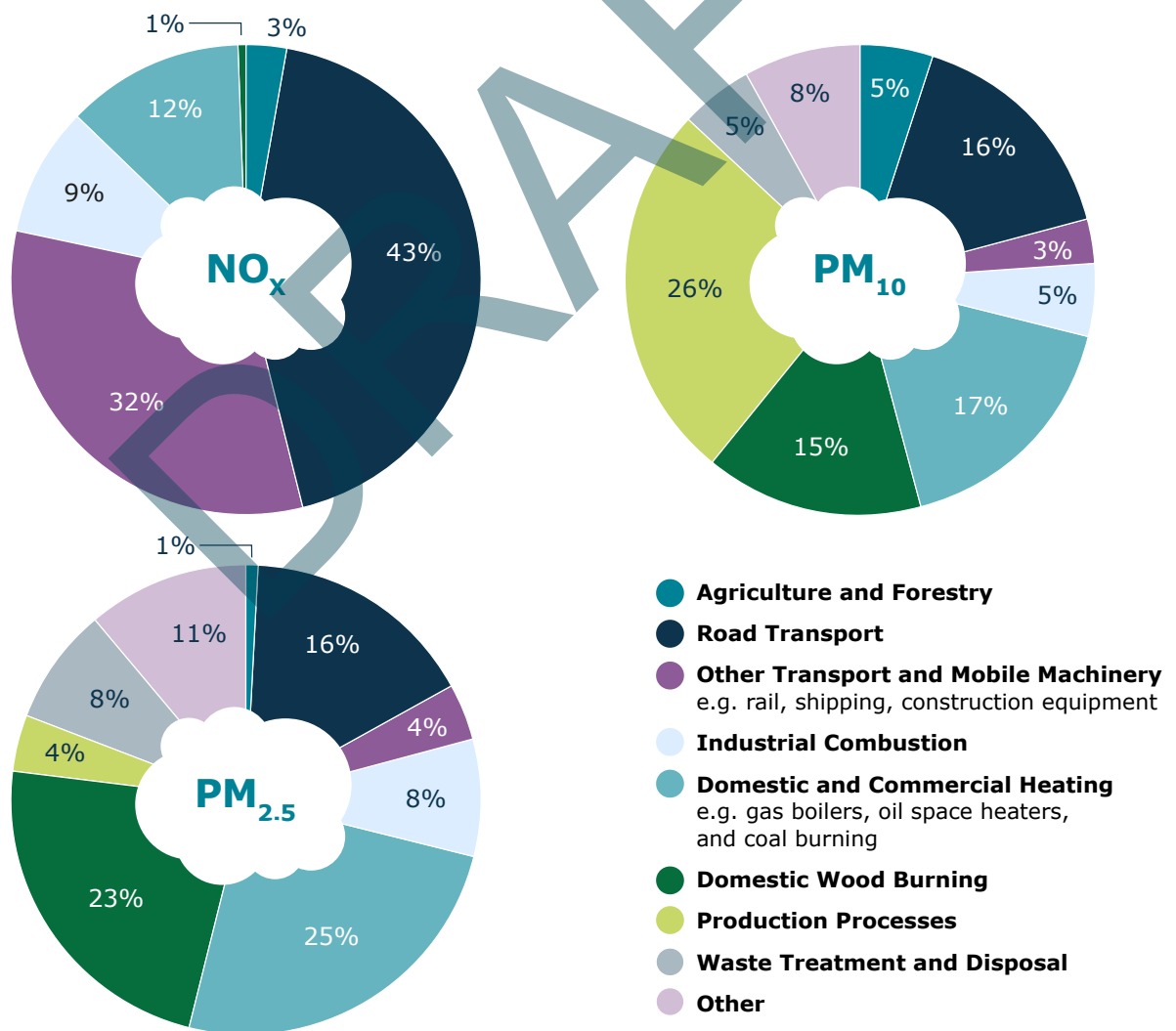
3.3 WHERE DOES AIR POLLUTION IN THE NEW FOREST COME FROM?

Different sources in the New Forest impact air quality. Identifying the sources that have the most significant impact enables us to develop policies that will have the greatest effect on reducing air pollution. **For this strategy, we have analysed emissions in the New Forest using the UK National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory.**¹³

Road transport plays a key role as a primary source of NO₂, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. 96% of visitors arrive to the New Forest in cars or coaches, contributing to these emissions. Other key sources include emissions from commercial, residential, and agricultural sources. Our area is home to one of the largest oil refineries in Europe, as well as significant areas of sand and gravel extraction. As such, local industry is another key source of potential concern for air quality.

Domestic wood burning is also a key source of particulate matter emissions, contributing 23% of total PM_{2.5} emissions in the New Forest District.

Figure 3-1: Sources of emissions in the New Forest



¹⁴ UK National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory <https://naei.beis.gov.uk/>
As of March 2024, the baseline year for this inventory was 2018.

Air quality is **not just a local issue**, as airborne pollution is not contained within district boundaries and can affect neighbouring areas. As a result, we work with neighbouring local authorities to address air quality issues. An example of this is the 'Burn Better' campaign, developed collaboratively with Southampton City Council, Winchester City Council and Eastleigh Borough Council to inform the public on pollutant issues concerning solid fuel burning. Air quality in the New Forest may also be affected by the proximity of Southampton Port emissions.

3.4 CLEAN AIR AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Many sources of air pollution, such as fossil fuel combustion, industry, and agriculture, are also key sources of emissions of greenhouse gas emissions like carbon dioxide (CO₂) and methane. This means that improving air quality by reducing emissions can also help to address climate change.

“Pollutants not only severely impact public health, but also the earth’s climate and ecosystems globally.”

WHO¹⁴

Which air pollutants can contribute to climate change?

While CO₂ in itself is not harmful to human health, it along with other air pollutants can impact our climate:

Ozone is a significant greenhouse gas formed through complex chemical reactions involving nitrogen oxides (NO_x and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in the presence of sunlight. It directly contributes to climate change and prevents plants from absorbing carbon dioxide. Particulate matter can absorb sunlight and contribute to global warming. Other air pollutants can lead to the formation of secondary aerosols. These aerosols can reflect light and therefore affect our climate.

What does this mean for the New Forest?

Limiting the emissions of these pollutants through behavioural change such as shifting away from private vehicle use, improving fuel efficiency in vehicles or improving energy efficiency in homes and workplaces can help to minimise our climate impacts.

In October 2021 the council declared a 'Climate Change and Nature Emergency' as a result of extreme weather and climate impacts at a local, national, and worldwide level. Our Climate Change and Nature Emergency Report and Action Plan¹⁵ outlines our approach for how the Council can demonstrate climate leadership, implementing actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change.

The New Forest National Park Authority has also declared a climate and nature emergency. More information is available at: <https://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/conservation/climate-and-nature-emergency/net-zero-with-nature/>

Ensuring that actions align with long-term prosperity is our ultimate goal and requires a considered approach that balances finances, health, and wellbeing, ecosystems services, cost of living and the needs of future generations.

¹⁴ <https://www.who.int/teams/environment-climate-change-and-health/air-quality-energy-and-health/health-impacts/climate-impacts-of-air-pollution>

¹⁵ New Forest District Council. (2023) Climate Change and Nature Emergency Report and Action Plan 2023. Available at: <https://www.newforest.gov.uk/climatechange>

4

How will we implement this strategy?



4.1 DEVELOP ANNUAL WORK PLANS

New Forest District Council will form a **Steering Group** to oversee the implementation of this Strategy. This Steering Group will include representatives from a range of council departments and include key local stakeholders.

Each year, this Steering Group will **develop a work plan** describing the actions we will take over the following year. These actions will be developed from the Air Quality Strategy's action areas. Each work plan will be included in our Air Quality Annual Status Report, which will be made available on our website. The plan will set out who is responsible for each action, how we expect the measure will safeguard the health of our residents and visitors, and how we will ensure that the work plan acts to reduce health inequalities in the New Forest.

**Figure 4-1:
Members of our
Air Quality
Steering Group**



4.2 MONITORING AND REVIEW

To ensure that we achieve our goals, New Forest District Council will implement a **continuous monitoring and review process for this strategy**. Through this process, we will incorporate new data, any updates to relevant regional or national guidance, and any emerging opportunities.

Data for each action will be used to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the actions in each work plan. Each work plan will include Key Performance Indicators that will allow us to assess the effectiveness of individual measures and make changes where required.

Throughout the life of this strategy we will also **continue to monitor pollution levels in the area and report them annually** in our Annual Status Reports.

4.3 PARTNERSHIPS

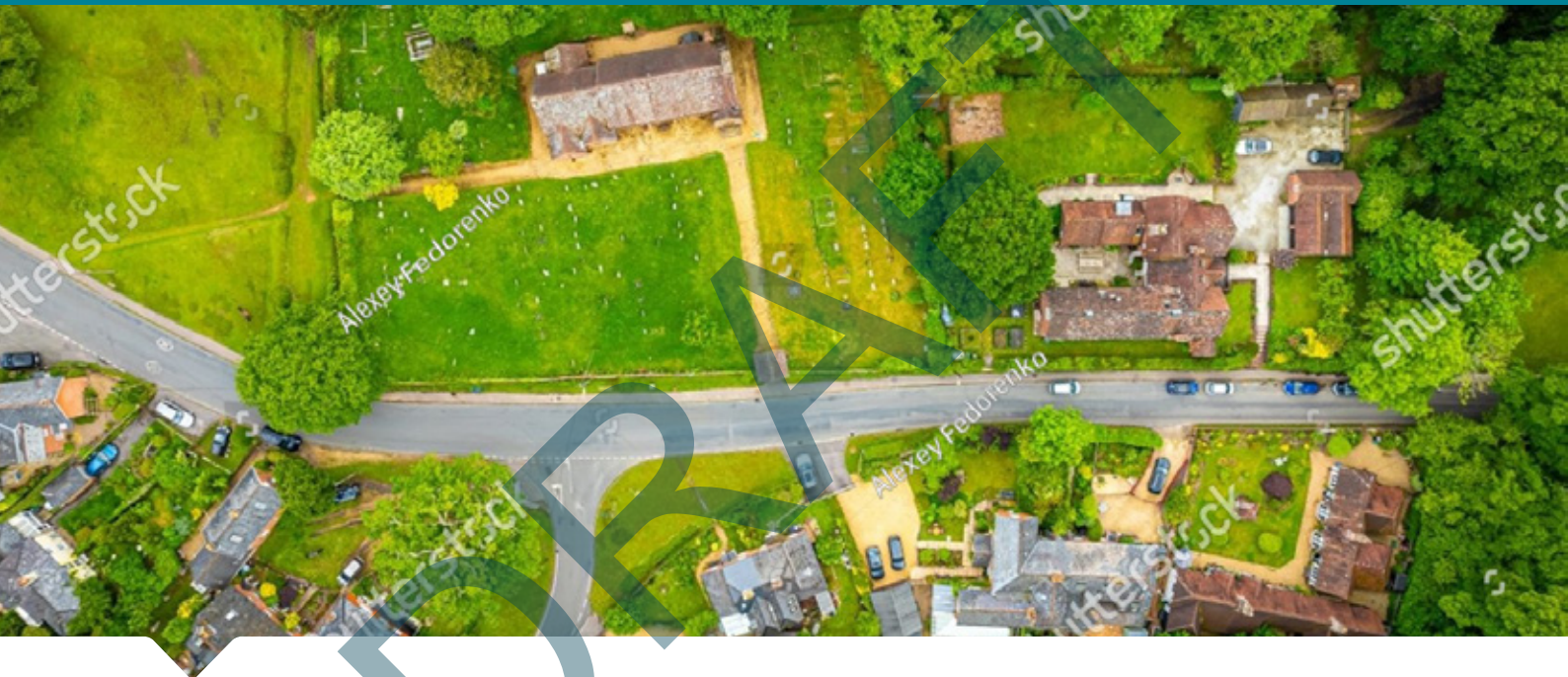
Air pollution is a regional challenge, so **collaborating with neighbouring local authorities and Hampshire County Council is crucial to ensure our success**. We will continue to collaborate with the New Forest National Park Authority and Forestry England for all projects which may affect the National Park and will continue building partnerships with local industry in the district. We will also seek opportunities to join new local and national networks on nature and climate change to deliver regional actions.

We will continue to work as a member of the Partnership for South Hampshire across key areas including energy efficiency, minimising carbon emissions, reducing the need for transport through placemaking, and support for renewable energy development.







For further details on the council's partnership plans, please see: [Health and wellbeing – New Forest District Council](#)

5

Action areas

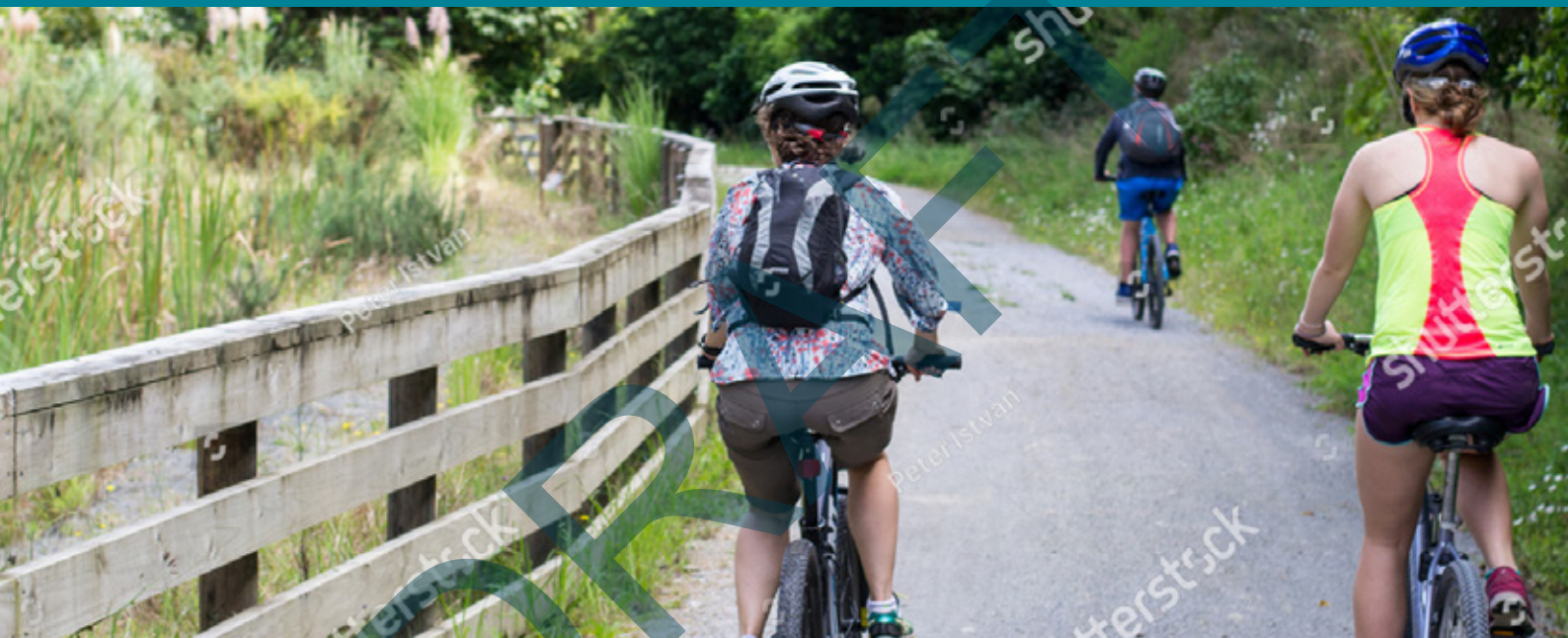


As part of this Air Quality Strategy, New Forest District Council have developed actions across multiple key areas with the aim to improve local air quality:

 <p>1 Public awareness and behaviour change</p>	 <p>2 Reducing health inequalities</p>	 <p>3 Improving our understanding of particulate matter pollution</p>
 <p>4 Wood burning and indoor air pollution</p>	 <p>5 Reducing road traffic emissions</p>	 <p>6 Reducing the impact of new developments</p>

6

Public awareness and behaviour change



6.1 WHY IS PUBLIC AWARENESS IMPORTANT?

Access to high quality, reliable information on air quality is essential so that our residents can make informed decisions to reduce their exposure to air pollution and reduce their personal emissions of harmful pollutants.

Increased awareness empowers individuals to make informed decisions, such as reducing wood burning or choosing alternative means of transport and can also encourage residents to contribute to initiatives aimed at improving air quality.

This Air Quality Strategy aims to help promote the understanding of air quality in the New Forest, provide information on what is being done to improve air quality, and provide information on how to reduce our individual exposure and emissions.

6.2 WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW?

Publishing air quality information

Our website contains links to our latest air quality reports and monitoring data.

We routinely publish our air pollution monitoring data in map format on the Air Quality England website.¹⁶

We are also required to publish an annual local air quality report for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). Annual Status Reports for each year since 2018 can be found on our website.¹⁷

The reports include yearly measured concentrations and an analysis of air pollution in the District. Each report also provides detailed information on the actions that we are taking to improve in the New Forest each year and provides guidance for how you can reduce your own exposure to air pollution.

Public awareness for wood burning

We are currently working with neighbouring authorities (Southampton CC, Winchester CC, and Eastleigh BC) and the Environment Centre to promote cleaner fuels and cleaner wood burning practices. They have been promoting the Wood Burning campaign¹⁸ for the past 3 years, raising awareness of wood smoke on health and the environment through:

- Running face to face events
- Carrying out monitoring in areas where smoke complaints occur
- Production and distribution of flyers to promote clean burning in urban and rural areas
- Engagement with tree surgeons, chimney sweeps, and stove and fireplace suppliers
- Sharing 'burn better' information on our social media platforms.



¹⁶ Air Quality in England. (2024) New Forest District Council Monitoring Data. Available at: https://www.airqualityengland.co.uk/local-authority/?la_id=236

¹⁷ New Forest District Council. (2024) Air Pollution. Available at: <https://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/1002/Air-pollution>

¹⁸ The Environment Centre. (2024) Wood burning. Available at: <https://environmentcentre.com/wood-burning/>

6.3 WHAT WILL WE DO NEXT?

Update our air quality website

We are committed to making it easier for our residents to access important air quality information. The main source for air quality information in our area is the New Forest District Council website, so we will **update our website to make it more informative and accessible**. This could include improving access to relevant information, such as showing real-time air quality mapping data from our monitoring stations, providing more detailed health advice, and promoting educational resources.



We will also work with other teams in the council including our Climate and Sustainability Team as they make updates to their web pages, and work with neighbouring councils to identify opportunities to make further improvements.

Work to raise awareness of travel behavioural change

We will continue to develop and support **awareness campaigns for a range of audiences across the New Forest**. Providing accurate, reliable information on the potential impacts of different modes of transport on air quality helps inspire those who can make small changes to their daily routines, whether through using alternative modes, or turning off their engines while idling.

Encourage the shift to more sustainable modes of transport

We will work with partners such as Hampshire County Council, National Highways, the New Forest National Park Authority, Forestry England and transport operators to encourage and support people to shift from short car journeys to more sustainable modes such as walking, cycling and public transport. This will include supporting the County Council as the Transport Authority alongside other partners to extend and improve public transport services.

We will also continue to work with Hampshire County Council on the development of the Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan to improve active travel facilities across the district and encourage people to shift from short car journeys to walking/cycling/wheeling.

Facilitate the shift to zero emission fuels

We will work with partners and the local community to support the uptake of electric vehicles and provision of EV charging infrastructure in new homes and commercial premises as well as work with HCC to support the installation of rapid public EV charging points.

We will work with partners and the local community to support the uptake of electric vehicles and provision of EV charging infrastructure in new homes and commercial premises.

Public engagement to understand the most important issues for our residents and visitors

Understanding our residents' concerns allows us to develop more effective public awareness campaigns and develop actions that **address the issues that are most important to those who live and work here.**

Throughout the life of this strategy, we will use a range of approaches to public engagement to understand the most important air quality issues for our residents, town and parish councils and visitors. We will identify best practice examples from other local authorities to build on the work we are already doing. We will also **identify opportunities** within our existing engagement programme to include air quality information, for example through work with schools.

Develop our partnerships and communications with industry in the New Forest

We will build strong partnerships and communications with our industrial sites such as the Fawley Refinery and other regulators such as the Environment Agency. These partnerships will allow us to **improve awareness and understanding of air quality around industrial sites**, explain how these sites are permitted, and promote the emissions reduction practices that they employ to minimise their air pollution impacts.

Campaign for heathland burning awareness

Controlled heath burning is an essential part of the regeneration cycle in the New Forest and is a crucial tool for maintaining biodiversity and encouraging new plant growth. However, this leads to increased air pollution on burning days, so it is important that residents and visitors have information on why it is done, how it is managed, and where controlled burning is due to take place to allow vulnerable individuals to avoid affected areas. We will work towards implementing **an awareness campaign to help inform residents and visitors about heath burning** and provide more information to enable residents to make informed choices.



6.3 WHAT CAN YOU DO?

We can all take some simple steps to make a big difference in reducing local air pollution and help protect our families and communities.

Figure 6-1: Actions you can take to reduce local air pollution



7

Reducing health inequalities

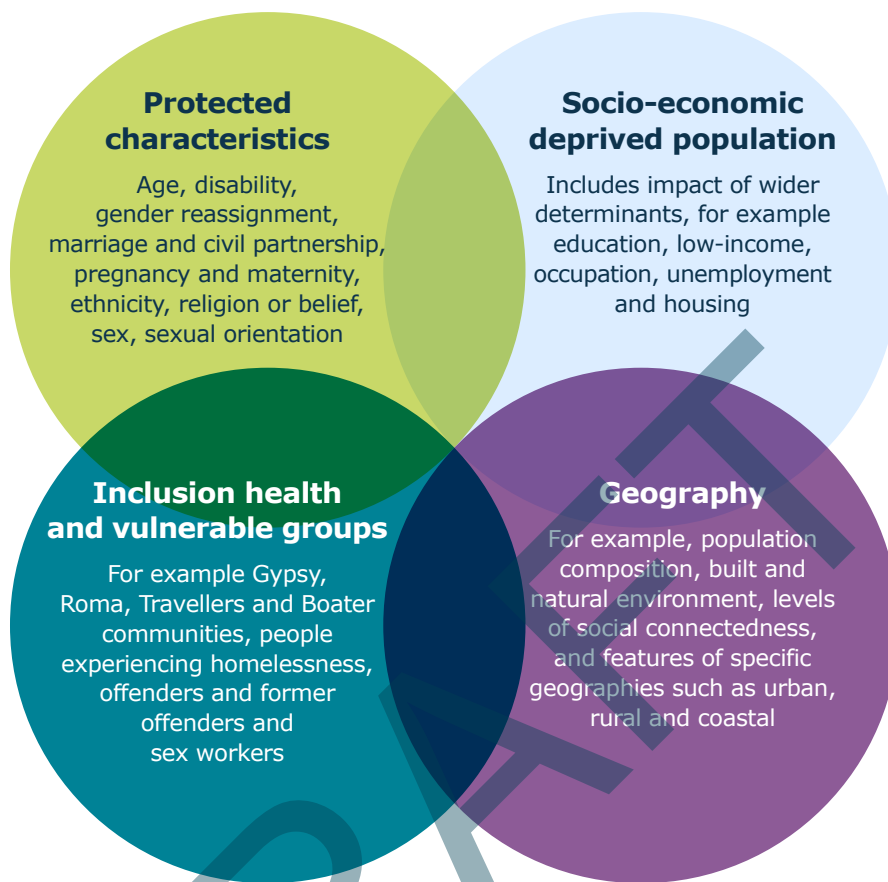


7.1 HEALTH INEQUALITIES AND AIR QUALITY

The environmental conditions around us shape our health throughout our lives.

Differences in these conditions across populations impact access to good health at every stage of life, affecting how we think, feel, act, and, ultimately, our well-being. There are a broad range of individual characteristics that have been identified as contributing to health inequalities:

Figure 7-1: Individual characteristics that have been identified as contributing to health inequalities



Exposure to air pollution disproportionately affects vulnerable populations and can exacerbate existing health disparities. Lower-income communities are more likely to experience the adverse impacts of air pollution as they are more likely to:

- Have existing medical conditions;
- Live in areas with poorer outdoor and indoor environments
- Have less access to jobs, healthy food, decent housing, and green spaces, which all contribute to poorer health.

These disadvantages are often experienced in tandem and may affect people throughout their lives.

7.2 AIR QUALITY AND HEALTH INEQUALITY IN THE NEW FOREST

Air pollution affects everyone who lives and works in the New Forest, but there are some groups that are particularly vulnerable.

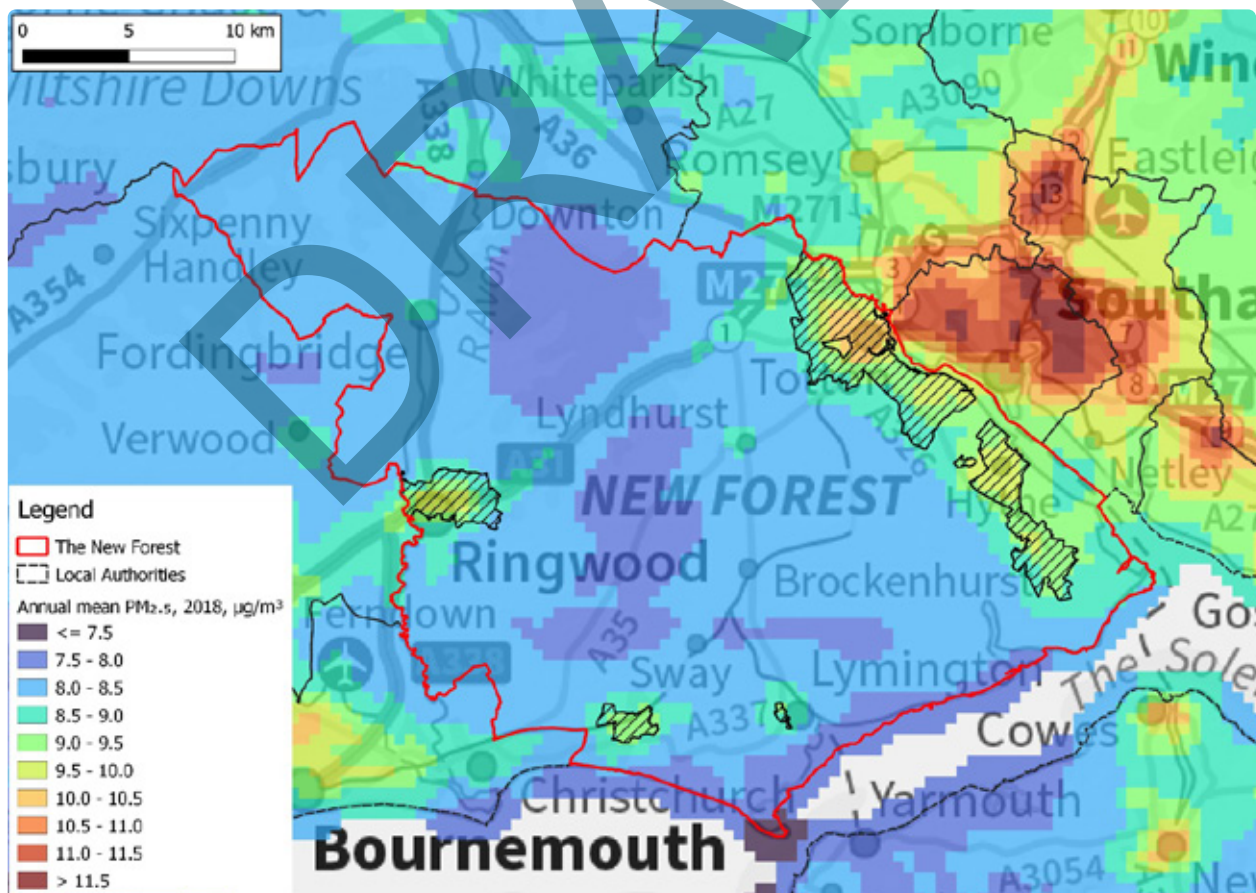
In the New Forest, 16% of the population is aged 15 or under, and 29% are 65 or older. In particular, **the New Forest has an older population than the rest of Hampshire, and as a result our population is more vulnerable to air pollution.**

On average, the New Forest is prosperous compared to the rest of the UK. Unemployment remains low according to the most recent ONS census, with 53% of the population in employment and 33% retired. However, there are a number of more disadvantaged parts of the District, particularly in our towns and in the Waterside area.

As a first step to understanding air quality and health inequality in the New Forest, we have identified vulnerable areas by combining deprivation and population data published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government¹⁹ and annual average PM_{2.5} concentration data for 2018 published by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs.²⁰ Figure 7-1 shows areas where the annual average PM_{2.5} concentration in 2018 was within 10% of the new PM_{2.5} target with either:

- a greater proportion of the population aged 60 or over than the average across Hampshire;
- a greater proportion of the population aged 15 or under than the average across Hampshire; or
- an Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) below the average for England.

Figure 7-1: Vulnerable communities in the New Forest overlaid on average PM_{2.5} concentrations, 2018



19 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

20 <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/data/laqm-background-maps?year=2018>

Our analysis shows that there are **vulnerable communities in several of our towns**, particularly in the Waterside area including Totton, Marchwood and Hythe. Ringwood and parts of New Milton and Lymington are also home to communities that are more vulnerable to poorer air quality.

The majority of these areas are vulnerable as the result of having a high proportion of residents over 60. Parts of the areas highlighted in New Milton, Totton, Hythe, and Blackfield are also vulnerable due to their communities being more deprived than the average. Those living in properties that front busier roads tend to be more deprived than the average. These properties are also more likely to be rental properties or social housing, and those living in these properties are exposed to higher levels of air pollution from traffic emissions than the wider population.

More information on air quality and inequalities is available from the Hampshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.²¹ This is a resource for mapping New Forest residents' health and inequalities.

7.3 WHAT WILL WE DO NEXT?

Investigate links between demographics and air quality

We will work with Public Health to **better understand the available data on links between demographics and air quality**, with a specific focus on identifying the areas most vulnerable to health inequalities and understanding ways in which these can be addressed. We will talk to data providers to understand what information is available to us, particularly in vulnerable communities.

Incorporate reducing inequalities into our annual work plans

Our **Air Quality Strategy Steering Group will ensure the equitable distribution of air quality benefits in any action we undertake**. The Air Quality Steering Group will consist of a number of different stakeholders from both public health and environmental health and will meet as frequently as required to discuss potential areas of concern and develop solutions.

In each annual work plan, we will specifically address how the actions will improve health inequalities in the New Forest. We will consult our Public Health colleagues to ensure that each work plan is aligned with our overall strategy for reducing health inequalities.

Identify and deliver targeted measures for vulnerable communities

We will conduct a study to **identify, and if appropriate, deliver targeted measures for vulnerable communities** in areas with poorer air quality. These measures could include engagement and public awareness building, making sure that information is accessible to those affected. These measures will be incorporated into our annual work plans.

²¹ Hampshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, available at: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/publichealth/jsna>

8

Improving our understanding of particulate matter pollution



8.1 WHY IS PM_{2.5} IMPORTANT?

Fine particulate matter, known as PM_{2.5}, is considered to be one of the most dangerous pollutants because it can bypass the lung's defences and enter the bloodstream, circulating through the body. This can lead to serious health conditions including cardiovascular and respiratory disease, and even cancers. It affects more people than other pollutants and has health impacts even at very low concentrations.

As a result, under the Environment Act 2021, the UK Government has set 2 legally binding targets to reduce concentrations:

- an annual mean concentration target for PM_{2.5} of 10 µg/m³ across England by 2040
- an average population exposure reduction target of 35% in 2040 compared to a 2018 baseline

The Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 for England also set an interim annual mean $PM_{2.5}$ concentration target of $12 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ at all monitoring stations by January 2028.

This means that **all local authorities, even those where $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations are below the annual mean target, are expected to take action to improve air quality.**

$PM_{2.5}$ is a regional pollutant, so many sources of the $PM_{2.5}$ pollution in the New Forest are outside our control. However, we do have control over significant sources like road transport and wood burning, and our emissions affect concentrations across the region. The UK National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory, published by the UK Government, shows that emissions $PM_{2.5}$ in the New Forest are higher than in neighbouring areas, mostly as a result of domestic and commercial combustion, and woodburning.

8.2 PARTICULATE MATTER IN THE NEW FOREST

We do not continuously monitor $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations in the New Forest but we can estimate $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations using PM_{10} measurements following UK Government guidance. In 2022, $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations at our monitoring station in Totton were estimated to be around $13 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, which is above the 2040 target of $10 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.

National $PM_{2.5}$ modelling published by Defra indicates that concentrations away from sources such as roads and industry are likely to be below the target already. This modelling also shows that concentrations in the New Forest are relatively low compared to other local authorities in Hampshire.

8.3 WHAT WILL WE DO NEXT?

Investigate monitoring options for $PM_{2.5}$

In order to improve our understanding of particulate matter pollution in the New Forest, we will first seek to **introduce $PM_{2.5}$ monitoring in the New Forest**. This will help us to establish a baseline for current $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations and ensure that $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations can be measured to understand changes over time.

Options for monitoring arrangements might include developing a network of low-cost sensors to understand how $PM_{2.5}$ varies over a wider area, or using continuous analysers, which will provide international reference standard data at limited locations (similar to our current PM_{10} monitoring). We will assess these options to determine the most effective approach.

Identify any PM_{2.5} hotspots

We will use our monitoring data and consider the use of modelling to **identify areas where PM_{2.5} concentrations exceed the 2040 government targets**. Using this information, our Steering Group will be able to decide whether targeted local actions are required for PM_{2.5} in particular areas.


Detailed source apportionment of PM_{2.5} concentrations

We will carry out **detailed source apportionment of PM_{2.5} concentrations if hotspots are identified** to tell us in detail where pollution in any hotspots comes from. This will allow us to develop effective, targeted work plans. It will also help us understand how much of our residents' exposure to PM_{2.5} is from sources that the council controls, helping us set to set our reduction goals.

Develop actions to reduce emissions

Our Air Quality Steering Group will **develop and agree the best approach to reducing PM_{2.5} emissions in the New Forest**, including targeted and district-wide measures.

We expect that many of the actions we are already taking will also contribute to reducing PM_{2.5} emissions. However, in the meantime, we are continuing to work on our existing plans that will help reduce particulate pollution, especially our Burn Better Campaign.



We will carry out detailed source apportionment of PM_{2.5} concentrations if hotspots are identified to tell us in detail where pollution in any hotspots comes from. This will allow us to develop effective, targeted work plans.

DRAFT

9

Wood burning and indoor air pollution



9.1 MANAGING OUR EXPOSURE TO INDOOR AIR POLLUTION

Many of us spend the majority of our time indoors, so understanding how our households contribute to air pollution and how to manage indoor air quality is important to safeguard our health and wellbeing.

Our actions as individuals can have a large impact on the health of those around us, for example through wood burning, and on our own health. Common sources of indoor air pollution include cooking and heating appliances, cigarette and e-cigarette smoke, damp and mould, cleaning products, and building materials.

9.2 WOOD BURNING

Wood burners can be a primary source of heating for some households, but the majority of households with a woodburner use them in addition to a central heating system. This is now a major contributor to harmful particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) emissions in the New Forest. We suggest only burning in the home when absolutely necessary or on special occasions to help reduce your exposure to harmful pollutants.

Here is our advice for reducing the air quality impacts of burning wood in your home:

#1 Burn cleaner
Burn cleaner fuels such as smokeless, authorised fuels or dry, well-seasoned wood with low moisture content.

#2 Burn better
Use efficient appliances, don't shut off air or allow the temperature to drop, and service and clean them regularly.

#3 Burn different
If possible, switch heating source to no or low emission fuels, such as renewable, electric or gas alternatives.

9.3 INDOOR AIR POLLUTION

Reducing air pollution in your home is an investment in your health and wellbeing.

These are some simple steps that we can all follow to make sure that we are breathing the cleanest air possible:

Avoid smoking indoors

Use electric or gas heating rather than wood burning

Vacuum regularly

Use a dehumidifier to prevent mould

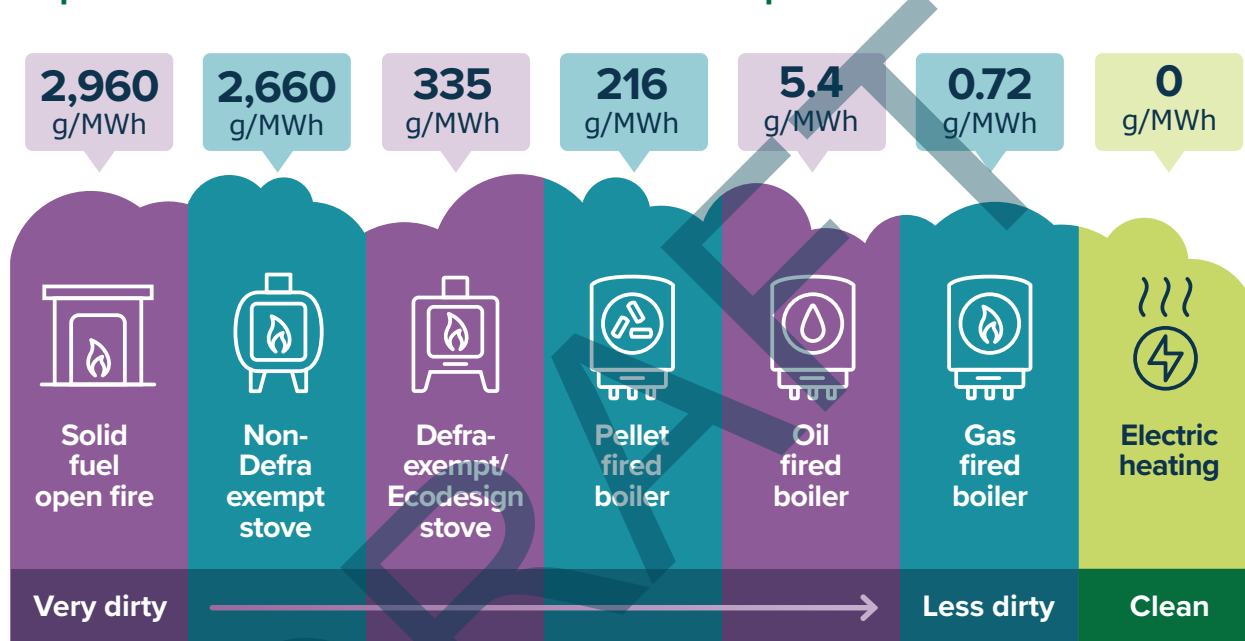
Open windows when you are cooking, cleaning, burning, or using paint

9.4 WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW?

Advocating for cleaner burning practices

Not all forms of burning are equally polluting. This figure from the Chief Medical Officer’s 2022 report²² shows how polluting different types of heating are. We are collaborating with other Hampshire Local Authorities (Southampton City Council, Winchester City Council and Eastleigh Borough Council) and The Environment Centre to advocate for cleaner burning practices in open fires, stoves, and bonfires.

Figure 9-1: The relative PM_{2.5} emissions from domestic heating methods. Adapted from the Chief Medical Officer’s Annual Report 2022.



Improving energy efficiency

Ensuring an efficient and sustainable method of heating your home reduces harmful indoor air pollution and energy costs. However, transitioning to more energy-efficient heating methods can be expensive.

We have several initiatives to make this transition easier:

- **Cosy Homes New Forest Tool:**²³ This tool simplifies the process for residents and landlords to develop a retrofit plan to improve energy efficiency.
- **The Greener Housing Strategy:**²⁴ This strategy focuses on collaborating directly with landlords to ensure compliance with minimum energy efficiency standards.

²² Chief Medical Officer’s Annual Report 2022: Air pollution, available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/chief-medical-officers-annual-report-2022-air-pollution>

²³ Cost Home New Forest. (2024) Start building your free online home energy plan. Available at: <https://cosyhomesnewforest.planbuilder.co.uk/>

²⁴ New Forest District Council. (2022) Greener Housing Strategy 2022 to 2032. Available at: <https://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/3113/Greener-Housing-Strategy-2022-to-2032>

- **The Environment Centre**,²⁵ located in Southampton, provides complimentary guidance to residents seeking to upgrade their homes. They can also help identify relevant funding sources.

9.5 WHAT WILL WE DO NEXT?

Raise awareness of the impact of wood burners

We will **continue to raise awareness of the impact of wood burners**. Currently we are working with the Environment Centre and neighbouring Local Authorities to raise awareness of the impacts of wood burning and also provide information on cleaner heating alternatives, proper usage practices and regulations.

Provide accessible, reliable information on alternatives to wood burners

We will also look for opportunities to **collaborate with regional authorities and suppliers to provide accessible, reliable information for anybody considering alternatives to wood burners** in their home and help users of wood burners minimise their air quality and climate footprint.

Investigate possible approaches to reducing emissions from bonfires

We will **explore the feasibility and effectiveness of adopting a Smoke Control Area in the New Forest**. We will also investigate developing and promoting awareness to reduce bonfire usage within the district following examples set by other Local Authorities. By setting clear guidelines, controls, and enforcement mechanisms, we will be able to help reduce the amount of pollution from bonfires to ensure we maintain compliance with air quality standards.

Public engagement on indoor air quality

We will identify opportunities to **carry out public engagement to better understand how our residents consider and manage their personal indoor air quality**. This could include surveys to find out views on issues including indoor pollutants, mould, and particulate matter to make sure we are tackling the issues that matter most to our residents.

²⁵ New Forest District Council. (2024) Get a grant or loan to improve your home energy efficiency. Available at: <https://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/3437/Get-a-grant-or-loan-to-improve-your-home-energy-efficiency>

10

Reducing road traffic emissions



10.1 ROAD TRANSPORT EMISSIONS IN THE NEW FOREST

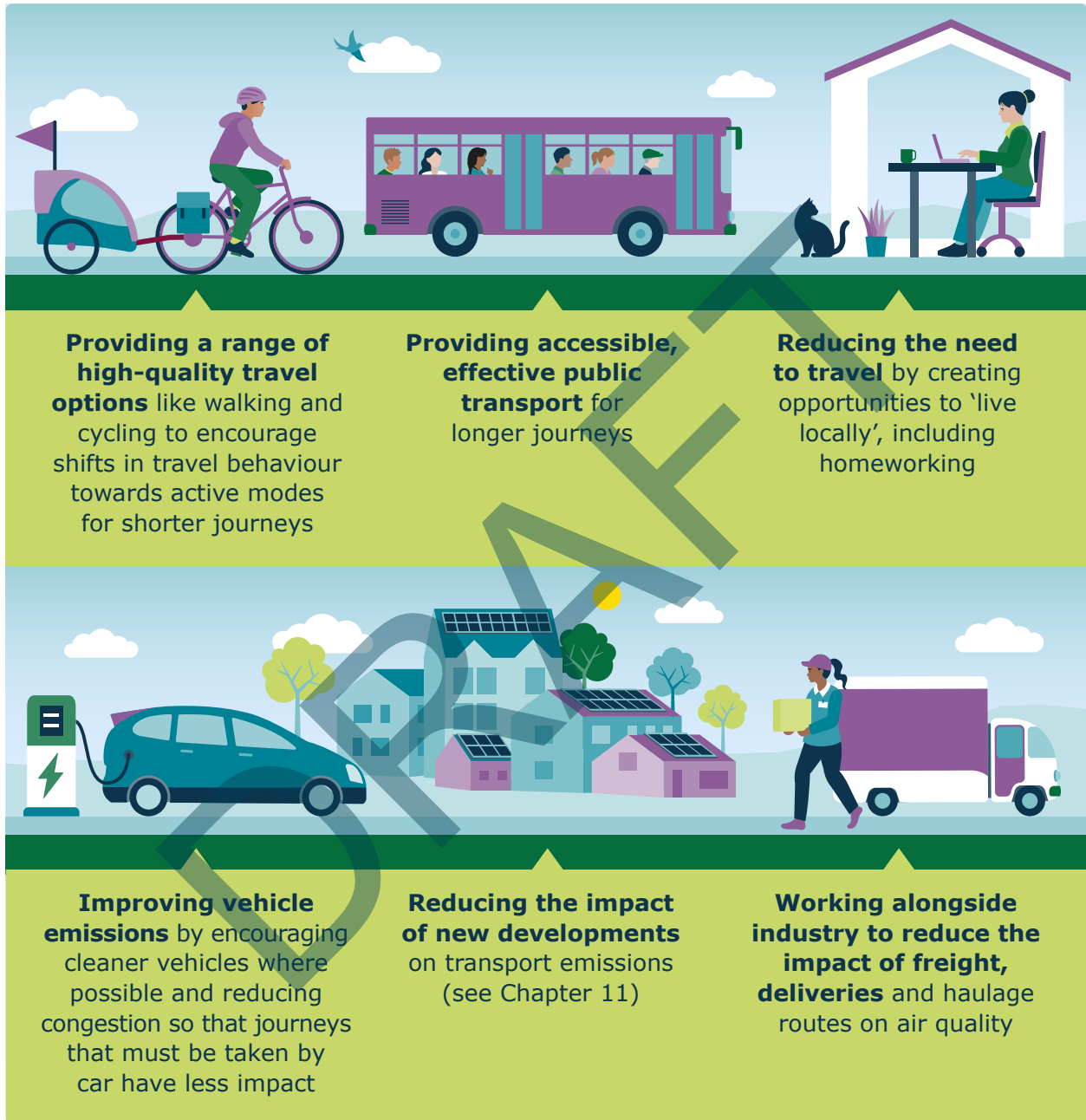
Road traffic emissions have reduced substantially in recent years due to actions and abatement measures New Forest District Council and Hampshire County Council have implemented, combined with technological advances prompted by vehicle emission standards and other measures and policies enacted by the UK government.

However, **road transport is still the largest source of emissions of NO_x and NO₂ in the New Forest and is a major contributor to particulate emissions.** Just under two-thirds of NO_x pollution in the New Forest comes from road transport, and the highest measured NO₂ concentrations are still seen along major roads.

While the largest contributors to air pollution in the New Forest are private cars, HGVs can also be important in areas such as the port, industrial sites, and the oil refinery.

To safeguard the health and wellbeing of everybody who lives and works in the New Forest, we need to continue reducing emissions through a variety of approaches.

Figure 10-1: Ways that we can reduce road traffic emissions



10.2 WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW?

Our transport priorities are set out in several local and regional plans. These outline the local requirements of their respective areas in terms of infrastructure and behavioural change requirements to achieve lower transport emissions and congestion. Policy C8 of the Hampshire Local Transport Plan 4²⁶ gives detail on how Hampshire County Council is managing the harmful health effects of poor air quality.



Enhancing walking and cycling

Shifting to walking and cycling can reduce congestion, improve physical and mental health by encouraging healthier lifestyles and help address air pollution and the climate crisis. **In Hampshire, 1 in 6 commuting trips are less than 1.25 miles, but 51% of these are made by car.**

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans are a strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements required at the local level including proposed cycling network improvements and identifying important walking centres. The Waterside Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan is now complete, and we have partnered with Hampshire County Council and the New Forest National Park Authority to produce a Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan for the entire District and National Park. We will support the introduction of new infrastructure by promoting active travel and supporting schemes to make it easier to use active travel as set out in Chapter 6.

²⁶ Hampshire County Council (2024) Local Transport Plan 4. Available at <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/localtransportplan>

Using the planning system to manage and improve emissions

The New Forest District area is covered by two local plans, prepared by NFDC and the New Forest National Park Authority respectively. New Forest District Council's statutory environmental health responsibilities cover the whole of the New Forest District and our Environmental Health team are a consultee on relevant planning applications within the New Forest District area of the National Park.

Objective SO2 of the Local Plan Part 1 (2020)²⁷ is to manage and where possible reduce or mitigate activities that unacceptably impact on air quality. Policy CCC1 builds on this by being clear that development should not result in pollution or hazards which prejudice the health and safety of communities and their environments, including air quality. It seeks to ensure that appropriate measures are required to prevent, control, mitigate or offset the impacts or risks of development on community health and safety. We require new developments to prioritise safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle access, linking to existing pedestrian networks where possible. Wherever there are existing footpaths, cycle routes, or public transport access to a proposed development, these are required to be retained and improved by the development. We also seek to ensure that development is built in the right place in accessible locations near public transport and services in order to reduce the need to travel by car.

In addition, new developments that may have additional mitigation needs will be required to produce a Travel Plan, setting out measures to promote and encourage sustainable travel.

New Forest District Council's planning guidance on Parking Standards (2022)²⁸ also requires developers to enable the convenient installation of charging points for electric vehicles in residential properties. Furthermore, the council's guidance on Planning for Climate Change (2024)²⁹ seeks net zero carbon development which produces lower carbon emissions (and related particulates) through reduced space heating demand. Related installation of renewable energy generation (e.g. photovoltaic panels) is also encouraged.

Promoting active travel for visitors

The New Forest receives a large number of visitors, 96% of whom arrive by car. As part of our plan to reduce traffic on our roads, we are encouraging these visitors to use public transport or active travel links into the New Forest as well as within the National Park. This includes sustainable travel options such as the New Forest Tour.

The New Forest contains more than 100 miles of waymarked cycle routes, much of it off the public highway and traffic-free. The National Park highlights popular cycle routes and highlights the locations of cycle hire shops in the area.³⁰

We are also promoting active travel for our residents, as described in Chapter 6.

27 [Local Plan 2016-2036 Part One FINAL.pdf \(newforest.gov.uk\)](#)

28 [Parking Standards SPD April 2022.pdf \(newforest.gov.uk\)](#)

29 [Climate Change SPD Adopted April 2024.pdf \(newforest.gov.uk\)](#)

30 Forest England. (2021) Cycle routes map: The New Forest National Park. Available at: https://www.forestryengland.uk/sites/default/files/documents/New-Forest_Cycle-Routes-Map_2021_0.pdf

Enhancing public transport

For many people, public transport provides an essential means of getting around for their daily lives, and using public transport can reduce congestion and road traffic emissions. Our goal is to **make public transport more attractive, cheaper, and accessible to more people**, as the first choice for medium and longer journeys.

Recent schemes include improving bus stops with Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) in Totton and Hythe, improvements to bus lanes and crossing points in Marchwood, and accessibility improvements at Totton Rail Station.

Reducing the need for travel

Avoiding carbon-intensive activities by providing opportunities to 'live locally' as set out in the Hampshire Local Transport Plan 4 can significantly reduce both the number and length of journeys made every day, leading to significant carbon savings and cleaner air. This includes not only transportation and placemaking improvements, but also expanding digital and mobile connectivity. This will allow residents, particularly those in rural areas, to access jobs, services, and other opportunities and activities online from home if they choose. These priorities are echoed in the Waterside Transport Strategy and Action Plan, with the additional focus of sustainable cargo transport, particularly through the development of rail links to the Waterside area, reducing the dependence on polluting Heavy Goods Vehicles.

10.3 WHAT WILL WE DO NEXT?

Utilise current road infrastructure to reduce congestion and improve air quality in the locality

We have identified **reducing congestion, improving accessibility, and improving road safety** on the A326, A35 and A337 as a key objective. As part of this bid to reduce congestion, there will also be an investigation into capacity improvements on the M3, M27 and A31, to allow for smoother traffic flows throughout the New Forest.

Additional improvements could include adding cycling lanes or carrying out measures to improve traffic flow on key roads in the area.

Continue to improve our walking and cycling infrastructure

Actions to encourage a shift to active travel could include installing more bicycle parking in key hubs and ensuring connectivity between our different cycle and walking routes. We will also investigate opportunities to reallocate road space away from vehicles to walking and cycling healthy streets.

We will continue to work with the County Council, the New Forest National Park Authority and Forestry England to improve our walking and cycling infrastructure and develop our Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan to **make travelling on foot or by bike as pleasant and convenient as possible**.

Work with Hampshire County Council to increase reach of public transport services

By **increasing the reach of public transport services** and reaching more rural communities, we will allow more people to switch to public transport, reducing the need for private vehicle journeys.

This will be achieved by expanding our public transport services, including supporting additional routes, increasing the frequency of bus and rail services, and making improvements to morning, evening, and Sunday services. The new Hampshire Local Transport Plan 4²⁶ and the Hampshire Enhanced Partnership Plan³¹ set out Hampshire Council's plan for improving bus services.

In the longer term, we will support the County Council in exploring more flexible and responsive public transport options to increase the reach of our public transport services.

Reduce emissions from council vehicles

Vehicles are significant contributors to air pollution in the New Forest, so we need to reduce vehicle emissions to ensure the health of our residents and visitors. We will lead by example and will **replace our vehicle fleet with low emission vehicles** as part of our commitment to achieve Net Zero by 2050. We will also seek out opportunities to optimise the total number of trips made by our vehicles and ensure that staff are driving in an efficient and effective manner, reducing fuel use, and avoiding excessive braking where possible, as per the council's Fleet Management Protocol (2024).

Improve infrastructure for electric vehicles

We will seek out opportunities to improve infrastructure for electric vehicles to make it easier to own an electric vehicle in the New Forest. We currently have approximately 60 EV chargers in New Forest District Council car parks, and we will continuously support our partners in assessing the localised need to increase this capacity to make sure that chargers are installed in the right places. We will work with commercial partners and Hampshire County Council to bid for government funding to deliver rapid charging points.

Reduce impacts from freight on air quality

HGVs can be a significant contributor to air pollutant emissions in areas with high numbers of deliveries such as the port, industrial sites, warehouses and the oil refinery. We will continue to work with local industry to find ways to minimise the impact of vital freight, deliveries and haulage routes on air quality.

31 Hampshire County Council (2022) Hampshire Enhanced Partnership Plan, <https://democracy.hants.gov.uk/documents/s91773/Appendix%201.pdf>

11

Reducing the impact of new developments



11.1 NEW DEVELOPMENTS AND AIR QUALITY

New Forest District Council is working to enhance quality of life for local residents and provide more housing and infrastructure to meet both local needs and national policy objectives.

However, **new developments can put pressure on local air quality**, both from the pollution generated during construction and from heating and traffic pollution generated once the developments are complete. Successful developments strike the right balance between growth and conservation, so it is important that the impact of construction and new developments is kept to a minimum.

11.2 WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW?

Planning

Our **Air Quality in New Developments Supplementary Planning Document**³² guides developers on how they should incorporate sustainable development and air quality within their designs. As part of the planning process, developers are required to submit a detailed report assessing the impact of their proposed development on local air quality and propose mitigation measures to minimise emissions. This includes impacts from additional transport to and from the new development, emissions associated with heat and power required by the new development, and emissions from any onsite processes.

Our **Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document**³³ provides guidance for developers on how they should minimise their climate change impact through reducing energy demand. Specifically, the developer should demonstrate how they have considered and plan to mitigate emissions during construction.

The New Forest district also covers the majority of the National Park, which is subject to different planning policies prepared by the New Forest National Park Authority. The planning policies for the National Park area seek to protect the environment of the New Forest from the adverse impacts associated with traffic and other forms of air pollution.³⁴

Protecting our natural environment

Our National Park that covers large parts of the district, together with other protected designations (including part of the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs National Landscape and a range of international nature conservation designations), help to preserve our area's beauty and character. However, this also represents a challenge when finding locations for new homes and infrastructure.

Within the borders of the National Park, habitat conditions are monitored at sites close to main roads. We use continuous monitoring equipment as well as regular ecological field work, ensuring nitrogen and ammonia levels do not exceed critical thresholds.

32 New Forest District Council (2022) Air Quality Assessments in New Development: Supplementary Planning Document, https://www.newforest.gov.uk/media/2726/Air-Quality-SPD/pdf/Air_Quality_SPD_FINAL_Version_June_2022.pdf

33 New Forest District Council (2024) Planning for Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), <https://newforest.gov.uk/article/3591/Planning-for-Climate-Change-Supplementary-Planning-Document-SPD>

34 New Forest National Park. (2024) Planning. Available at: <https://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/planning/>

These plans and strategies help to protect and promote green space in the New Forest:

- **The Corporate Plan**³⁵ sets out how the council aims to balance growth with conservation efforts.
- **The New Forest District Council Tree Strategy 2020-2025**³⁶ seeks to promote, enhance, and protect all trees growing on any and all land owned or managed by the council.
- **The New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016-2036**³⁷ lays out requirements for new development within the National Park.

Council housing

We manage over 5,000 properties, and programmes to deliver at least 600 new council homes by 2026 are currently underway.

Improving and maintaining the energy efficiency of these dwellings is important both to reduce heating costs and to limit carbon and air pollutant emissions. We are heavily involved in ensuring the housing stock owned by the council is properly maintained, with planned maintenance programmes worth £6m per year for replacing doors, windows, and roofs for better insulation.

A total of 2,884 energy efficiency measures have been installed in our council housing, with 1,330 of these aimed at heating efficiency through air source heat pumps, photovoltaic schemes, window and door replacements, and insulation.

11.3 WHAT WILL WE DO NEXT?

New opportunities for growth have the potential to drive significant development over the coming decades. The Solent Freeport, one of 12 UK freeports, is expected to drive significant economic growth in our area as the majority of land which makes up the Solent Freeport tax sites is within the New Forest district. This could include the future development of the Dibden Bay area.

It is important that we respond robustly and effectively to new plans to make sure that they deliver benefits to the New Forest while protecting the environment.

Review and monitor our existing policies to ensure that they remain effective

We will use our annual work plans to identify any changes in national air quality guidance or legislation to ensure we are following best practice. We will also use our monitoring data to benchmark our air quality and refine our strategies to maximise their impact on improving air quality.

³⁵ New Forest District Council (2024) Corporate Plan 2024 to 2028 <https://www.newforest.gov.uk/corporateplan>

³⁶ New Forest District Council (2020) Tree Strategy, <https://newforest.gov.uk/media/647/tree-strategy-2020-25/pdf/tree-strategy-2020-25.pdfvc>

³⁷ New Forest National Park (2019) Local Plan 2016–2036 <https://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/planning/local-plan/>

Review how we respond to planning applications

We will review how we provide air quality advice and our requirements for appropriate assessment and agreed mitigation measures to ensure that we are minimising the impact of development.

Work closely with the National Park and neighbouring local authorities to share expertise, resources, and best practice

Sharing resources will allow us to help tackle air quality on a regional level. We hope to align our approach to planning and permitting for new developments across the District, including the National Park area, and contribute to the development of air quality policies across the region to address regional air quality challenges.

Engage with businesses to help them achieve net-zero emissions

We will seek out opportunities to engage with businesses to help them achieve net-zero emissions, and work with other Council teams to make sure these schemes deliver co-benefits for air quality where possible. This can include providing incentives, support, and guidance to businesses on implementing sustainable practices, adopting cleaner technologies, and reducing carbon and air quality footprints.

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Where to find more information



Please refer to the following list of tools and resources to find out more information on actions being taken by the New Forest District Council to improve air quality, the state of air quality in the New Forest, and how air pollution impacts health and wellbeing.

Tool / resource	Description	Link
New Forest District Council	Provides information on air quality monitoring in the New Forest, and provides access to air quality reports	https://www.newforest.gov.uk/airquality
New Forest Corporate Plan	Provides context for the policies on air quality in the new forest	Corporate_plan_2024_to_2028.pdf (newforest.gov.uk)
New Forest District Council Monitoring Data	A map of the data collected by the continuous air quality monitoring stations in the New Forest	https://www.airqualityengland.co.uk/local-authority/?la_id=236

Tool / resource	Description	Link
Air Quality in New Developments in the New Forest	Provides information on the adoption of, and measures contained within the Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document	https://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/2934/Air-Quality-in-New-Development
New Forest Waterside Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan	Provides information on the ongoing development in the Waterside area to improve the walking and cycling experience	https://documents.hants.gov.uk/transportWatersideTransportStrategy-ETEDecisionDayReportAppendix.pdf
New Forest National Park Cycling Routes	Contains maps of cycling routes in the New Forest National Park	https://www.forestryengland.uk/sites/default/files/documents/New-Forest_Cycle-Routes-Map_2021_0.pdf
New Forest National Park – Sustainable Transport	Details the investments made by the National Park in sustainable travel schemes and infrastructure	https://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/conservation/climate-and-nature-emergency/sustainable-transport/
The Environment Centre – Wood Burning	Provides information on wood burning, and how to burn better	https://environmentcentre.com/wood-burning/
The Environment Centre – Campaign for Cleaner Air	Contains information about the ongoing cleaner air campaign related to the use of log burners in the New Forest	https://environmentcentre.com/the-environment/clean-air/
Hampshire County Council – Climate Change Strategy	Provides information on the County's Climate Change Strategy	https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/environment/climatechange
UK Health Security Agency	Provides information about the health impacts of air pollution	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-air-pollution/health-matters-air-pollution
Defra Air Pollution Forecast	Defra's air pollution forecast tool provides the latest outlook for air quality across the UK	https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/forecasting/

Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel - 22 January 2025

Housing Landlord Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Strategy and Policies

Purpose	For review
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	<p>Under Section 218A of the Housing Act 1996 local housing authorities, as landlords, are required to prepare and publish policies and procedures in relation to ASB.</p> <p>The Social Housing Regulation Act (2023) places additional focus on housing landlords to prevent and tackle ASB.</p> <p>The ASB strategy and accompanying ASB Policy, Hate Crime Policy & Good Neighbourhood Management Policy aim to give a clear statement on the Council's approach to how it responds to reports, and the way the Council intends to work with residents and relevant partner organisations to combat these challenging areas.</p> <p>These policies are proposed to be approved ahead of formal consultation of the Council's Housing Landlord ASB Strategy which will formalise the Council's vision and wider commitments to preventing, responding to, and tackling ASB in our housing stock (once adopted), as it is important robust policies are in place as soon as possible, due to regulatory change.</p> <p>The Strategy will formalise the Council's vision and commitments to preventing, responding to, and tackling ASB once adopted.</p>
Recommendations	<p>That the Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel:</p> <p>1. consider the draft ASB, Hate Crime, and Good management policies and make</p>

	<p>recommendations to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness.</p> <p>2. consider the proposed ASB Strategy and make recommendations for cabinet and formal consultation.</p>
<p>Reasons for recommendations</p>	<p>The Regulator of Social Housing launched its new regulatory framework on 1 April 2024. The new Regulatory standards relating to ASB are contained within the Customer Standards including Neighbourhood and Community Standards, Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard and the Tenants Satisfaction Measure Standards, which stipulate:</p> <p>Safer Neighbourhoods standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered providers must have a policy on how they work with relevant organisations to deter and tackle ASB in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing. • Registered providers must clearly set out their approach for how they tackle and deter hate incidents in neighbourhoods where they provide social housing. • Registered providers must enable ASB to be reported easily and keep tenants informed about the progress of their case. • Registered providers must provide prompt and appropriate action in response to ASB, having regard to the full range of tools and legal powers available to them. • Registered providers must support tenants who are affected by ASB, including by signposting them to agencies who can give them appropriate support and assistance. <p>The Council’s current ASB Policy was adopted in 2013. Subsequently there has been a significant shift in legislation, regulation, and good practice.</p>
<p>Ward(s)</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Portfolio Holder(s)</p>	<p>Councillor Steve Davies</p>

Strategic Director(s)	Richard Knott – Housing and Communities
Officer Contact	Chris Pike ASB & Neighbourhood Manager 02380 285512 Chris.pike@nfdc.gov.uk

Introduction and background

1. Under Section 218A of the Housing Act 1996 local housing authorities, as landlords, are required to prepare and publish policies and procedures in relation to ASB.
2. The Council’s housing service is the largest social housing landlord in the district. NFDC has a significant role to play in managing our estates, neighbourhoods and communities to ensure that they are safe and welcoming environments that encourage harmony amongst all residents. To do so, the housing service must continue to develop preventative measures and early intervention measures to prevent ASB occurring and escalating.
3. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Regulatory Framework for local housing authorities is clear that as a landlord, the Council is required to deter and tackle ASB, and deter hate incidents in our neighbourhoods where we provide social housing.
4. The proposed strategy (Annex 1) sets out the Council’s priorities and approach to preventing and improving the co-ordinated response to housing related ASB, which builds on the longstanding work of the Safer New Forest Partnership. The Partnership will continue to take a strategic overview of Crime and ASB within the New Forest District area involving all our partners and commissioned services - including the Council’s landlord services.
5. The landlord ASB strategy is based on 4 strategic priorities:
 - Prevention & early intervention.
 - Managing risk and supporting Victims.
 - Work in partnership.
 - Putting tenants first.
6. The strategy has been developed based on the current legislative and regulatory requirements as well as current best practice, such as the recent housing ombudsman spotlight reports, written in response to complaints raised by tenants.

7. The strategy proposes that the council formally defines ASB as outlined in the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 Part 1 (S2):
 - a) conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm, or distress to any person,**
 - b) conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises, or,**
 - c) conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.**

8. Under the council's current ASB Policy the adopted definition for ASB is modelled on the definition in Section 1 (1) of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 which defines ASB as "**Acting in a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as himself**".

9. Whilst it is difficult to define ASB (as it is based on different views and tolerance) the definition under the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 as set out above, is widely accepted by housing providers and the Courts as the most suitable definition for ASB. It is therefore recommended the Council adopts this definition and the ASB Policy 2013 is updated to reflect this.

10. The draft strategy has been through informal staff consultation and whilst feedback from staff (including the Community Safety Team) was limited to minor changes to wording, overall, the feedback from the staff was supportive of the priorities and commitments.

11. As the strategy is proposed to be formally adopted by Cabinet, following external consultation, the proposed ASB Policy (annex 3), Good Neighbourhood Management Policy (annex 4) and Hate Crime Policy (Annex 5) are put forward to the Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel for recommendations to the Portfolio Holder to consider ahead of publication, and ahead of the strategy consultation and approval. In normal circumstances the strategy consultation would influence any policy and procedures. However, there is a risk in this approach. The Council's current ASB Policy was adopted in 2013 (Annex 6), and whilst in many ways the Policy remains workable it is outdated, and the response to hate crimes are not sufficiently covered.

12. The 2013 Policy adopts a "low tolerance" approach to Nuisance and ASB. "Low tolerance" is not defined in the policy leaving it open to interpretation. Nuisance is generally a term used by Environmental

protection when referring to a “statutory nuisance” and it is not mentioned in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998’s definition of ASB. For this reason, most landlords have moved away from a “low tolerance” approach favouring either a “harm based” or “risk based” approach (where actions are determined via a risk assessment or harm matrix), most landlords will also make it clear what types of reports will be consider “anti-social”, “unreasonable” or a “nuisance”.

13. The 2013 Policy refers to the Council being a signatory to the RESPECT standard and charter. This standard was developed by the Department of Communities and Local Government in 2006. This has been superseded, most recently by the new regulatory framework on 1 April 2024, and the current policy has not kept up with other changes.
14. The updated ASB Policy has incorporated the current best practice which has been championed by the Regulator and Housing Ombudsman. This includes all ASB tools and powers available to the council - such as the use of Community Protection Notices / warnings and criminal behaviour orders which have replaced the “ASBO”. It will need to be again updated to reflect the upcoming changes in the forthcoming Crime and Policing Bill, where “respect orders” will be partially replacing existing Civil Injunction powers for adults, to ensure a wider range of penalties as breaches will be dealt with in the criminal courts, alongside the new power of arrest.
15. The Regulator of Social Housing & Housing Ombudsman Service has strengthened their investigative approach, and their response to landlord failings. Landlords have been notified of the increase in expected standards in a series of special reports from the Housing Ombudsman, who have published landlord complaints where evidence of maladministration has been found, with a large focus on ASB complaints from tenants.

In particular:

- The Ombudsman Spotlight on Noise complaints report
 - The Ombudsman Spotlight on Attitudes, respect, and rights
 - The Ombudsman Spotlight on Knowledge and Information Management report
16. Through these reports the Ombudsman has recommended that landlords provide a clear statement of the Council’s approach to ASB and the way it intends to work with residents and relevant, organisations to combat what is largely a social behavioural problem. It is clear that landlords should **support victims** and follow **a risk-based approach** to reports of ASB.

17. The ASB, Crime and Policing Act 2014 states that it is good practice for agencies to assess the risk of harm to the victim, and any potential vulnerabilities, when they receive a complaint about ASB. This should be the starting point of a case management approach to dealing with ASB complaints.
18. The suite of policies comply with Ombudsman findings and regulatory requirements, providing a commitment to this risk based approach in relation to cases of ASB.
19. In addition to the best practice guidance, and specifically in the ombudsman spotlight on noise, landlords have been repeatedly instructed to formalise their position on reports that don't meet the threshold to be reasonably considered ASB. In the Ombudsman 'Spotlight on Noise' complaints report they state:

“Landlords should have a proactive good neighbourhood management policy, distinct to the ASB policy, with a clear suite of options for maintaining good neighbourhood relationships and a matrix for assessing which option is the most appropriate. These options should include mediation, information sharing and community building events and, where appropriate, dedicated staffing. This will ensure that low level issues of neighbour friction are dealt with at the appropriate levels and not inappropriately handled as potential ASB. Landlords should engage residents in the development of the good neighbourhood management policy, including residents who have recently raised a formal complaint with the landlord, to assure themselves that it reflects the expectations of residents and will be effective.”
20. The updated ASB, new Hate Crime and new Good Neighbourhood Management Policies therefore seek to clarify the council's position on reports that are not considered ASB and what as a landlord NFDC will do to support tenants and residents around reports that may still cause a great deal of upset or harm. This is outlined in the Good Neighbourhood Management commitments.
21. Whilst the Hate Crime Policy is separate to the ASB policy, all these Policies should be read in parallel. The Hate Crime policy is designed to give a clear statement on how NFDC will respond to reports classed as hateful. This approach is often more supportive and focuses on the victims' needs and restorative Justice.

22. To reflect this change of approach, a new “How to be a good neighbour” leaflet has been developed, the NFDC website has been [updated](#), and new system processes are being introduced.
23. New staff response and case management processes have already been actioned to ensure the Council’s operational response to ASB reports mirrors the policy and data requirements of the new regulatory regime.
24. A new Neighbourhood Team has been created within existing budgets. Led by the Housing ASB & Neighbourhoods Manager this team will focus solely on the individual response to ASB reports as well as being a visible presence on estates and communal buildings.
25. Any policy changes resulting from the delivery of strategic actions will be incorporated into annual policy reviews.

Corporate plan priorities

26. Priority 2: Empowering our residents to live healthy, connected and fulfilling lives. The Corporate Plan 2024-28 states that delivery of this priority will be supported by the delivery of a new Anti-social behaviour strategy.

Options appraisal

27. The full range of policy requirements have been considered and it is deemed appropriate and proportionate for NFDC to publish the full suite of policies required by best practice and the regulatory framework.

Consultation undertaken

28. Informal consultation on draft ASB Strategy priorities and policies took place earlier this year with internal staff. Consultation responses supported the draft proposals. Formal strategy consultation is proposed in due course.
29. The draft policies have been shared with TIG and consultation responses supported the draft proposals. Formal strategy consultation is proposed in due course.

Financial and resource implications

30. Any expenditure required by the proposed strategy and policies will be met from existing budgets, which are provided to Housing Officers to tackle neighbourhood and community issues.

31. Failure to raise standards, meet regulatory requirements and respond appropriately to complaints could lead to fines and compensation levied by the Housing Ombudsman.

Legal implications

32. Under Section 218A of the Housing Act 1996 local housing authorities, as landlords, are required to prepare and publish policies and procedures in relation to ASB.
33. The Regulator of Social Housing launched its new regulatory framework on 1 April 2024 which outlines our requirements as a social housing provider.
34. The Policy supports appropriate legal remedies to tackle ASB where non-legal remedies have failed. This will involve action taken through the courts and solicitors.

Risk assessment

35. The delivery of these policies mitigates legal and financial risk to the Council.
36. The work of Officers in working in difficult circumstances, and priority of response to reports from vulnerable people is risk assessed in line with H&S and lone working procedures and the specific needs of high-risk individuals.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

37. Whilst the report has no direct implications the work of the new Housing Neighbourhood team will include improving the condition of local housing neighbourhoods, including open spaces, and the positive contribution to neighbourhoods. This may present opportunities to contribute to the Council's neighbourhood and climate objectives.

Equalities implications

38. The proposed strategy and policies improve the response to ASB and hate crimes for victims of such behaviour. Reports of ASB are more often made by vulnerable people, and those with protected characteristics. The reporting process considers the needs of people with different backgrounds and needs, and a flexible and priority-based approach is defined by the policies, and the Council's aims are to positively support vulnerable people.

Crime and disorder implications

39. It is anticipated there will be potential indirect and direct positive impacts on the Council's tenants and neighbourhoods. The interventions proposed are likely to lead to an initial increase in the number of cases prosecuted in the courts, or by the Police, whilst long term interventions proposed should lead to a long-term reduction in crime and disorder.

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

40. The collection, retention and deletion of Tenant data is governed by GDPR and associated guidance. All data will be collected and maintained in line with the required legislation.

New Forest National Park / Cranborne Chase National Landscape implications

41. The new approach to ensuring the Housing Service positively contributes to housing neighbourhoods may involve increased partnership working with the National Park Authority where the Council's housing stock is also located.

Conclusion

42. The strategy will inform a longer-term framework of service delivery and partnering with local agencies and support in aligning our goals and resources with the corporate plan objectives.
43. The Policies are required in the shorter-term at a service level to improve service delivery and outcomes. Once the strategy is fully adopted the Policies will be updated in line with any changes required and will be continuously reviewed.
44. The Strategic Director for Housing and Communities will have authority to make amendments in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Housing.
45. The policies will support the Council by:
- Meeting the expectations of the regulatory framework,
 - Providing Neighbourhood Housing Officers a best practice procedural framework to follow
 - Providing tenants with a transparent victim centred process that seeks to resolve their reports with a range of measure to help resolve their case.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – ASB Strategy 2025-2029

Appendix 2 – ASB Policy 2025

Appendix 3 – Good Neighbourhood Management Policy 2025

Appendix 4 – Hate Crime Policy 2025

Background Papers:

Spotlight Noise complaints
October 2022

NFDC Housing Landlord

ASB Strategy 2025- 2029

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Foreword

I am delighted to introduce this new Housing Landlord Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Strategy for New Forest District Council's (NFDC) housing tenants.

We understand the negative impact ASB can have on our communities and on individual residents. No-one should live in fear of intimidation from neighbours or others from within their street/ neighbourhoods. Too often ASB is referred to as a 'low level' crime or behaviour that should just be tolerated. Police, local authorities, and community agencies all have responsibilities to tackle ASB by working together to help victims.

Whilst no single organisation holds the key to resolving or preventing ASB, this strategy lays down the Council's Housing Service's commitments to take steps towards preventing ASB, supporting victims of ASB, investigating ASB and when necessary, ensuring that we have the necessary mechanisms in place to take rigorous action as a landlord.

ASB is not solely an issue for our tenants, but it is important that we acknowledge our role as the largest social housing provider in the district and the responsibilities we have for keeping our tenants safe and well in their homes. This strategy builds on the work already undertaken in our district through effective community safety partnership arrangements, including the longstanding and effective work of the Safer New Forest Partnership.

I am pleased therefore that this strategy aims to deliver 4 key priorities which will raise the profile of our work to prevent and tackle ASB but is also victim centered and has a clear commitment to continuous improvement and enhancing partnership working.

[insert photo and signature]
Councillor Steve Davies
Portfolio Holder for Housing Services

Introduction

This strategy responds to a changing legislative and regulatory landscape, as well as feedback from our residents on how we have managed previous reports of ASB, and how living through ASB feels to our residents.

The Regulator for Social Housing has led the implementation of a new regulatory regime, including a tenants' charter and consumer standards which provide clear guidance on the role of landlords. In response to these changes and the feedback from our residents the Council has developed a strategy to deliver effective prevention and support initiatives.

As the largest landlord in the district NFDC has a significant role to play in managing our estates and neighbourhoods to ensure that they are a safe and welcoming environment and one where we encourage harmony to all our residents. In doing this we must continue to develop preventative measures and early intervention measures to prevent ASB occurring and escalating.

This strategy sets out the Council's priorities to preventing and responding to ASB, building on the longstanding work of the Safer New Forest Partnership, which will continue to take a strategic overview of Crime and ASB within the New Forest District involving all our partners and commissioned services, including the Council's landlord services.

As a landlord, we are responsible for supporting our tenants who may be victims of Anti-Social Behaviour as well as taking swift and effective action where a perpetrator is our tenant.

Our primary funding is from the Housing Revenue Account, which via income from tenants' rents funds all housing related services and facilities. Therefore, any service relating to Anti-Social Behaviour must primarily be for the benefit of our own tenants or related to our housing management functions.

What is Housing related Anti-Social Behaviour?

Housing Related ASB is defined as activity that affects our housing management functions.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) is a term which covers a broad range of issues and there are several definitions for it. The general agreement is that it is defined as 'anything causing a nuisance or annoyance.'

Definition:

The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Police Act 2014 Part 1 section 2 defines the meaning of ASB as:

a) conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm, or distress to any person,

(b) conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises, or

(c) conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.

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National context

There is considerable emphasis placed on the Police, Councils and Housing providers by Central Government on ASB and the methods used to tackle it. This focus began in 1998 via the Crime and Policing Act with the introduction of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs). The Crime and Policing Act described ASB as ***“Causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress to one or more person not of the same household as the perpetrator.”***

In 2003 Central Government set up the Anti-Social Behaviour unit, launched the Anti-Social Behaviour Together action plan and introduced the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003. The accompanying guidance outlined the process for tackling ASB via **respect** and **responsibility**. It provided Local Authorities and the Police with a wider and more flexible range of powers to meet their existing responsibilities.

From a social housing perspective, the changes included developing the use of injunctions and demoted tenancies. It included provisions to deal with noise nuisance and introduced closure powers on premises that were being used for drug dealing, it defined ASB to ensure reports were acted upon, as well as stressing the importance of collecting data on ASB and using this to support any community response.

In 2014 The ASB Crime and Policing Act was introduced with the aim of providing simpler, more effective powers to tackle ASB, that would provide better protection for victims and communities. This Act split the definition of ASB to cover the different legal tools available to both the Police and Local Authorities. The Definition under Section 1 of the act became widely recognised by Housing Providers as the definition for Anti-Social Behaviour. Statutory guidance was published in 2019 which focused on the importance of tackling the impact of Anti-Social behaviour and the effect this has on victims and on victim’s needs.

In 2022 National Government published five ASB principles, which are:

1. Victims should be encouraged to report Anti-Social Behaviour and expect to be taken seriously. They should have clear ways to report, have access to help and support to recover, and be given the opportunity to choose restorative approaches to tackling ASB.
2. Agencies will have clear and transparent processes to ensure that victims can report ASB concerns, can understand how the matter will be investigated and are kept well informed of progress once a report is made.

3. Agencies and practitioners will work across boundaries to identify, assess and tackle ASB and its underlying causes. Referral pathways should be clearly set out between services and published locally. This includes pathways for the ASB case review and health services.
4. The public's ASB concerns should always be considered both nationally and locally in strategic needs assessments for community safety. Best practice should be shared through a network of ASB experts within each community safety partnership, each policing area and nationally.
5. Adults and children who exhibit ASB should have the opportunity to take responsibility for their behaviour and repair the harm caused by it. Agencies should deliver appropriate interventions, which may include criminal justice options, based on the seriousness, risks and vulnerabilities of the case.

In March 2023, the national government set out a new approach to working with local agencies to tackle ASB across England and Wales including:

- Increasing the urgency ASB is responded to.
- Changing laws and system to take a zero-tolerance approach to ASB, cracking down on illegal drugs such as cuckooing.
- Increasing Police and other agencies' tools to discourage ASB, such as higher on the spot fines, increase in youth support and filling empty shops and regenerating local parks.

In November 2024 the introduction of "Respect Orders" was announced by the Home Secretary– aiming to address persistent ASB. These new orders will replace existing Civil Injunction powers for adults and introduce tough restrictions on offenders, including bans from certain areas and mandated rehabilitation programmes. Breaches will be criminal offences, enforceable with arrests and potentially leading to significant penalties. The government is presenting this as a robust response to ASB, with stronger powers to seize nuisance vehicles and tackle repeat offenders.

Community Safety Partnerships review and Anti-Social Behaviour Powers

As Part of the ASB Action Plan national government ran a consultation between March and May 2023 which included a focus on how existing ASB Powers could be improved and expanded. The consultation concluded that respondents felt that expanding the powers in the Anti-Social Behaviours,

Crime and Policing Act 2014 would ensure they are used more frequently and consistently to tackle ASB.

Regulatory Framework

Following the tragic event at Grenfell Towers in 2017 the government introduced ***The Charter for Social Housing Residents – Social Housing White Paper 2020*** with the aim to make sure social housing tenants are treated with the respect they deserve. Within this it states that ***“social housing tenants are more likely to experience anti-social behaviour and be victims of crime than those in other tenures.”***

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Regulator for Social Housing Statement:

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) and hate incidents can have a significant negative impact on tenants of social housing, both for those experiencing it directly and for those living in the community where the ASB and hate incidents are occurring.

In order to deter and tackle ASB and hate incidents effectively in areas where they operate, registered providers must work with appropriate partners, with a common aim of trying to reduce ASB and hate incidents. Joint initiatives may include, for example, providing mediation services to try to resolve disputes before they escalate, undertaking security measures and environmental improvements and providing diversionary activities.

It is vital that registered providers have effective policies and processes to tackle ASB and hate incidents, and they should communicate these to tenants. These should include their approaches to investigating reports of ASB and hate incidents (including the roles of other relevant agencies), the support available to affected tenants and the actions they take to deal with perpetrators of ASB and hate incidents.

Registered providers should take into account the diverse needs of tenants in considering how tenants report ASB and hate incidents to them and eliminate any barriers to reporting such incidents.

We expect registered providers to take a victim-centred approach to supporting tenants affected by ASB. This support can take different forms such as, for example, making a referral to an external support agency or taking into account the wishes of the complainant when determining the course of action the provider will take. As part of this approach, registered providers should consider how they support vulnerable perpetrators of ASB, to help them to sustain their tenancy.

The paper introduced 7 new commitments, of which 3 of these relate directly to Housing providers' responsibilities to ASB.

Chapter 2 sets out the requirements for tenants to know how their landlord is performing, setting out new tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs) including how satisfied they are with how their landlord has managed their Anti-Social Behaviour case. Landlord performance data will be published in national league tables allowing for tenants to make meaningful comparisons to be made across the sector for the first time.

Chapter 3 sets out the requirements to have complaints dealt with promptly and fairly, with access to a strong ombudsman.

Chapter 6 sets out the requirements for tenants to have good quality homes and neighbourhoods to live in, within this, landlords must set out to tackle Anti-Social behaviour by enabling tenants to know who is responsible for actioning their reports and who can support and assist them if they are faced with Anti-Social behaviour.

Landlords must also make a positive contribution to the neighbourhood working with local partners and stakeholders.

The Regulator of Social Housing launched its new regulatory framework on 1 April 2024. The Regulatory standards relating to ASB are contained in within the Customer Standards including Neighbourhood and Community Standards, Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard and the Tenants Satisfaction Measure Standards, which stipulate:

Safer Neighbourhoods standards

- *Registered providers must have a policy on how they work with relevant organisations to deter and tackle ASB in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.*
- *Registered providers must clearly set out their approach for how they tackle and deter hate incidents in neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.*
- *Registered providers must enable ASB to be reported easily and keep tenants informed about the progress of their case.*
- *Registered providers must provide prompt and appropriate action in response to ASB, having regard to the full range of tools and legal powers available to them.*
- *Registered providers must support tenants who are affected by ASB, including by signposting them to agencies who can give them appropriate support and assistance.*

Tenant Satisfaction Measures Standards (TSMs)

- Registered providers must collect and provide information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in managing their homes and neighbourhoods.

This places a requirement on landlords to publish performance on the number of ASB cases relative to the size of the landlord (NM01) and 'How satisfied or dissatisfied tenants are with New Forest Director Council's approach to handling Anti-Social Behaviour.

Housing Ombudsman Services

The Regulator of Social Housing & Housing Ombudsman Service has strengthened their investigative approach, and their response to failings. With failings identified by the Ombudsman leading to real change expected by the Regulator.

Landlords have been notified of the increase in expected standards in a series of **special reports from the Housing Ombudsman**, who have published landlord complaints where evidence of maladministration has been found, with a large focus on ASB complaints.

The Housing Ombudsman continue to publish spotlight reports on common failings within the sector including:

- The Ombudsman's Spotlight on Noise complaints report (October 2022)
- The Ombudsman's Spotlight on Knowledge and Information Management report (May 2023)
- The Ombudsman's Spotlight on Attitudes, respect, and rights (January 2024)

The spotlight report on noise complaints made 32 recommendations to tackle the issue, including looking at refurbishment, neighbourhood management and anti-social behaviour policies, allocations and record-keeping, information-sharing, and complaint handling.

Local context

What we know

Stock and Tenancy Type

The council remains the largest provider of housing within the district, managing a stock of over 5,250 socially rented homes. Following the introduction of the Localism Act 2012 and NFDC Tenancy Policy, NFDC no longer routinely offers a secure lifetime tenancy to all tenants. All new tenants will normally be granted an initial Introductory Tenancy. This will usually be followed by a flexible tenancy, referred to as a fixed term tenancy (normally lasting a minimum of 5 years). This period of time provides the Council and tenants the appropriate time to assess if they can sustain and conduct their tenancy in line with tenancy conditions. Should acts of ASB be carried out the Council can seek to end either the introductory tenancy or not offer an additional fixed term tenancy.

NFDC provides temporary housing and a private sector lease scheme which is let to homeless households or to prevent homelessness. We are responsible for managing these tenancies and ensuring tenants are supported to keep to the terms of their agreements, whilst awaiting permanent offers of accommodation to be made.

ASB Data

Improvements in how we collect our ASB data were introduced in 2023 and this has allowed us to benchmark our performance.

A review of 2022/23 ASB reports from tenants showed 136 reported cases of Anti-Social Behaviour, which represents 26 cases per 1,000 homes.

Classification of report	Total
Amplified Music	3
Animal Nuisance	22
Filthy & Verminous Property	1
Gardens	1
Harassment and threats	16
Illegal & Immoral Behaviour	27
Other	21
Parking	6
Rowdy and Inconsiderate	35
Violent Behaviour	3
Youth Nuisance	1
Total (2022-23)	136

2023/24 showed an increase to 160 reported cases of Anti-Social Behaviour, which represents 31 cases per 1,000 homes.

Classification of report	Total
Animals	25
Behaviour	46
Criminal Activity	15
Environmental	19
Fires	2
Hate Crime	3
Noise	42
Odours/Smells	7
Surveillance	1
Total (2023-24)	160

Further analysis of last year's data (see below) shows that behaviour and noise were the two most reported issues. It is important that we continue to track the types of reports to identify any trends and use this to improve and shape our service.

Type of behaviour	Total	Type of noise	Total
Domestic Violence	2	Children	3
Fly tipping/Litter	2	Deliberate targeted noise	2
Harassment	14	Dispute/Domestic	6
Mental Health related	2	DIY/Tools/Works	2
Nuisance Caused by Children	8	Gatherings	2
Verbal Abuse/Foul Language	18	Impact Sounds	2
Grand Total (2023-24)	46	Music	5
		Noise from neighbours	17
		Television	1
		Unclassified	2
		Grand Total (2023-24)	42

Tenant Satisfaction Measure Data

Through late 2023 and early 2024 tenants were invited to take part in the tenant perception measure survey as part of the new regulatory performance regime. Overall satisfaction with the housing landlord was received at 81%, and tenants were further asked, 'how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with New Forest District Council's approach to handling Anti-Social Behaviour'. 63% of tenants surveyed answered this question. Overall satisfaction with the handling of ASB cases was 62% and when benchmarked with 52 other registered providers the Council's performance was considered slightly above average.

The tenants who answered that they were either fairly dissatisfied or very dissatisfied were asked a supplementary question on 'why would you say you are dissatisfied?' 3.2% of respondents answered the question.

Common themes of comments received were:

- Tenant incident forms being completed but not responded to or actioned.
- Reports about neighbours not taken seriously.
- Perceived lack of joint working from the Police or Police action

Safer New Forest Partnership

District wide anti-social behaviour data is tracked in partnership with Hampshire Police under the stewardship of the Safer New Forest Partnership strategic assessment.

As a result, the plan identifies 3 priorities for 2024-2025:

1. Drug and alcohol related harm
2. Domestic Abuse
3. Tackling crime, fear or crime through education, prevention, and enforcement

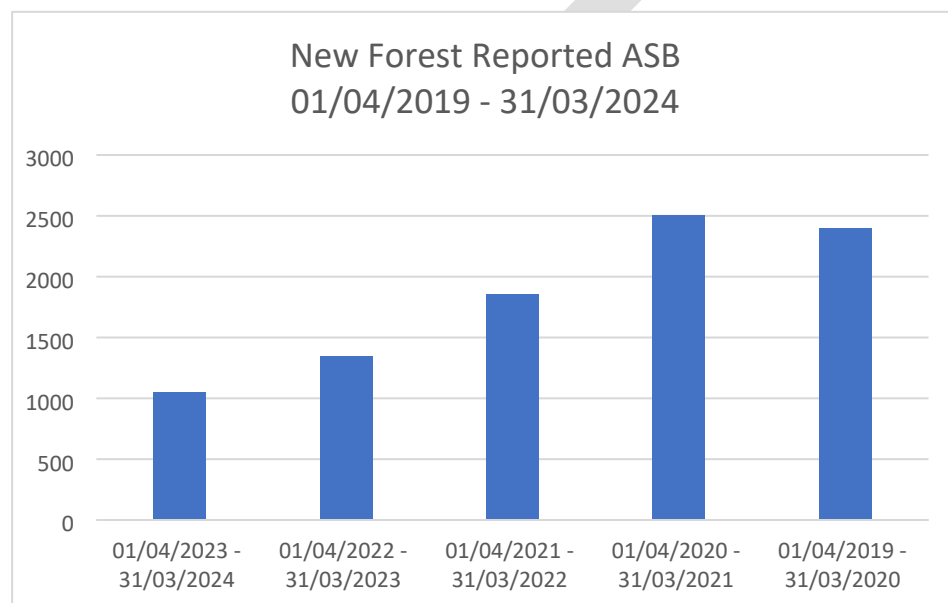
Under the 2024-2025 Strategic assessment ASB is categorised into three main types:

1. Personal
2. Community
3. Environmental

4. ASB	01/04/2023 – 31/03/2024	01/04/2022 - 31/03/2023	Variation
New Forest East	569	640	- 71
New Forest West	478	705	-227

The table shows an overall decrease of 22% in reported incidents of ASB compared with that of the previous year 2022/2023.

New Forest continue to see a reduction in reported ASB. Below shows a 56% decrease in reported ASB from 01/04/2019 to 31/03/2024 (2400 incidents to 1047 incidents).



This data needs to be treated with caution, as whilst it shows an overall reduction in the recorded incidents occurring, it may also show a reduction in the level of incidents reported. This could be a result of tolerances or confidence in services ability to resolve ASB.

Why this is important for New Forest Resident Services & Tenants

As ASB is often primarily referred to as a 'local concern'. We will need to recognise ASB will fundamentally look and feel different in every area of The New Forest and a one size fits all approach will therefore not work for victims.

The New Forest is a large district which is mainly rural with urbanised areas in Totton and Hythe to the east, Lymington and New Milton on the southern coast and Ringwood in the west. These areas hold 73% of the district population. A further 16% of the population live in rural towns and fringe areas, whilst the remaining 11% are in rural villages.

As the people most likely to be victims of ASB tend to live in more deprived communities we need to look more closely at these areas. Overall, New Forest has a low level of deprivation. It was ranked 240 out of 317 local authority districts across England (where rank 1 had the highest level of deprivation). However, there are small areas of deprivation within the district, with pockets of higher levels of deprivation located in Totton, areas near to Hythe, Lymington, and New Milton. The New Forest ranks similar to the Hampshire average when looking at income deprivation affecting children.

Social demographics and personal circumstances are a key factor in influencing the scale of impact of ASB experienced by individuals. Examples being that those with long term physical or mental health conditions are more likely to have experiences or witness ASB to those without the same conditions. Social demographics will include different genders, housing tenures, age, and vulnerability such as physical and/or mental health conditions.

Taking the example of age. The New Forest has one of the lowest population densities across English local authorities, but the New Forest has seen an increase in the average age of the population from 47 to 51 years of age, with a 19.9% increase in people aged between 65 and 74 years.

Research on the impact on individual and community by central government has shown that age was key in determining views when determining the perception of ASB. The youngest age group (those aged 18 to 34) being more likely to feel that ASB is a 'very big' or 'fairly big' problem in their local area (57%) than those aged 35 to 54 (50%) and those aged 55 and over (34%). This was despite the 18 to 34 age group being more likely to interpret ASB as 'normal' behaviour.

Interventions identified with our strategy will pay close attention the social demographic profile in the New Forest and effectively target and support groups who may be disproportionately impacted by ASB.

Tracking data

We continue to make improvements in how to track and record vulnerabilities. Our social housing tenant demographic data survey is not yet fully complete as of November 2024. This data collection exercise is well underway during 24/25 will obtain key personal data important to designing services.

Staff feedback received on ASB cases is that we continue to see increased levels of vulnerabilities in casework, and this will need to be reviewed in line with the recommendation made in the housing ombudsman spotlight report on attitudes, respect, and rights – relationship of equals.

A significant amount of our housing stock is found in our urbanised areas and the more deprived areas of The New Forest. A majority of our ASB reports will continue to be reported from these traditional built-up areas and our response will therefore need to be primarily focused to these areas. We do however need to recognise the rural landscape of The New Forest where we also hold housing stock in more sparsely populated rural areas such as Martin, Sway, Burley, Calshot and Bransgore - which will have a different local perception to ASB.

Corporate Plan 2024-2028

Our tenants and the communities they live in are an ongoing priority for this council, which is supported by the themes in our Corporate Plan 2024-2028. NFDC is keen to promote opportunities to gather feedback from our tenants through the delivery of a new Tenant Engagement Strategy and our annual residents' survey, as we look to continually improve and evolve our services.

The new corporate plan priority themes are People, Place and Prosperity. Consultation to develop the Corporate Plan involved a residents' survey which was conducted between 8 September 2022 and November 2022. Of the 760 interviewed nearly all (96%) respondents stated they felt very/fairly safe in their local area, however nearly a quarter of the respondents reported their quality of life was affected by the fear of crime. This indicated that whilst the people feel safe there is an increased perception of crime and disorder, leading to anxiety and adjustments with daily life.

Our Current Approach to ASB & Neighbour Nuisance

The Council is committed to sustaining tenancies with our Tenancy Policy making the commitment that, 'The council will make every reasonable effort to support tenants to sustain their tenancy, that they do not get into rent arrears or carry out acts of Anti-Social Behaviour. The majority of tenants will simply require the provision of information and advice; however, some tenants may require more support.

Our current preventative measures include:

- Use of Introductory Tenancies – all first-time council tenants are given an introductory tenancy.
- Use of Flexible Tenancies – these are secure tenancies for a fixed term period. If the tenant fails to keep to the terms of their tenancy, including carrying out ASB, we may not offer a further tenancy on its expiry.
- Settling in visits – taking place with 3 months and 9 months of an introductory tenant to emphasise tenant obligations, support, and vulnerabilities.

- Regular estate visits and block inspections.
- Attending strategic partnership meetings such as New Forest Drug Related Harm Forum and the New Forest District Tactical Planning Group to ensure there is adequate focus and resources directed toward tackling ASB.

We have traditionally taken a low tolerance approach to nuisance and ASB. This is one where we take an active lead in identifying and speaking to all the affected parties. This approach has resulted in a quick and prompt response but also one where we are inadvertently quick to label tenants as perpetrators, or sometimes we can incorrectly identify clear 'one on one' neighbour disputes, as ASB. Our involvement in these cases can sometimes have an unintended consequence of increasing tensions or worsening the relationship between neighbours.

Comments received via the recent TMS survey are also observed in officer casework where there is an overuse of log sheets for residents to log and evidence neighbour nuisance or ASB, as opposed to greater emphasis being placed on encouraging good communication between neighbours and the use of early intervention tools. It is important that we continue to offer safe and effective communication between residents (which is a powerful tool for tackling ASB and can be successful in preventing further escalation). We need to ensure through clear policy guidance and staff training that we effectively advise and provide tenants with a range of options around their reports.

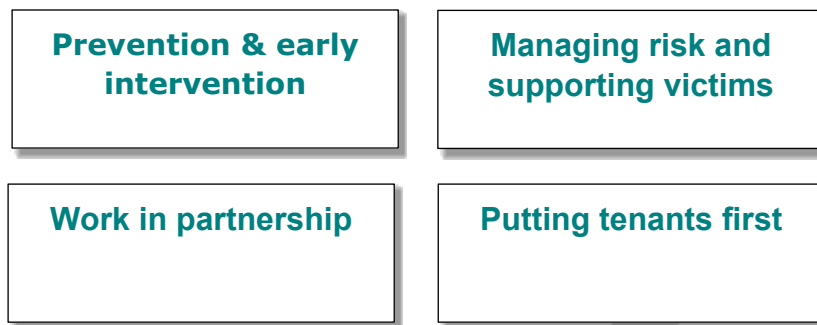
A significant proportion of the reports NFDC receives relate to one-on-one neighbour nuisance and noise disputes. These are sometimes the most challenging issues to resolve as often these cases will not meet the thresholds for formal legal intervention. The fact that they are being reported to us shows that they are important to our tenants, that they have a detrimental effect on them and that they are seeking our advice and support. The introduction of a Good Neighbourhood Management Policy to sit alongside any ASB Policy will provide a clear separation between the two issues. We need to be clear how they can help the situation and what help we can provide, including the continued provision of mediation services to try to resolve disputes before they escalate.

Other common themes noted are the security of our blocks, including older, less secure communal entry doors which do not have electronic fob access, and which allow visitors to contribute to existing ASB issues.

Achievements to date

- Publication of a new Tenant engagement strategy in April 2024.
- Newly created ASB Manager post in 2023 and wider resources review ensuring we have the necessary resources identified to tackle ASB.
- Restructure of the Neighbourhood and Estate Management team and the creation of a dedicated Neighbourhood & ASB services (3x Full time Neighbourhood officers and 1.5 full time neighbourhood assistants)
- New ICT Housing Management Systems (HMS) developed and launched in February 2023 to support case management and data collection.
- Redefining sub-categories of reports to allow for greater analysis of trends.
- Regulator of social housing learning and internal knowledge sharing applied to processes and disseminated to housing employees.
- Digital consultation platform implementation to allow targeted consultation to different tenant groups.
- Updated procedures and staff guidance.

Our vision and strategy are built on 4 Strategic priorities.



Our vision is one where all cases of ASB and reported problems between neighbours are responded to, with clear actions agreed with the complainants.

The definition of ASB has a low threshold, and what can cause or is likely to cause a nuisance or annoyance can be subjective to the person making the report.

Given the risks attached to ASB the Council's Officers will follow a harm-based approach towards ASB so that the most serious behaviour, which has the greatest impact on people's lives, is prioritised, tackled and solutions are found. The Social Housing Regulator's view on ASB is clear and they want housing providers to also take a victim-based approach when responding to reports of ASB and in doing this we need to identify those more vulnerable to ASB and ensure their needs are considered and supported. This is sometimes also referred to as 'human centric' and involves seeing people as the most important thing.

Our data concludes that the majority of ASB or reported cases of annoyance or nuisance will not lead to 'high harm'.

In cases of that do not meet the threshold for ASB intervention, residents will continue to be provided with the access to the appropriate advice and tools so that they as neighbours can work together to resolve their differences.

To ensure this happens we will provide a robust assessment of all ASB and reported problems between neighbours to identify not only the nature of the behaviour and the causes, but also to identify at an early-stage cases of neighbour nuisance or disagreements which are not to be classified as ASB but may still impact residents' lives.

In cases of ASB, when the need for formal intervention is required by the Council, we will take a risk-based approach, assessing both the risk to the victims and their wishes. By assessing cases of ASB we will be able

provide the flexible and tailored response to cases of ASB that the regulator and residents expect.

We want residents to take pride in the estates, neighbourhoods, towns, and villages that they live in. To support this, we aim to increase resources and funding, from existing budgets, to tackle ASB and nuisance, to improve our neighbourhoods and estates and other decent neighbourhood projects as well as working with diversionary projects.

These priorities are aiming for real, meaningful impact for both tenants and NFDC services. Our priorities will be reviewed periodically by both tenants and colleagues to make sure outcomes are being achieved and powers can be flexed up and down depending on what our tenants tell us as we progress with implementation.

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Strategic Priority 1

Prevention & early intervention

One of the most effective tools to resolving ASB is to be proactive in preventing ASB in the first place, as well as responding early to reports to stop issues escalating.

We will:

- Develop a strategic approach to ASB and community cohesion (communication over conflict), developing a new ASB Policy and a 'Good Neighbourhood' Policy
- Increase awareness of what ASB is and what services are available.
- Increase awareness of what a hate crime is through the introduction of a Hate Crime Policy and Procedure.
- Increase awareness of Domestic Abuse through NFDC's Domestic Abuse Strategy and a Housing Landlord Domestic Abuse Policy & Procedure.
- Complete a self-assessment and respond to the Housing Ombudsman spotlight report on noise nuisance.
- Continuously review our ASB procedure to ensure it provides a fast response and remains focused on early intervention.
- Strengthen our existing messaging on ASB and make it clear what is a breach of tenancy and the likely consequences.
- Continue our close and effective partnership working arrangements.
- Review the current service provision around tenancy support and the support provided to alleged perpetrators of ASB.
- Ensure data and intelligence is shared between agencies to flag patterns of behaviour, crime & disorder and ASB via Community Partnership Forms (CPIs)
- Continue to review all associated documentation (letters, action plans, website) to ensure that there is a clear and consistent message delivered, with a real focus on prevention and resolution.
- Review our processes around managing our neighbourhood and communal areas so that we promote environmental sustainability and tenant engagement through improvements to communal areas and neighbourhoods.
- Empower our communities and tenants not to tolerate ASB and how to safely challenge and report incidents.
- Prevent ASB where possible through timely and appropriate interventions such as sending warning letters, offering mediation, and using acceptable behaviour contracts.
- Complete a review of communal entry door security as part of our stock condition surveys and maintenance programs.

Strategic Priority 2:

Managing risk and supporting victims

ASB can leave victims feeling unsafe and afraid in their own home, often leaving them with the feeling that no one is listening. The 'person' needs to be at the centre of our response.

We will:

- Review internal guidance and processes around recording tenant vulnerabilities.
- Address victim's immediate needs and allow time to discuss long-term support while their cases are being investigated.
- Help victims understand the options they have and what actions we can take.
- Complete regular case reviews with victims, listening to victims needs and wishes.
- Seek feedback on ASB cases to give victims the opportunity to give feedback on services.
- Use Risk Assessments in cases of ASB and use this to tailor our individual approach.
- Ensure safeguarding issues are raised and shared between agencies.
- Continue to use sensitive lettings and placements to help manage our neighbourhoods.
- Continue to use the Management transfer procedure to support rehoming both victims and vulnerable tenants whose risks cannot be managed in situ.
- Using legal enforcement action where necessary, taking a robust approach to resolve ASB whilst ensuring any action is proportionate.
- Work in partnership with Victim Support.

Strategic Priority 3

Work in partnership

Police, local authorities, and community agencies, all have the responsibility to tackle anti-social behaviour by working together to help victims.

We will:

- Respond to serious or persistent cases of ASB under MARM (Multi Agency Risk Management) frameworks or other statutory meetings, such as Adult Safeguarding or Child protection.
- Review current practices and thresholds for support service access ensuring people do not fall through the gaps.
- Review how we manage our homelessness temporary accommodation with close interdepartmental relationships.
- Promote the use of ASB case reviews where complainants are experiencing persistent anti-social behaviour.
- Reviewing how well NFDC (Housing), NFDC (Community Safety) and the Police are reviewing cases and holding services to account for their actions.
- Develop a service level agreement with open spaces around the management of housing land, including residents' involvement on how their open spaces are managed.
- Develop closer relationships with local policing teams across the district.
- Develop closer relationships with Hampshire Adults and Children Services, Mental Health Services and Probation – including the use of community pay back.
- Work closely with Environmental Protection to swiftly investigate and resolve noise complaints.
- Work in partnership around any legal enforcement action.

Strategic Priority 4

Putting tenants first

Our service and response to ASB needs to be shaped by our residents as our tenants are best placed to tell us what is working well and what we can do better.

We will

- Ensure residents are at the forefront of shaping our response to ASB, neighbour disputes and their neighbourhoods.
- Ensure data analysis forms part of our proactive activities to improve our response to ASB and neighbour disputes.
- Ensure that the Tenancy Engagement Service are actively involved around any service improvement and receipt of feedback.
- Gain feedback on all closed cases of ASB and use lessons learnt from complaints to feed into service improvements.
- Identify the core skills and knowledge required to deliver an effective ASB service, and sourcing training that delivers this. As part of this exercise, it will be essential that training on safeguarding is recognised and included as core knowledge.
- Develop a staff essential training plan focusing on legal tools and powers to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour as well as training around Mental health, Drugs and Alcohol and Domestic Abuse.
- Review how we get out and about on our estates, and how we engage with residents and our elected members.
- Review the team structure to reflect best practice and current service need.

Monitoring and review

The outcomes of the strategy and the work programme will be under continual monitoring and review. Updates to Members and the Council's Executive Management Team will be provided at least annually.

The tenant perception survey carried out each year will provide valuable insight in to how satisfied our tenants are around our response to ASB. It is accepted that there are some quick wins that can be implemented whilst other changes will take time.

Annex 1 allows us to flex our approach and timescales, but the aim will always be to achieve the priorities in this strategy before the end of 2028.

New actions and targets may be agreed if further changes are made to corporate objectives, national legislation, and policy. The focus on ASB is at the forefront of both the regulatory framework and political attention in both the national approach within criminal justice system and Policing system. It is likely that further legislation, guidance, and funding arrangements will continue to change over the next few years.

We are keen to understand the ongoing impact of Anti-Social Behaviour on our residents especially those victims who are vulnerable and live in more deprived areas. Our annual review will incorporate statistical and perception-based analysis of our ASB cases and impact on victims. This will enable us to be responsive in tackling any emerging issues.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing Services, working with the Housing Strategic and Assistant Directors, our Housing Service Managers and the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Manager will lead the review of the delivery action plan.

In reviewing its strategy annually this council remains committed to embracing amended policy direction and incorporating it within annual updates.

Measure of success

Our key measures of success will be quantitative:

- Improved satisfaction performance year on year following on from the initial set of Tenant Satisfaction Perception Survey in 23/24
- Improved satisfaction performance year on year when bench marked against similar sized landlords.
- Reduction in number of stage 1 and 2 complaints received from tenants relating to ASB compared with the 23/24 financial year.

- Increase in cases being successfully resolved year on year following outcome being recorded from 24/25.

Our key measures of success will be qualitative.

- By the end of the strategy period in 2028 tenants will have a clear voice under following implementation of the tenant engagement strategy. Tenants will tell us that they are able to directly influence and scrutinise our service.
- Learning from complaints and ASB case review will be embedded into service design and re-design.
- Tenants feedback on closed cases will be used to design and re-design the service.
- Streamlined process and access to more information and advice.

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Annexe 1: Strategy Action Plan

Priority 1, Prevention & early intervention

Publish a new ASB Policy and a 'Good Neighbourhood' Policy

Lead Officers:

ASB Manager, Service Manager for Housing Resident Services.

Target Date:

April 2025

Increase awareness of what ASB is and what services are available.

Lead Officers:

ASB Manager, Service Manager for Housing Resident Services.

Target Date:

April 2026

Publish a Hate Crime Policy and Procedure.

Lead Officers:

ASB Manager, Service Manager for Housing Resident Services.

Target Date:

April 2025

Publish a Domestic Abuse Strategy and a Housing Landlord Domestic Abuse Policy & Procedure.

Lead Officers:

Service Manager Community Safety, Community Safety Manager, Service Manager for Housing Resident Services, ASB Manager.

Target Date:

April 2026

Complete a self-assessment and respond to the Housing Ombudsman spotlight report on noise nuisance.

Lead Officers:

Performance & Insight Manager, ASB Manager.

Target Date:

April 2026

Continuously review our ASB procedure to ensure it provides a fast response and remains focused on early intervention.

Lead Officers:

ASB Manager.

Target Date:

Ongoing

Review the current service provision around tenancy support and the support provided to alleged perpetrators of ASB.

Lead Officers:

Service Manager for Housing Resident Services.

Target Date: April 2027

Review our processes around managing our neighbourhood and communal areas so that we promote environmental sustainability and tenant engagement through improvements to communal areas and neighbourhoods.

Lead Officers:

Service Manager for Housing Resident Services, Tenancy Engagement Manager, Housing Estates Manager, ASB Manager.

Target Date:

April 2027

Complete a review of communal entry door security as part of our stock condition surveys and maintenance programs.

Lead Officers:

Housing Maintenance Programmes and Servicing, Service Manager for Housing Resident Services, Housing Estates Manager. ASB Manager

Target Date:

April 2027

Priority 2, Managing risk and supporting victims

Review internal guidance around processes around recording tenant vulnerabilities.

Lead Officers:

Service Manager for Housing Resident Services, Tenancy Engagement Manager, Housing Estates Manager, ASB Manager.

Target Date:

April 2026

Seek feedback on ASB cases to give victims the opportunity to give feedback on services.

Lead Officers:

Tenancy Engagement Manager, ASB Manager.

Target Date:

On-going

Work in partnership with Victim Support.

Lead Officers:

Service Manager for Housing Resident Services, Tenancy Engagement Manager, Housing Estates Manager, ASB Manager.

Target Date:

April 2026

Priority 3, Work in partnership

Review current practices and thresholds for support service access ensuring people do not fall through the gaps.

Lead Officers:
ASB Manager,
Target Date:
On-going

Review how we manage our homelessness temporary accommodation with close interdepartmental relationships.

Lead Officers:
Service Manager for Housing Resident Services, Service Manager for Housing Options and Tenancy Accounts, ASB Manager.
Target Date:
April 2027

Promote the use of ASB case reviews where complainants are experiencing persistent anti-social behaviour. Checking NFDC (Housing), NFDC (Community Safety) and the Police are reviewing cases and holding services to account for their actions.

Lead Officers:
Service Manager for Community Safety, Community Safety Manager, ASB Manager.
Target Date:
April 2026

Develop a service level agreement with open spaces around the management of housing land, including residents' involvement on how their open spaces are managed.

Lead Officers:

Service Manager for Housing Resident Services, Housing Estates Manager.

Target Date:

April 2027

Develop closer relationships with local policing teams across the district.

Lead Officers:

ASB Manager, Community Safety Manager.

Target Date:

April 2026

Develop closer relationships with Hampshire Adults and Children Services, Mental Health Services and Probation – including the use of community pay back.

Lead Officers:

ASB Manager, Community Safety Manager.

Target Date:

On-going

Annual reviews with Environmental Protection to review internal procedures to swiftly investigate and resolve noise complaints.

Lead Officers:

ASB Manager, Environmental Protection Manager.

Target Date: 2026

On-going

Priority 4, Putting tenants first

Ensure residents are at the forefront of shaping our response to ASB, neighbour disputes and their neighbourhoods.

Lead Officers:

Tenant Engagement Manager, ASB Manager.

Target Date:

On-going

Ensure data analysis forms part of our proactive activities to improve our response to ASB and neighbour disputes.

Lead Officers:

ASB Manager, Performance and Insight Manager.

Target Date:

April 2026

Ensure that the Tenancy Engagement Service are actively involved around any service improvement and receipt of feedback.

Lead Officers:

Tenant Engagement Manager, ASB Manager.

Target Date:

On-going

Gain feedback on all closed cases of ASB and use lessons learnt from complaints to feed into service improvements.

Lead Officers:

Tenant Engagement Manager, ASB Manager.

Target Date:

April 2026

Develop a staff essential training plan focusing on legal tools and powers to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour as well as training around Mental health, Drugs and Alcohol and Domestic Abuse.

Lead Officers:

Service Manager for Housing Resident Services, Housing Estate Manager, ASB Manager.

Target Date:

April 2027

Review how we get out and about on our estates, and how we engage with residents and our elected members.

Lead Officers:

Tenant Engagement Manager, ASB Manager.

Target Date:

April 2026



Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

Housing and Communities - Housing Resident Services

Document publish date: **TBC**

Version number 1.0

Version	Author	Date	Changes made
1.0	Chris Pike	26/11/2024	Updated / New Policy

Document

Name of Policy	Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
Document reference	
Purpose of policy	To outline New Forest District Council's (NFDC) approach to dealing with reports of Anti-Social behaviour (ASB)
Policy applies to	This policy and the subsequent arrangements apply to all directly and indirectly employed housing staff within NFDC and, where appropriate, tenants, contractors and members of the public.
Lead officer	Housing ASB & Neighbourhood Manager
First issued	XX/XX/XX
Latest updated	XX/XX/XX
Version control	1.
Review period	At least every 3 years from the date of issues, or because of legislative, organisational change, ASB case review or a corporate complaint investigation.
Updated overview	

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Introduction

This Policy related to the Council's housing landlord's function.

The Purpose of this Policy is to foster positive relationships with our residents and to deliver better outcomes by implementing and building on recommendations made in the October 2022 Housing Ombudsman's Spotlight reports "time to be heard and noise reports".

The Council has a responsibility to prevent Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) by keeping homes, neighbourhoods, and communal areas under its control, safe and clean. The Council is required to have effective policies and processes in place to tackle ASB and hate incidents.

The Council accepts that everyone has a right to their chosen lawful lifestyle providing that it does not spoil the quality of life of others. The Council has an important role to play in making sure that such rights and obligations are managed effectively.

Our service standard dictates that all reports of ASB and Neighbourhood management issues are responded to, with clear actions agreed on how NFDC can assist with resolving the reported problem.

In cases of ASB, when the need for formal intervention is required by us, we aim to take a risk-based approach, assessing both the risk to victims and their wishes. In tackling ASB we will utilise both non-legal and legal measures.

In cases that don't meet the threshold for ASB intervention the report will be responded to under the Council Good Neighbourhoods Management Policy. That Policy outlines how we will respond to behaviours which are not ASB or considered a breach of tenancy. These behaviours can still be impactful but require a different response where residents are provided with access to the appropriate advice and tools so that as neighbours, they can work together to resolve any differences.

This policy also excludes hate crime and domestic abuse as these are dealt with under separate policies and procedures.

Behaviour towards our staff and contractors is dealt with through our internal accident, incident reporting & investigating policy.

How we use CCTV is dealt with through the Council's [CCTV Policy](#).

Complaints about the way we manage our response to ASB or Neighbourhood issues are dealt with through our [corporate complaint Policy](#).

Separate to this policy, residents have a right to make an application for an ASB case review (previously known as a Community Trigger)

Objectives:

The Council is committed to tackling ASB by:

- Using preventative and early intervention measures to reduce incidents of ASB.
- Emphasising the importance of early and proactive action to prevent cases from escalating.
- Responding to all cases of ASB with clear actions agreed with residents.
- Providing early and effective triaging and assessment of reports to see if the reports meet the threshold to be considered ASB.
- When cases are not considered ASB they will be responded to under our Good Neighbourhood Management Policy.
- Working in partnership with Police, Hampshire County Council, Education, Health and other public bodies at both formal and informal levels to prevent and respond effectively to ASB.
- Making available self-help tools focusing on communication over conflict to prevent issues escalating to more serious ASB.
- Providing effective communication, providing clear explanations on how residents reports will be managed, what actions the Council can take, what actions residents must take and what limitations we may face.
- Following a risk-based approach towards ASB, so that the most serious ASB, which has the greatest impact on people's lives, is prioritised, tackled and resolved.
- Supporting victims of ASB and encouraging perpetrators to change their behaviour through referring them for support.
- Making every effort to resolve reports without the use of non-legal action (where appropriate).
- Taking a risk-based approach in cases of ASB where legal action is required - assessing both the risk to the victims and their wishes before taking proportional action.
- Providing residents with access to the appropriate advice and tools in cases that don't meet the threshold for ASB intervention.

Legislative and regulatory context

In 2014 The ASB Crime and Policing Act was introduced with the aim of providing simpler, more effective powers to tackle ASB, that would provide better protection for victims and communities. This Act split the definition of ASB to cover the different legal tools available to both the Police and Local Authorities.

The Definition under Section 1 of the act became widely recognised by Housing Providers as the definition for ASB. Statutory guidance was published in 2019 which focused on the importance of tackling the impact of ASB and the effect this has on victims and on victims' needs.

In 2022 National Government published five ASB principles, which are:

1. Victims should be encouraged to report ASB and expect to be taken seriously. They should have clear ways to report, have access to help and support to recover, and be given the opportunity to choose restorative approaches to tackling ASB.
2. Agencies will have clear and transparent processes to ensure that victims can report ASB concerns, can understand how the matter will be investigated and are kept well informed of progress once a report is made.
3. Agencies and practitioners will work across boundaries to identify, assess and tackle ASB and its underlying causes. Referral pathways should be clearly set out between services and published locally. This includes pathways for the ASB case review and health services.
4. The public's ASB concerns should always be considered both nationally and locally in strategic needs assessments for community safety. Best practice should be shared through a network of ASB experts within each community safety partnership, each policing area and nationally.
5. Adults and children who exhibit ASB should have the opportunity to take responsibility for their behaviour and repair the harm caused by it. Agencies should deliver appropriate interventions, which may include criminal justice options, based on the seriousness, risks and vulnerabilities of the case.

The Regulator of Social Housing launched its new regulatory framework on 1 April 2024. The Regulatory standards relating to ASB are contained within the new Customer Standards, which include Neighbourhood and Community Standards, Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard and the Tenants Satisfaction Measure Standards, which stipulate:

Safer Neighbourhoods standards

- Registered providers must have a policy on how they work with relevant organisations to deter and tackle ASB in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.
- Registered providers must clearly set out their approach for how they tackle and deter hate incidents in neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.
- Registered providers must enable ASB to be reported easily and keep tenants informed about the progress of their case.
- Registered providers must provide prompt and appropriate action in response to ASB, having regard to the full range of tools and legal powers available to them.
- Registered providers must support tenants who are affected by ASB, including by signposting them to agencies who can give them appropriate support and assistance.

Transparency, influence, and accountability standards

- Registered providers must ensure complaints are addressed fairly, effectively, and promptly.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures Standards (TSMs)

- Registered providers must collect and provide information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in managing their homes and neighbourhoods.

This places a requirement on landlords to publish performance statistics on the number of ASB cases relative to the size of the landlord (TSM NM01) and the collective response to the question 'How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with NFDC's approach to handling ASB.'

Definitions

Anti-Social Behaviour:

The Council has adopted the following definition of ASB as set out in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014:

- a) Conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm, or distress to any person.
- b) Conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person or relation to that person's occupation of residential premises.
- c) And conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.

The Council recognises that the decision to rule something as ASB is subjective. This is based on how the behaviour makes people feel. We understand that people have different tolerances, expectations and perceptions. Sometimes individuals will consider something to be ASB when it is not behaviour that could be considered unreasonable.

It is for this reason that when the Council decides whether something is to be defined as ASB we will consider not just the definition of ASB, but also whether the behaviour is unreasonable.

When deciding whether something is unreasonable, we will base this on several factors. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. The frequency of the problem – we are unlikely to consider something as ASB if it is a one-off incident unless it is particularly serious.
2. How long each incident lasts and/or the times of day that an incident occurs.
3. The impact upon the victim(s).
4. The intention of the alleged perpetrator and whether they mean to cause harm.

Our response to reports that are considered ASB are outlined in our **ASB Commitments**. When applying this test, any behaviours that are not considered by officers to be ASB due to different lifestyles or every-day living situations and are not intended to cause nuisance or annoyance will be responded to under the Council's **Good Neighbourhood Management Policy**.

We will only progress reports in cases where we are satisfied our intervention is appropriate and may resolve the issues, and there is no agency better placed to respond.

To ensure this happens an assessment of all ASB and reported problems between neighbours will be undertaken to identify not only the nature of the behaviour and the causes, but also to identify at an early-stage cases of neighbour nuisance or disagreements which may not be classified as ASB, but may still impact resident's lives.

Behaviours that generally will not be considered ASB and therefore unlikely to be responded to under this policy could include:

- Normal household noise, such as noise from household appliances, children playing inside, children crying, dogs barking, occasional door slamming, toilets flushing, or sexualised noises.
- Smells from cooking
- One-off parties, including BBQs
- DIY within sociable hours
- Noisy plumbing or appliances
- Parking disputes
- Messy gardens
- Minor behavioural irritations – such as 'dirty looks', 'staring', or 'non abusive' comments.
- Household lifestyle clashes
- Complaints about CCTV

(This is not an exhaustive list.)

Roles and responsibilities

All housing staff are responsible for promoting a clear message that NFDC does not tolerate ASB, and designated officers will work with partner agencies to take appropriate action to resolve reports and allegations of ASB and reported problems between neighbours.

Customer Services (CS) & the Housing Support Hub (HSH)

- Customer Services and the Housing Support Hub are likely to receive the initial reports and are responsible for logging the initial query and providing information of response times.

Tenancy Sustainment Assistant / Neighbourhood Assistant

- Reviewing initial reports made to Housing resident services.
- Review and investigate minor complaints on instruction from the Neighbourhood Housing Officer.
- To provide help, advice, and information to residents on the full range of tenancy and neighbourhood management services
- Can also be responsible for managing and processing reports on instruction from the Neighbourhood Housing Officer.

Void Co-Ordinator

- Responsible to administrating the reletting of properties.

Temporary Accommodation Officer

- Responsible for managing and progressing reports in the NFDC Homeless Temporary accommodation.
- Ensuring that all tenants abide by the licence Conditions, providing advice and support whilst taking initial enforcement action (when appropriate).
- Liaising with other departments and agencies, taking joint action when required.
- Keeping accurate records and updating complainants.
- Referring and liaising with support services to assist alleged perpetrators with managing their licence.
- Identifying cases which fall outside of the definition of ASB and working with residents to effectively resolve the issues using non-legal measures.
- Escalating complex or challenging cases to the ASB & Neighbourhood Housing Manager / Neighbourhood Housing Officer.

Neighbourhood Letting and Sustainment Officer

- To deliver Housing and Neighbourhood management services from the commencement of any type of tenancy provided by the Council.

- To ensure tenancy conditions are explained and to identify vulnerable tenants and to ensure that relevant support is provided through support agencies and others to assist them in maintaining their tenancy.
- To provide help, advice, and information to tenants to assist with sustaining their tenancy.
- To resolve any breaches of tenancy.
- Managing the process of ending tenancies as required,
- Dealing with tenancy requests such as succession, relationship breakdowns, approval of mutual exchanges and ensure compliance of any home improvements carried out by the tenant.
- Referring ASB or Neighbourhood reports to the Neighbourhood housing Officer

Neighbourhood Housing Officer

- The main contact for residents and are responsible for managing and progressing reports under this Policy.
- Ensuring that all tenants abide by the Tenancy Conditions, taking enforcement action where appropriate.
- Liaising with other departments and agencies, taking joint action when required.
- Keeping accurate records and updating complainants.
- Referring and liaising with support services to assist alleged perpetrators with managing their tenancy.
- Identifying cases which fall outside of the definition of ASB and working with residents to effectively resolve the issues using non-legal measures.

ASB and Neighbourhood Manager (ASBM)

- Lead Manager for the response to ASB.
- Housing staff will liaise with the ASBM around High Risk or Complex cases whether guidance and support is required.
- ASBM will review cases, looking at what more can be done, and work proactively with Housing Resident team to tackle the situation.
- ASBM can act as a single point of contact of high harm / high risk cases as necessary.
- ASBM will review staff training and processes so Housing Staff are aware and trained to use the appropriate tools to tackle ASB.
- ASBM will identify long standing cases and guide Housing Staff towards resolution.
- ASBM is responsible for the quality of the service and ASB performance.
- ASBM is responsible for updating Policy and Procedure to reflect current and good practice.

Neighbourhood Letting and Tenancy Sustainment Manager

- Respond to service requests and complaints in line with the corporate complaint's procedure.
- Monitor staff compliance with the procedure.
- Deputise for the ASB & Neighbourhood Manager.

Tenant Engagement Manager

- Responsible for data collection and engagement around tenant satisfaction measures.
- Collating the tenants voice and working with the ASBM around service improvement, policy development and implementing learning following complaints.

Service Manager for Housing Resident Services

- Responsible for service delivery and response to complaints made under the corporate complaint process.

Strategic Director and Assistant Director – Housing & Communities (AD)

- Responsible for overall delivery of the service and complaints made under the corporate complaint process.

Legal Team

- Where appropriate, the Neighbourhood & Estate Management Team will instruct, liaise, and seek advice from the Legal department when enforcement action is being considered /required.

Other Service leads, managers & officers

The Neighbourhood Management Team will also liaise and seek advice from:

- Community Safety
- Service Manager - CCTV, Community Safety & Community Alarms
- Environmental and Regulatory Services
- Housing repairs / operations
- Open Spaces & Pest Control
- Benefit Services
- Service Manager for Housing Options & Tenancy Accounts
- Homelessness Officers
- Homeseach Team
- Tenant Accounts Manager / Rent team

Our ASB Commitments

Preventing ASB

We will attempt to prevent ASB through a variety of measures:

- Using Introductory Tenancies to ensure new tenants fully understand their responsibilities.
- Completing nomination assessments to ensure support needs are identified ahead of sign up.
- Comprehensive sign ups where tenancy obligations are explained, support needs are recorded, and tenants are referred for additional support.
- Settling in visits – used to emphasize tenants’ obligations and highlight and follow up on any support needs.
- Prevent individuals and families who have a proven history of ASB from becoming NFDC tenants.
- Encourage tenants and residents to report incidents of ASB through the advertising of services via the council’s website, tenant engagement and community events.
- The use of fixed term flexible tenancies in accordance with our tenancy strategy.
- Informal and Formal interventions such as visits, letters and warnings.
- Identifying cases at an early stage which require a good neighbourhood management response.

Reporting ASB – Service Standards

All reports should be reported to the Council at the earliest opportunity. Reports can be made including letters, telephones, emails, in person and online through our website. We will also receive reports from other agencies such as the Police.

NFDC will endeavour to respond to all suspected cases of ASB within **5 working days**, if the suspected ASB is deemed **urgent** or **serious** NFDC will endeavour to respond within **1 working day**.

Urgent or serious reports involving violence or threats of violence which represent risk of significant harm or pose an immediate risk to life or property will be defined as meeting the service definition of ASB.

We will use the terminology “Party 1” and “Party 2” to avoid incorrectly labelling victims or perpetrators. Party 1 will refer to the person making the report and Party 2 will refer to the person the report is about.

Responding and actioning ASB reports

In cases of ASB the Council will conduct an initial assessment, if the report meets the definition of ASB NFDC will complete a risk assessment, which will assess both the risk to the victims and their wishes. To ensure that reports are dealt with a ASB action plan will be agreed to support our response and investigation. By risk assessing cases of ASB we will provide a flexible and tailored response to cases of ASB.

The full timescales to responding to reports are set out in our internal procedure.

The Council will consider which course of action is suitable to the circumstances, depending on the tenant’s rights, severity and/or persistent nature of the conduct and we will have regard to the proportionality and reasonableness of the action. Unless the nature of the incident is to such a level that immediate legal action is required the Council will generally use non-legal measures first and we may use more than one remedy to address an issue.

The Council has a wide range of tools and powers to challenge ASB and will decide on a case-by-case basis which tool and powers are the most appropriate to use, whilst considering the wishes of the victim.

In appropriate cases residents will be encouraged to engage and communicate with one another and understand one another’s point of view. This will typically involve a referral for mediation.

When our interventions have failed (or are not successful) and the harmful ASB continues the Council may consider legal measures.

Service standards - we will:

- Complete a full assessment of all cases assessed as ASB and urgent cases of ASB.
- Keep in regular contact with resident/s regarding the progress of their case.
- Offer / complete a risk assessment assessing both the risk to the victim(s) and their wishes
- Regularly review risk assessments
- When actioning ASB reports ask residents to keep a log of incidents and assist in evidence gathering.

- Encourage residents to take up the offer of mediation when appropriate.
- When actioning ASB reports ask residents to use noise monitoring equipment, work with Environmental Protection or other appropriate services.
- When investigating cases ask that reports are made to the Housing Hub / to the Neighbourhood & Tenancy Team or the Police.
- Encourage residents to engage with supporting services, such as Victim Support or Health Services. This is to assist with coping strategies or other interventions linked to their health and wellbeing.
- Complete a proportionality assessment before taking any formal tenancy action such as a Notice of seeking possession.
- In case of low impact or no risk to harm direct residents towards 'self-help' tools.

Remedies for tackling ASB

The Council will use a variety of measures to resolve ASB. This is not an exclusive list but includes the main measures that can be explored to resolve ASB.

Non-legal measures

- Mediation
- Visits
- Warning letters
- Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs)
- Diversionary Activities
- Referrals to supporting agencies
- Joint actions agreed with partner agencies

Legal measures

- Introductory Tenancy extensions
- Notice of seeking possession
- Notice under Section 146 Law of Property Act 1925
- Absolute Grounds of Possession
- Notice to Quits
- Ending of a fixed term tenancy
- Possession orders
- Demoted Tenancies
- ASB Injunctions

- Community Protection Warnings & Notices (Service by Council and/or Police)
- Criminal Behaviour Orders (served by Police)
- Dispersal Power (served by the Police)
- Public Space Protection Order (NFDC Community Safety Team)
- Abatement Notices (served by the Councils Environmental Protection team)
- Closure Notices and Orders (Service by Council and/or Police)

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Tenants Rights, Leaseholders (including shared ownership) rights & responsibilities

Council tenants and leaseholders have clear rights and responsibilities in relation to ASB under their tenancy agreement or lease with the Council.

In general, a tenant/leaseholder has the right to be able to live in their home as they choose and without interference from any person. They have a responsibility to ensure that neither they, nor anyone living with them, or visiting their property acts in an anti-social manner, and this includes the behaviour and actions of children and pets.

In cases where tenants and leaseholders persist in causing ASB they can be evicted from their homes and the property returned to the Council's housing stock. Eviction will only be requested by the Court as a last resort, when all other interventions have failed and when the behaviour is to such an extent that it warrants making the person homeless.

The Council's Lettings Policy enables the Council to exclude those evicted for ASB from the Council's HomeSearch housing register (in certain circumstances). More information can be found under the Council's [scheme of allocation](#)

Support

Often a person's vulnerability may make them more likely to be a victim or perpetrator of ASB or result in a clash of lifestyles between neighbours.

Where identified or disclosed we will act upon on any support need of residents.

Support might include practical solutions such as property improvements, or additional security, as well as referrals to supporting agencies such as Adult Services or Children Services, Health Services or Victim Support.

In cases of ASB any intervention or enforcement action may run alongside supportive measures to help prevent ASB or neighbour reports reoccurring/occurring.

The council will endeavour to encourage awareness and engagement as a means of helping sustain tenancies.

In ASB cases when assessing what action should be taken consideration will be given to what support the alleged perpetrator would benefit from, such as support around substance misuse, mental health or offending.

In exceptional circumstances we may consider a management transfer (management move) to safeguard a NFDC tenant. Further information is available in the Council's [scheme of allocation](#)

Any management transfer will be considered under our management transfer procedure.

Looking after Witnesses and Victims

The Council will rely on the evidence provided by witnesses, who are often in vulnerable situations. In cases where Court action is necessary to stop the ASB or protect those who experience it the Council commits to looking after witnesses, and we will consider the witnesses' circumstances and their family situation.

The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in England and Wales, November 2020 defines a victim as:

“a person who has suffered harm, including physical, mental or emotional harm or economic loss which was directly caused by a criminal offence; a close relative (or a nominated family spokesperson) of a person whose death was directly caused by a criminal offence.

A victim is also a witness.”

We will support victims by:

- Maintaining regular contact.
- Discussing each stage of the legal process.
- Making it clear that in some cases they will need to be prepared to give evidence or attend court in some form.
- Referring them to Victim Support.
- Sharing information with Police and Community Safety following consent from the complainant/ victim.
- Seeking advice on whether it is possible to obtain an injunction.
- Liaising with the Police around any bail conditions.
- Offering pre court visits.
- Ensuring transport is available to take them to court.
- Paying for childcare if appropriate.

We will ask victims to:

- Remain in contact with the Council whilst their report is being investigated.
- Keep to the actions agreed in any Action Plan with the Council.
- Be willing to attend court or provide evidence in some form for their case to be progressed.

Closing reports

The decision to close a case will be discussed, and ideally agreed with Party 1.

The decision to formally close a case will be provided in writing to both parties and include advice and steps to take should the report restart.

Although a new report will be opened all the information from their previous report will be held on file, for a designated period, and will be referred to as necessary.

Closing ASB reports

Reports of ASB will need to be evidenced. Without evidence it is unlikely that any case can be investigated and will therefore be closed.

Cases may also be closed when:

- The ASB has stopped or is resolved.
- There is insufficient evidence to act, including the failure to return logs / or engage in evidence gathering when requested by the Council.
- The report is withdrawn.
- Reports are no longer being received or no contact from party 1 has been made in the last 4 weeks.
- Party 1 or 2 have moved.
- The behaviour cannot be reasonably classed as ASB, or the report has been assessed as low impact or parties will not try another approach, such as mediation.

Partnership working

MHCLG's Regulatory Framework, under the Neighbourhood and Community Standard, requires registered housing providers to co-operate with relevant partners to help improve social, environmental and economic wellbeing in their areas and to work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle ASB in the neighbourhoods where they own homes.

Criminal matters should be reported to Hampshire Police. NFDC will work with the Police to support any investigations.

The Council has strong working relationships and links with agencies and services that support the needs of our residents when tackling the causes and effects of ASB. Our range of partners is wide.

Our partners include:

- The Council's Community Safety Team
- The Council's Environmental Protection Teams
- Hampshire Police
- Probation Service
- Housing Associations
- Youth Offending Team
- Hampshire Childrens and Adults Social Care
- NHS Mental Health Teams
- Schools
- Victim Support

We work with our partners in a variety of ways to tackle ASB, including regular meetings and other joint working arrangements under the Safer New Forest Partnership.

Of equal importance is our work with residents, resident groups and Tenant Engagement Service to look at ways to prevent, identify and resolve ASB using a variety of methods including supporting resident led projects, estate meetings, estate inspections and the provision of diversionary activities.

Confidentiality and information sharing

We can only tackle ASB effectively by working with our partners and a key element of this approach is the sharing of information in accordance with the Council's statutory obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations. All tenants will be made aware of how their personal information will be processed. Information recorded on the Council's system and on tenants' files will be shared with other agencies as necessary.

A copy of the Privacy Notice is found here: www.newforest.gov.uk/privacy

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Monitor and review

This policy will be subject to regular review and amendment when necessary to accommodate new legislation, guidance, or local needs.

The Strategic Director for Housing and Communities has authority to make amendments in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Housing.

This policy will be available on the council's website at www.newforest.gov.uk

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Housing Good Neighbourhood Management Policy

Housing and Communities - Housing Resident Services

Document publish date: **DD/MONTH/YEAR**

Version number 1.0

Version	Author	Date	Changes made
1.0	Chris Pike	26/11/2024	New Policy

Document

Name of Policy	Good Neighbourhood Management Policy
Document reference	
Purpose of policy	To outline New Forest District Council's (NFDC) approach to dealing with reports and the management of neighbourhood issues which are not considered to be Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) but still require a landlord response.
Policy applies to	This policy and the subsequent arrangements apply to all directly and indirectly employed housing staff within NFDC and, where appropriate, tenants, contractors and members of the public.
Lead officer	Housing ASB & Neighbourhood Manager
First issued	XX/XX/XX
Latest updated	XX/XX/XX
Version control	1.
Review period	At least every 3 years from the date of issues, or because of legislative, organisational change, ASB case review or a corporate complaint investigation.
Updated overview	

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Introduction

This Policy related to the Council's housing landlord's function.

The Purpose of this Policy is to foster positive relationships with our residents and to deliver better outcomes by implementing and building on recommendations made in the October 2022 Housing Ombudsman's Spotlight reports "time to be heard and noise reports".

The Council has a responsibility to prevent Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) by keeping homes, neighbourhoods, and communal areas under its control, safe and clean.

The Council accepts that everyone has a right to their chosen lawful lifestyle providing that it does not spoil the quality of life of others. The Council has an important role to play in making sure that such rights and obligations are managed effectively.

Our service standard dictates that all reports of ASB and Neighbourhood management issues are responded to, with clear actions agreed on how NFDC can assist with resolving the reported problem.

In cases that don't meet the threshold for ASB intervention, this policy outlines the Council's commitments to how we will manage our neighbourhoods and how we will respond to behaviours which are not ASB or considered a breach of tenancy. These behaviours can still be impactful but require a different response where residents are provided with access to the appropriate advice and tools so that as neighbours, they can work together to resolve any differences.

This policy excludes hate crime and domestic abuse as these are dealt with under separate policies and procedures.

The policy is distinct from our ASB Policy and any incident or reports of ASB will be dealt through the main ASB Policy.

Behaviour towards our staff and contractors is dealt with through our internal accident, incident reporting & investigating policy.

How we use CCTV is dealt with through the Council's [CCTV Policy](#).

Complaints about the way we manage our response to ASB or Neighbourhood issues are dealt with through our [corporate complaint Policy](#).

Objectives:

The Council is committed to creating good neighbourhoods by:

- Using preventative and early intervention measures to reduce incidents of ASB under our ASB policy.
- Emphasising the importance of early and proactive action to prevent cases from escalating.
- Providing early and effective triaging and assessment of reports to see if reports meet the threshold to be considered ASB or requires our intervention to maintain a good neighbourhood relationship.
- Responding to all cases of neighbourhood issues with clear actions agreed with residents.
- Working in partnership with Police, Hampshire County Council, Health, education and other public bodies at both formal and informal levels to prevent and respond effectively to neighbourhood issues.
- Making available self-help tools focusing on communication over conflict to prevent issues escalating to ASB.
- Providing effective communication, providing clear explanations on how residents reports will be managed, what actions the Council can take, what actions residents must take and what limitations we may face.
- Supporting tenants and encouraging positive neighbour relationships and educating tenants on “how to be a good neighbour”
- Regularly review reports to confirm if they need to be responded to under our ASB Policy

Legislative and regulatory context

The Regulator of Social Housing launched its new regulatory framework on 1 April 2024. The Regulatory standards relating to managing neighbourhoods are contained within the new Customer Standards, which include Neighbourhood and Community Standards, Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard and the Tenants Satisfaction Measure Standards, which stipulate:

Safer Neighbourhoods standards

- Registered providers must have a policy on how they work with relevant organisations to deter and tackle ASB in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.
- Registered providers must clearly set out their approach for how they tackle and deter hate incidents in neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.
- Registered providers must enable ASB to be reported easily and keep tenants informed about the progress of their case.
- Registered providers must provide prompt and appropriate action in response to ASB, having regard to the full range of tools and legal powers available to them.
- Registered providers must support tenants who are affected by ASB, including by signposting them to agencies who can give them appropriate support and assistance.

Transparency, influence, and accountability standards

- Registered providers must ensure complaints are addressed fairly, effectively, and promptly.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures Standards (TSMs)

- Registered providers must collect and provide information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in managing their homes and neighbourhoods.

This places a requirement on landlords to publish performance statistics on the number of ASB cases relative to the size of the landlord (TSM NM01) and the collective response to the question 'How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with NFDC's approach to handling ASB.'

Definitions

Anti-Social Behaviour:

Under the Council's ASB Policy, the Council has adopted the following definition of ASB as set out in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014:

- a) Conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm, or distress to any person.
- b) Conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person or relation to that person's occupation of residential premises.
- c) And conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.

The Council recognises that the decision to rule something as ASB is subjective. This is based on how the behaviour makes people feel. We understand that people have different tolerances, expectations and perceptions. Sometimes individuals will consider something to be ASB when it is not behaviour that could be considered unreasonable.

It is for this reason that when the Council decides whether something is to be defined as ASB we will consider not just the definition of ASB, but also whether the behaviour is unreasonable.

When deciding whether something is unreasonable, we will base this on several factors. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. The frequency of the problem – we are unlikely to consider something as ASB if it is a one-off incident unless it is particularly serious.
2. How long each incident lasts and/or the times of day that an incident occurs.
3. The impact upon the victim(s).
4. The intention of the alleged perpetrator and whether they mean to cause harm.

Our response to reports that are considered ASB are outlined in our **ASB Policy**. When applying this test, any behaviours that are not considered by officers to be ASB due to different lifestyles or every-day living situations and are not intended to cause nuisance or annoyance will be responded to under this Policy.

We will only progress reports in cases where we are satisfied our intervention is appropriate and may resolve the issues, and there is no agency better placed to respond.

To ensure this happens an assessment of all ASB and reported problems between neighbours will be undertaken to identify not only the nature of the behaviour and the causes, but also to identify at an early-stage cases of neighbour nuisance or disagreements which may not to be classified as ASB, but may still impact resident's lives.

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Roles and responsibilities

All housing staff are responsible for promoting a clear message that NFDC does not tolerate ASB and will work with partner agencies to take appropriate action to resolve reports and allegations of ASB and reported problems between neighbours.

Customer Services (CS) & the Housing Support Hub (HSH)

- Customer Services and the Housing Support Hub are likely to receive the initial reports and are responsible for logging the initial query and providing information of response times.

Tenancy Sustainment Assistant / Neighbourhood Assistant

- Reviewing initial reports made to Housing resident services.
- Review and investigate minor complaints on instruction from the Neighbourhood Housing Officer.
- To provide help, advice, and information to residents on the full range of tenancy and neighbourhood management services
- Can also be responsible for managing and processing reports on instruction from the Neighbourhood Housing Officer.

Void Co-Ordinator

- Responsible to administrating the reletting of properties.

Temporary Accommodation Officer

- Responsible for managing and progressing reports in the NFDC Homeless Temporary accommodation.
- Ensuring that all tenants abide by the licence Conditions, providing advice and support whilst taking initial enforcement action (when appropriate).
- Liaising with other departments and agencies, taking joint action when required.
- Keeping accurate records and updating complainants.
- Referring and liaising with support services to assist alleged perpetrators with managing their licence.
- Identifying cases which fall outside of the definition of ASB and working with residents to effectively resolve the issues using non-legal measures.
- Escalating complex or challenging cases to the ASB & Neighbourhood Housing Manager / Neighbourhood Housing Officer

Neighbourhood Letting and Sustainment Officer

- To deliver Housing and Neighbourhood management services from the commencement of any type of tenancy provided by the Council.

- To ensure tenancy conditions are explained and to identify vulnerable tenants and to ensure that relevant support is provided through support agencies and others to assist them in maintaining their tenancy.
- To provide help, advice, and information to tenants to assist with sustaining their tenancy.
- To resolve any breaches of tenancy.
- Managing the process of ending tenancies as required,
- Dealing with tenancy requests such as succession, relationship breakdowns, approval of mutual exchanges and ensure compliance of any home improvements carried out by the tenant.
- Referring ASB or Neighbourhood reports to the Neighbourhood Housing Officer

Neighbourhood Housing Officer

- The main contact for residents and are responsible for managing and progressing reports under this Policy.
- Ensuring that all tenants abide by the Tenancy Conditions, taking enforcement action where appropriate.
- Liaising with other departments and agencies, taking joint action when required.
- Keeping accurate records and updating complainants.
- Referring and liaising with support services to assist alleged perpetrators with managing their tenancy.
- Identifying cases which fall outside of the definition of ASB and working with residents to effectively resolve the issues using non-legal measures.

ASB and Neighbourhood Manager (ASBM)

- Lead Manager for the response to ASB.
- Housing staff will liaise with the ASBM around High Risk or Complex cases whether guidance and support is required.
- ASBM will review cases, looking at what more can be done, and work proactively with Housing Resident team to tackle the situation.
- ASBM can act as a single point of contact of high harm / high risk cases as necessary.
- ASBM will review staff training and processes so Housing Staff are aware and trained to use the appropriate tools to tackle ASB.
- ASBM will identify long standing cases and guide Housing Staff towards resolution.
- ASBM is responsible for the quality of the service and ASB performance.
- ASBM is responsible for updating Policy and Procedure to reflect current and good practice.

Neighbourhood Letting and Tenancy Sustainment Manager

- Respond to service requests and complaints in line with the corporate complaint's procedure.
- Monitor staff compliance to the procedure.
- Deputise for the ASB & Neighbourhood manager.

Tenant Engagement Manager

- Responsible for data collection and engagement around tenant satisfaction measures
- Collating the tenants' voice and working with the ASBM around service improvement, policy development and implementing learning following complaints.

Service Manager for Housing Resident Services

- Responsible for service delivery and complaints made under the corporate complaint process.

Strategic Director and Assistant Director – Housing & Communities (AD)

- Responsible for overall delivery of the service and complaints made under the corporate complaint process.

Legal Team

- Where appropriate, the Estate Management Team will instruct, liaise, and seek advice from the Legal department when enforcement action is being considered /required.

Other Service leads, managers & officers

The Neighbourhood Management Team will also liaise and seek advice from:

- Community Safety
- Service Manager - CCTV, Community Safety & Community Alarms
- Environmental and Regulatory Services
- Housing repairs / operations
- Open Spaces & Pest Control
- Benefit Services
- Service Manager for Housing Options & Tenancy Accounts
- Homelessness Officers
- Homeseach Team
- Tenant Accounts Manager / Rent team

Our Good Neighbourhood Management Commitments

The Council recognises that some behaviours, whilst not ASB, can still cause a great deal of upset and frustration to residents. Some behaviours can also escalate to become ASB, as well as de-escalate and still cause tension between neighbours.

Generally, matters dealt with under these good neighbourhood management commitments will arise because of circumstances, rather than a genuine intention to cause someone else harm.

The council will not seek to label someone as a perpetrator or a victim.

As the behaviour will not be classed as ASB, it will therefore be unlikely to be a tenancy breach. As such we will be unlikely to consider any of our legal tools which are available to use in ASB cases.

Like ASB reports the Council will consider the source/cause of the behaviour, intention, impact/harm and frequency.

Behaviours that generally will not be considered ASB and therefore will be responded to under this Policy could include:

- Normal household noise, such as noise from household appliances, children playing, children crying, normal dogs barking, occasional door slamming, toilets flushing, or sexualised noises.
- Noise caused due to outstanding property repairs.
- Smells from cooking.
- One-off parties, including BBQs.
- DIY within sociable hours.
- Noisy plumbing or appliances.
- Parking disputes.
- Messy gardens.
- Minor behavioural irritations – such as ‘dirty looks’, ‘staring’, or ‘non abusive’ comments.
- Household lifestyle clashes.
- Occasional bonfires.
- Complaints about CCTV.

*This is not an exhaustive list.

Preventing Neighbourhood issues:

- Using Introductory Tenancies to ensure new tenants fully understand their responsibilities.
- Completing nomination assessments to ensure that support needs are identified ahead of sign up.
- Comprehensive sign ups where tenancy obligations are explained, and support needs are recorded, and tenants are referred for additional support.
- Settling in visits – used to emphasis tenants’ obligations and highlight and follow up on any support needs.
- Carefully considering allocations for impact on existing neighbourhoods
- Provision of a good neighbourhood management leaflet to help us deliver this Policy.
- Under our Void Standard we will not remove carpets unless they are in poor condition, and we will remove laminate flooring.
- We will follow up on other measures as appropriate, such as anti-vibration mats into washing machines spaces above ground floor.
- Promote communication between neighbours through the provision of mediation.
- Regular ground maintenance program.
- Regular cleaning and block inspections.
- Regular estate walkabouts

Reporting Neighbourhood Management Issues

Reports should be reported to the Council at the earliest opportunity. Reports can be made including letters, telephones, emails, in person and online through our website. We will also receive reports from other agencies such as the Police.

NFDC will endeavour to respond to all suspected cases of Neighbourhood management issues within **5 working days**.

The full timescales to responding to reports are set out in our internal procedure.

When assessing reports, we will let residents know whether this matter is likely to be dealt with as a Neighbourhood management issue to ensure they are dealt with at the appropriate level and not ASB. This will aid in managing residents’ expectations at an early stage.

We will use the terminology “Party 1” and “Party 2” to avoid incorrectly labelling victims or perpetrators.

Responding to reports and remedies

First getting neighbours to talk can be incredibly powerful and often stops a neighbour dispute escalating to more serious ASB. It allows different perspectives to be discussed, awareness and understanding to be developed. We can help by reviewing residents’ concerns and discuss effective ways of communicating with one another.

If residents need more formal help, we can talk to both neighbours and try and work out a solution, however residents will be asked to approach their neighbours first.

Because the central purpose is to build relationships between parties it is unlikely that we will be able to assist if the person making the report wants to remain anonymous. We will seek to alleviate any concerns round confidentiality when residents request it.

Residents will be encouraged to engage and communicate with one another and understand one another’s point of view.

In some instances, the reported problem may need assistance from other agencies and will work with partners to identify practical solutions.

We will:

- Provide advice on how best to communicate their problems or steps they can take to best manage the situation.
- Refer cases to mediation - mediation brings both neighbours together in a structured way, it can be used between two individuals or for groups of neighbours. It’s for cases when there is a clash of lifestyles or when both parties can take responsibility. Mediation can be face to face or done via shuttle techniques. The outcome of mediation should result in better understanding between neighbours and a shared agreement between them.
- Complete property inspections to establish any outstanding repairs or anything that may contribute to noise transference.
- Work with residents around options that may help reduce noise transference, such as understanding the importance of carpets, removal of hardwood flooring etc.
- Identify vulnerabilities and support needs/consider the needs for the parties involved and work to identify suitable referrals and support.

- Complete Dog Ownership Agreements and provide information on how to be a responsible pet owner.
- Facilitate Good Neighbourhood agreements between neighbours.
- We will provide Housing Options to residents and assist with applications under the Council's Allocation Policy or a mutual exchange.
- As resident to keep a log of reports to establish the frequency of the reported problem.
- Review the report to ensure the cases has the proper assessment if interventions fail or are not successful and impact continues.

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Tenants Rights, Leaseholders (including shared ownership) rights & responsibilities

Council tenants and leaseholders have clear rights and responsibilities in relation to ASB and neighbourhood management under their tenancy agreement or lease with the Council.

In general, a tenant/leaseholder has the right to be able to live in their home as they choose and without interference from any person. They have a responsibility to ensure that neither they, nor anyone living with them, or visiting their property acts in an anti-social manner, and this includes the behaviour and actions of children and pets. There are also various implied terms within the tenancy agreement to encourage and maintain good neighbour relationships.

In cases where tenants and leaseholders persist in breaching their tenancy agreement they can be evicted from their homes and the property returned to the Council's housing stock. Eviction will only be requested by the Court as a last resort and would only be used in serious tenancy breaches such as proven and serious Anti-Social behaviour and when all other interventions have failed. Eviction is for when the behaviour is to such an extent that it warrants making the person homeless.

The Council's Allocation Policy enables the Council to exclude those evicted from the Council's HomeSearch Housing Register (in certain circumstances). More information can be found under the Council's Letting Policy

Support

Often a person's vulnerability may make them more likely to be a victim or perpetrator of ASB or result in a clash of lifestyles between neighbours.

Where identified or disclosed we will act upon on any support need of residents.

Support might include practical solutions such as property improvements, or additional security. As well as referrals to supporting agencies such as Adult Services or Children Services, Health Services

The council will endeavour to encourage awareness and engagement as a means of helping sustain tenancies.

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Closing reports

The decision to close a case will be discussed, and ideally agreed with Party 1.

The decision to formally close a case will be provided in writing to both parties and include advice and steps to take should the report restart.

Although a new report will be opened all the information from their previous report will be held on file and will be referred to as necessary.

Closing reports under a good neighbour management commitment.

The Council requires the co-operation and support from all the parties involved. The Council may close the report when the parties refuse a reasonable request or when mediation is recommended and considered the best option, but is refused.

Cases may also be closed when:

- The reported problem has stopped or is resolved.
- When the report is anonymous
- When there has been no contact from Party 1 for the last 4 weeks
- Party 1 has been provided with the necessary support and advice to self-help.
- Either party has refused mediation and refuse to work constructively with one another.

Partnership working

MHCLG's Regulatory Framework, under the Neighbourhood and Community Standard, requires registered housing providers to co-operate with relevant partners to help improve social, environmental and economic wellbeing in their areas and to work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle ASB in the neighbourhoods where they own homes.

The Council has strong working relationships and links with agencies and services that support the needs of our residents when tackling the causes and effects of ASB. Our range of partners is wide.

Our partners include:

- The Council's Community Safety Team
- The Council's Environmental Protection Teams
- Hampshire Police
- Probation Service
- Housing Associations
- Youth Offending Team
- Hampshire Childrens and Adults Social Care
- NHS Mental Health Teams
- Schools
- Victim Support

We work with our partners in a variety of ways to improve our neighbourhoods and encourage good neighbour relationships, including regular meetings and other joint working arrangements under the Safer New Forest Partnership.

Of equal importance is our work with residents, resident groups and Tenant Engagement Service to look at ways to prevent, identify ways to improving our service and what methods we can take to support resident led projects, estate meetings, estate inspections and the provision of diversionary activities.

Confidentiality and information sharing

We can only improve our neighbourhoods by working with our partners and a key element of this approach is the sharing of information in accordance with the Council's statutory obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations. All tenants will be made aware of how their personal information will be processed. Information recorded on the Council's system and on the tenants, file will be shared with other agencies as necessary.

A copy of the Privacy Notice is found here: www.newforest.gov.uk/privacy

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Monitor and review

This policy will be subject to regular review and amendment when necessary to accommodate new legislation, guidance, or local needs.

The Strategic Director for Housing and Communities has authority to make amendments in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Housing.

This policy will be available on the council's website at www.newforest.gov.uk

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Housing Hate Crime & Hate Incident Policy

Housing and Communities - Housing Resident Services

Document publish date: DD/MONTH/YEAR

Version number 1.0

Version	Author	Date	Changes made
1.0	Chris Pike	26/11/2024	New Policy

Document

Name of Policy	Housing Hate Crime & Hate incident Policy
Document reference	
Purpose of policy	To outline New Forest Council's (NFDCs) approach to dealing with reports of Hate Crimes and Hate incidents.
Policy applies to	This policy and the subsequent arrangements apply to all directly and indirectly employed housing staff within New Forest District Council and, where appropriate, tenants, contractors and members of the public.
Lead officer	Housing ASB & Neighbourhood Manager
First issued	
Latest updated	
Version control	
Review period	At least every 3 years from the date of issues, or because of legislative, organisational change, ASB case review or a corporate complaint investigation.
Updated overview	

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Introduction

The purpose of this Policy is to outline the Council's housing landlord response to reports which are classed as a hate crime or a hate incident.

The Council takes all forms of hate crimes and hate incidents seriously and we are committed to reduce hate crimes and incidents across the district.

Hate crime and hate incidents can have a significant negative impact on tenants in social housing. Tenants may experience it directly or they may live in communities where hate crimes or hate incidents have occurred.

Hate crimes and incidents are categorised as a type of antisocial behaviour (ASB). Reports relating to general ASB are dealt with under a separate ASB Policy, and as such, reports of hate crimes or hate incidents which are investigated by the Council should be read alongside the main ASB Policy.

Behaviour towards our staff and contractors is dealt with through our internal accident, incident reporting & investigating policy.

Complaints about the way we manage our response to hate crime or Hate incidents are dealt with through our [corporate complaints Policy](#).

Objectives:

The Council is committed to tackling hate crimes and incidents by:

- Providing front line staff with the tools and training necessary to deal with hate crimes and incidents effectively.
- Increasing awareness and encourage people to report hate crime or hate incidents.
- Outlining how we will work alongside appropriate partners to deter, and tackle hate crimes incidents.
- Treating reported cases of hate crimes and incidents seriously and dealing with them as urgent cases.
- Outlining how we investigate reports of hate crimes and incidents, and the role of other relevant agencies.
- Supporting those who experience hate crimes or incidents in a sensitive and non-judgmental manner, considering the diverse needs of tenants.
- Ensuring individuals are aware of all the options available to them so that they can make informed decisions.
- Adopting a victim-centred approach and taking in the wishes of the victim to find solutions.

- Acting against the perpetrators of hate crimes where possible and where it is safe for the victim.
- Supporting vulnerable perpetrators by assisting them to sustain their tenancy.

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Legislative and regulatory context

The Regulator of Social Housing launched its new regulatory framework on 1 April 2024. The Regulatory standards relating to ASB are contained in within the Customer Standards including Neighbourhood and Community Standards, Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard and the Tenants Satisfaction Measure Standards, which stipulate:

Safer Neighbourhoods standards

- *Registered providers must have a policy on how they work with relevant organisations to deter and tackle ASB in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.*
- *Registered providers must clearly set out their approach for how they tackle and deter hate incidents in neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.*
- *Registered providers must enable ASB to be reported easily and keep tenants informed about the progress of their case.*
- *Registered providers must provide prompt and appropriate action in response to ASB, having regard to the full range of tools and legal powers available to them.*
- *Registered providers must support tenants who are affected by ASB, including by signposting them to agencies who can give them appropriate support and assistance.*

Under the Regulator of Social Housing Neighbourhood and Community standards the Council must work with appropriate partners with a common aim of trying to reduce **ASB**, **hate incidents** and **hate crimes**.

In doing this we must have effective policies and processes to tackle Anti-Social behaviour, hate crimes and hate incidents.

Joint initiatives may include, for example.

- Mediation services,
- Undertaking security measures,
- Environmental improvements,
- Diversionary activities,
- Awareness raising and education,
- Targeted activities.

Policies and procedures should include:

- How the Council tackles hate crime and hate incidents and how we communicate this to tenants.

- Our approach to investigating reports, including the role of other agencies.
- The support available to affected tenants.
- The action the Council will take to deal with perpetrators of hate crimes or hate incidents.

In managing reports of hate crime and incidents the Council must:

- Keep tenants informed on the progress of their case.
- Be mindful of our data protection obligations and any legal proceeding.
- Take a victim-centred approach to supporting tenants / residents.
- Consider how we can support vulnerable perpetrators of hate crimes or hate incidents to help them sustain their tenancy.

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Definitions

A **hate crime** is any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on a person's:

- race or perceived race
- religion or perceived religion
- sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation
- disability or perceived disability
- transgender or perceived to be transgender

A **hate incident** is any non-crime incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on the same personal characteristics as those for a hate crime (either perceived or actual) or based on **alternative subcultures**.

Alternative subcultures would typically include those with distractive dress, specific and shared values or shared music styles.

Hate incidents can feel like crimes to those who experience them. While the often-repeated experience of 'lower level' incidents like name-calling or offensive gestures may seem 'too common' or 'too ordinary' to report.

If someone believes something is a **hate incident**, it should be recorded as such by the Council.

Roles and responsibilities

All housing staff are responsible for promoting a clear message that NFDC does not tolerate Hate Crimes, and will work with partner agencies to take appropriate action to resolve reports and allegations of Hate Crime and Hate incidents.

Customer Services (CS) & the Housing Support Hub (HSH)

- Customer Services and the Housing Support Hub are likely to receive the initial reports and are responsible for logging the initial query and providing information of response times.

Tenancy Sustainment Assistant / Neighbourhood Assistant

- Reviewing initial reports made to Housing resident services.
- Review and investigate minor complaints on instruction from the Neighbourhood Housing Officer.
- To provide help, advice, and information to residents on the full range of tenancy and neighbourhood management services.
- Can also be responsible for managing and processing reports on instruction from the Neighbourhood Housing Officer.

Void Co-Ordinator

- Responsible to administrating the reletting of properties.

Temporary Accommodation Officer

- Responsible for managing and progressing reports in the NFDC Homeless Temporary accommodation.
- Ensuring that all tenants abide by the licence Conditions, providing advice and support whilst taking initial enforcement action (when appropriate).
- Liaising with other departments and agencies, taking joint action when required.
- Keeping accurate records and updating complainants.
- Referring and liaising with support services to assist alleged perpetrators with managing their licence.
- Identifying cases which fall outside of the definition of ASB and working with residents to effectively resolve the issues using non-legal measures.
- Escalating complex or challenging cases to the ASB & Neighbourhood Housing Manager / Neighbourhood Housing Officer

Neighbourhood Letting and Sustainment Officer

- To deliver Housing and Neighbourhood management services from the commencement of any type of tenancy provided by the Council.
- To ensure tenancy conditions are explained and to identify vulnerable tenants and to ensure that relevant support is provided through support agencies and others to assist them in maintaining their tenancy.
- To provide help, advice, and information to tenants to assist with sustaining their tenancy.
- To resolve any breaches of tenancy.
- Managing the process of ending tenancies as required,
- Dealing with tenancy requests such as succession, relationship breakdowns, approval of mutual exchanges and ensure compliance of any home improvements carried out by the tenant.
- Referring ASB or Neighbourhood reports to the Neighbourhood housing Officer

Neighbourhood Housing Officer

- The main contact for residents and are responsible for managing and progressing reports under this Policy.
- Ensuring that all tenants abide by the Tenancy Conditions, taking enforcement action where appropriate.
- Liaising with other departments and agencies, taking joint action when required.
- Keeping accurate records and updating complainants.
- Referring and liaising with support services to assist alleged perpetrators with managing their tenancy.
- Identifying cases which fall outside of the definition of ASB and working with residents to effectively resolve the issues using non-legal measures.

ASB and Neighbourhood Manager (ASBM)

- Lead Manager for the response to ASB, Hate Crimes and Hate incidents.
- The housing staff will liaise with the ASBM around High Risk or Complex cases whether guidance and support is required.
- ASBM will review cases, looking at what more can be done, and work proactively with Housing Resident team to tackle the situation.
- ASBM can act as a single point of contact of high harm / high risk cases as necessary.
- ASBM will review staff training and processes so Housing Staff are aware and trained to use the appropriate tools to tackle ASB, hate crimes and hate incidents.
- ASBM will identify long standing cases and guide Housing Staff towards resolution.

- ASBM is responsible for the quality of the service and ASB performance.
- ASBM is responsible for updating Policy and Procedure to reflect current and good practice.

Neighbourhood Letting and Tenancy Sustainment Manager

- Respond to service requests and complaints in line with the corporate complaint's procedure.
- Monitor staff compliance to the procedure.
- Deputise for the ASB & Neighbourhood manager.

Tenant Engagement Manager

- Responsible for data collection and engagement around tenant satisfaction measures.
- Collating the tenants voice and working with the ASBM around service improvement, policy development and implementing learning following complaints.

Service Manager for Housing Resident Services

- Responsible for service delivery and complaints made under the corporate complaint process.

Strategic Director and Assistant Director – Housing & Communities (AD)

- Responsible for overall delivery of the service and complaints made under the corporate complaint process.

Legal Team

- Where appropriate, the Estate Management Team will instruct, liaise, and seek advice from the Legal department when enforcement action is being considered /required.

Other Service leads, managers & officers

The Neighbourhood Management Team will also liaise and seek advice from.

- Community Safety
- Service Manager - CCTV, Community Safety & Community Alarms
- Environmental and Regulatory Services
- Housing repairs / operations
- Open Spaces & Pest Control
- Benefit Services
- Service Manager for Housing Options & Tenancy Accounts
- Homelessness Officers
- Homeseach Team
- Tenant Accounts Manager / Rent team

Our Hate Crime & Hate incident Commitments.

Preventing Hate Crime & Hate incidents.

We will seek to prevent Hate Crime and Hate incidents on our estates through a variety of measures:

- We use Introductory Tenancies to ensure new tenants fully understand their responsibilities of being a good tenant and neighbour.
- We complete nomination assessments to ensure support needs are identified ahead of a tenancy sign up.
- We undertake comprehensive sign ups where tenancy obligations are explained, support needs are recorded, and tenants are referred for additional support.
- We complete settling in visits on new tenants – to emphasise tenants' obligations and highlight / follow up on any support needs.
- We prevent individuals and families who have a proven history of ASB from becoming NFDC tenants under our allocation procedure.
- We encourage tenants and residents to report incidents of Hate Crime through the advertising of services via the council's website, tenant engagement and community events.
- We raise awareness of Hate Crime by advertising National Hate Crime Awareness week.
- Staff receive regular training on hate crime awareness & safeguarding training.
- We use both informal and formal interventions such as visits, letters and warnings when there is a breach of tenancy.

Reporting Hate Crime & Hate Incidents

As well as reporting an incident to the Council reports relating to a hate crime should also be made to the Police.

By reporting hate crimes support can be provided to the victim, and ensure the offenders are brought to justice. This also helps the Police and the Council build up patterns of behaviours locally and highlight areas of concerns within our communities.

Reporting hate crimes can be done by:

- calling 999 and reporting directly to the police if the incident is an emergency.
- calling 101 and reporting to the police if the incident is not an emergency.
- online via the Crimestoppers website or by calling 0800 555 111 (if the person wants to remain anonymous.)
- on the True Vision website. True Vision is a national police scheme to help victims report hate crime online.

There are many reasons that may deter people from reporting hate crimes and incidents to the Police or Council, for example the person's state of mind, their perceptions, or expectations of the Police or Council.

The decision to not report a hate crime or incident to the Police may limit some of the actions that the Council can take, however the choice not to report to the Police does not mean we cannot help the person.

If a tenant is a victim of a hate crime or hate incident and wants to make a report to the Council, they should do so at the earliest opportunity.

Reports can be made including letters, telephones, emails, in person and online through our website.

Telephone: 02380 285222

Email: housing.hub@NFDC.gov.uk

Address: Lyndhurst (main office), Appletree Court, Beaulieu Road, Lyndhurst, Hampshire SO43 7PA

Website: www.newforest.gov.uk

We will also receive reports from other agencies such as the Police.

Hampshire Police can be contacted on:

Emergency: 999

Non-emergency: 101

Website: www.hampshire.police.uk

Reports of hate crime or hate incidents should be treated as an urgent ASB case and the person making the report should be contacted within **1 working day** of the report.

For recording purposes, we will use the terminology "Party 1" and "Party 2" to avoid incorrectly labelling victims or perpetrators. Party 1 will refer to the person making the report and Party 2 will refer to the person the report is about.

Responding and actioning Hate Crimes and Hate incidents.

Any immediate safety concerns (such as repairs or extra security) should be dealt with by the person taking the initial report.

The Neighbourhood and ASB team will complete the following steps in every case:

- Offer / complete a risk assessment assessing both the risk to the victim(s) and their wishes.
- If the victim(s) wants us to investigate the report, an ASB action plan will be agreed to support our response and investigation.
- If agreed, we will refer the victim(s) to Victim Support and provide them with details of specific hate crime support services.

If Party 1 wants us to investigate and respond to the reported hate crime or hate incident the Council will consider which course of action is suitable to the circumstances, depending on the tenants' rights, victims' wishes, the severity and/or persistent nature of the conduct, and we will have regard to the proportionality and reasonableness of any proposed action.

Unless the nature of the incident is at a level that immediate legal action is required the Council will generally use non-legal measures first, and we may use more than one remedy to address an issue. Details of these are outlined in the **Council's Housing Anti Social Behaviour Policy**.

The Council has a wide range of tools and powers to challenge hate crime and hate incidents and will decide on a case-by-case basis which tool and powers are the most appropriate to use, whilst considering the wishes of the victim.

Remedies for tackling Hate Crime or Hate incidents.

The main measures that can be deployed in response to hate crime or hate incidents include:

- Provide additional security e.g. extra locks, door chain, bolts, fire retardant letter box.
- Arranging for any urgent repairs to be completed
- Arranging removal of offensive graffiti.
- Referring to supporting agencies.
- Attending or arranging a multiagency meeting with partner agencies.
- Inviting other relevant agencies such as the Police or other agencies / housing providers to attend interviews with perpetrators.
- Taking appropriate action against perpetrator(s) and work with other agencies to assist them to change their behaviour.
- Making a Restorative Justice Referral to a Mediation provider
- Making a third-party police referral.

- Making an Adult safeguarding referral if an adult with care and support needs is being abused or at risk.
- Making a Children Services referral if we feel a child is a risk of harm or abuse.

Tenants' and Leaseholders' (including shared ownership) rights & responsibilities

Council tenants and leaseholders have clear rights and responsibilities in relation to ASB under their tenancy agreement or lease with the Council.

In general, a tenant/leaseholder has the right to be able to live in their home as they choose and without interference from any person. They have a responsibility to ensure that neither they, nor anyone living with them, or visiting their property acts in an anti-social manner, and this includes the behaviour and actions of children and pets.

In cases where tenants and leaseholders persist in causing hate crimes they could be evicted from their homes through legal action, and the property returned to the Council's housing stock. Eviction will only be requested by the Court as a last resort, when all other interventions have failed and when the behaviour is to such an extent that it warrants asking the court to end the tenancy.

The Council's Lettings Policy enables the Council to exclude those evicted from due to ASB from the Council's Homeseach housing register (in certain circumstances). More information can be found under the Council's [scheme of allocation](#).

Support

Often a person's vulnerability will make them more likely to be a victim or perpetrator of a hate crime or a hate incident.

We will identify and act upon on any identified support need of residents.

Support might include practical solutions such as property improvements, or additional security. As well as referrals to supporting agencies such as Adult Services, Children Services, Health Services or Victim Support.

The list below is not comprehensive, but gives details of some of the national bodies with an interest in tackling hate crime and supporting its victims.

- www.report-it.org.uk/home (True Vision Website to report any hate crime)
- www.hampshire.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/hco/hate-crime (Report Hate Crime to Hampshire Police)
- www.safer.newforest.gov.uk (partner agencies across the New Forest)
- www.stophateuk.org (to report any hate crime)
- www.sophielancasterfoundation.com (Support for alternative cultures)
- www.galop.org.uk (to report anti-LGBT hate crimes and incidents)
- www.tellmamauk.org (to report anti-Islamic hate crimes and incidents)
- www.cst.org.uk (to report anti-Semitic hate crimes and incidents)
- www.reportracismgrt.com (to report Traveller and Roma Hate Crime)
- www.crimestoppers-uk.org
- www.victimsupport.org.uk
- www.report-it.org.uk/your_police_force

In cases of hate crime or hate incidents any intervention or enforcement action may run alongside supportive measures to help prevent hate crimes or incidents occurring/reoccurring.

The council will endeavour to encourage awareness and engagement as a means of helping sustain tenancies.

When assessing what action should be taken consideration will be given to what support the alleged perpetrator would benefit from, such as support around substance misuse, mental health or offending.

Sometimes it may not be possible for the Council or the Police to evidence any alleged hate crime or hate incident. This is often the case in one off or isolated incidents. If the victim is reporting being repeatedly harassed by the same person or group, we may ask the victim to keep a record of the incident to help them contact the Police.

In exceptional circumstances we may consider a management transfer (management move) to safeguard a NFDC tenant. Further information is available in the Council's [scheme of allocation](#)

Any management transfer will be considered under our management transfer procedure.

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Closing reports

The decision to close a report will be discussed and ideally agreed with the Party 1. In cases where Party 1 has been the only party contacted and visited, we will not share the closing of the report with Party 2.

The decision to formally close a case will be provided in writing and include advice and steps to take should the report restart.

All the information from the report will be held on file and will be referred to as necessary.

If Party 1 wishes us to discuss the report with Party 2 the closing of any report will be closed in line with the Council's ASB Policy or the Council's Good Neighbourhood Management Policy.

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Partnership working

MHCLG's Regulatory Framework, under the Neighbourhood and Community Standard, requires registered housing providers to co-operate with relevant partners to help improve social, environmental and economic wellbeing in their areas, and to work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle ASB in the neighbourhoods where they own homes.

Criminal matters such as hate crimes should be reported to Hampshire Police. If it is appropriate for the police to take responsibility for investigating an incident. The Council will work with them to support their investigation.

The Council has strong working relationships and links with agencies and services that support the needs of our residents when tackling the causes and effects of hate crime and hate incidents. Our range of partners is wide, but includes:

- The Council's Community Safety Team
- The Council's Environmental Protection Teams
- Hampshire Police
- Probation Service
- Housing Associations
- Youth Offending Team
- Hampshire Children's and Adult's Social Care
- NHS Mental Health Teams
- Schools
- Victim Support
- Voluntary Sector

We work with our partners in a variety of ways to tackle hate crime and hate incidents, including regular meetings and other joint working arrangements under the Safer New Forest Partnership:

www.safer.newforest.gov.uk

Of equal importance is our work with residents, resident groups and Tenant Engagement Service to look at ways to prevent, identify and resolve hate crime & hate incidents using a variety of methods including supporting resident led projects, estate meetings, estate inspections and the provision of diversionary activities.

Confidentiality and information sharing

We can only tackle Hate Crime & Hate incidents effectively by working with our partners and a key element of this approach is the sharing of information in accordance with the Council's statutory obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations, all tenants will be made aware of how their personal information will be processed. Information recorded on the Council's system and on the tenants, file will be shared with other agencies as necessary.

A copy of the Privacy Notice is found here: www.newforest.gov.uk/privacy

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Monitor and Review

This policy will be subject to regular review and amendment when necessary to accommodate new legislation, guidance, or local needs.

The Strategic Director for Housing and Communities has authority to make amendments in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Housing.

This policy will be available on the council's website at www.newforest.gov.uk

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Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 22 January 2025

Condensation, Damp and Mould Policy for Housing (Landlord Services)

Purpose	For Review
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	This report introduces a new Condensation, Damp, and Mould Policy for Housing (Landlord Services), which details how Tenant reports of damp, mould or condensation will be managed, and the maintenance of the Council's Housing stock to prevent and react to such issues. The new proposed Policy is attached at Appendix 1.
Recommendation(s)	That the Panel consider the proposed Condensation, Damp, and Mould Policy and make recommendations to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness.
Reasons for recommendation(s)	The Council is committed to providing an effective and compliant maintenance service in response to its statutory responsibilities, ensuring our homes are safe, warm, and decent, protect the value of our housing stock and provide high levels of tenant satisfaction.
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Steve Davies – Housing and Homelessness
Strategic Director(s)	Richard Knott – Housing and Communities
Officer Contact	Ritchie Thomson Service Manager – Housing Major Projects ritchie.thomson@nfdc.gov.uk Sophie Tuffin Service Manager – Housing Maintenance Programmes and Servicing sophie.tuffin@nfdc.gov.uk

Introduction and background

1. This report deals with the maintenance of the Council's housing stock and introduces a new Condensation, Damp, and Mould Policy for Housing (Landlord Services).
2. The new social housing regulatory regime, implemented through the Social Housing Residents' Charter, the introduction of Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), the new Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 and new Consumer Standards, places greater emphasis on tenant safety, and brought about a range of new significant measures to improve the services provided to tenants by registered providers. All registered providers now report annually to the Regulator of Social Housing on a wide range of matters, including performance with statutory compliance measures.
3. The Housing Maintenance Teams, operate under a suite of policies covering the core statutory compliance areas as follows:-
 - HLSPOL01 Fire Safety
 - HLSPOL02 Gas Safety
 - HLSPOL03 Legionella
 - HLSPOL04 Lifts and Lifting Equipment
 - HLSPOL05 Maintenance and Repairs
 - HLSPOL06 Playground and Play Equipment
 - HLSPOL07 Electrical Safety
 - HLSPOL08 Void and Mutual Exchange
 - HLSPOL09 Control of Asbestos
 - HLSPOL10 Control of Contractors
 - HLSPOL11 Mobility Scooters

Damp, Mould and Disrepair

4. The Housing Ombudsman Service published its Spotlight Report on damp and mould in October 2021 following the death of Awaab Ishak and sent an open letter to all member landlords on 29 November 2022. A further Spotlight Report was published in February 2023, alongside guidance on Pre-Action Protocol for Housing Conditions Claims and service complaints.
5. Awaab's Law forms part of the government's White Paper pledge to reduce non-decency in rented homes by 50% by 2030. Awaab's Law entered its national consultation phase on 9 January 2024 for 8 weeks and the outcome of which will help shape a level playing field on response standards for all disrepair within the housing sector.

6. The key proposals set out within the consultation include:-
- a) Timescales for initial investigations of potential hazards (*within 14 calendar days*);
 - b) Requirements to be placed upon landlords to provide written summaries of investigation findings (*within 48 hours of investigation*);
 - c) Timescales for beginning repair works (*within 7 days of written summary being issued, where a hazard poses a significant risk to the health and safety of the resident*);
 - d) Timescales for completing repair works (*within a reasonable period – meaning repairs are not unreasonably delayed and evidence provided where delays to repairs are necessary*);
 - e) Timescales for emergency repairs (*within 24 hours*);
 - f) The circumstances under which properties should be temporarily decanted to protect residents' health and safety (*hazard that poses a significant and imminent, risk of harm or danger, and the property cannot be made safe within the specified timescales*); and
 - g) Requirements to be placed upon landlords to maintain adequate record keeping throughout repair works.
7. The Council is committed to providing safe, secure, and comfortable homes for all our Housing tenants and recognises that damp caused by defect, or unmanaged excessive condensation can lead to subsequential mould growth, and the impact this has on health and wellbeing.
8. Whilst the Council awaits the outcome of the government's consultation, the repair response periods set out within the proposed Policy align with our current reactive maintenance response categories set out below, which are not too dissimilar to those proposed in the consultation and will be kept under review.

Category	Target	Response
E	3 hours	Emergency Response to make safe/temporary repair only
U	24 hours	Urgent Prevent suffering undue inconvenience or further damage to property
P	5 working days	Priority These are repairs that may affect the comfort of residents and likely to cause damage to the property if not carried out as a priority
R	20 working days	Routine Includes all other minor repairs
PW	90 working days	Programmed Works Major items of replacement or requiring weather or safety dependent work planning

9. In the 12-month period commencing Autumn 2022, the Housing Service received 546 reports of damp/mould, and in the current 12-month period commencing Autumn 2023, a further 400 have been received.
10. Over the past 18 months, significant effort has been made to tackle reports of damp and mould, with new procedures already implemented which respond effectively to the initial report, cause identification, resulting repairs and where necessary, delivery of new preventative educational guidance and ongoing support to our tenants. This has included initial commissioned specialist cleaning services.
11. The key processing activities in our effort to tackle reports of damp and mould are set out below: -
 - a) Customer Contact Triage Workflow;
 - b) Triage Risk Matrix to determine response priority;
 - c) Triage script;
 - d) Website MS Form for e-reporting;
 - e) Automated email responses built into Touchpoint for Customer Services;
 - f) Training for key staff in damp and mould identification and prevention and regular topic feature in staff briefings and team meetings;
 - g) Database to record, track, and monitor outcomes of reports and insight on repeat reporters;

- h) Use of independent professionals when warranted in complex cases.

Resident support

- 12. The Council's Housing Service have published damp, mould, and condensation guidance documents to support council tenants spot the early signs of damp and mould and how to reduce and manage problems caused by condensation in their home.
- 13. Information for residents is available in digital format on our dedicated damp, mould, and condensation web pages, or hard copy to support our tenants' preferences and included within property packs for all new tenancies.
- 14. Our Tenants can report concerns regarding damp, mould, or disrepair in a number of ways, including via telephone, email or online via our damp and mould report questionnaire e-form. More information can be found here:-
 - a) [Damp, mould, and condensation - New Forest District Council](#)
 - b) [Condensation, Damp, and Mould Guide](#)
 - c) [Managing moisture in your home guide](#)
 - d) [Damp and mould report questionnaire](#)
- 15. It will be the case that some reports of mould will not be due to a property defect. After a review, and this is the case, our Officers are trained to provide support to help the household reduce condensation in the home. A range of external resources to support tenants are also signposted within the Policy at Annex 6.

Corporate plan priorities

- 16. The Council is committed to its legal and moral obligations as a Landlord of social housing. Everyone is vulnerable to the health impacts of damp and mould and every Tenant has the right to a warm, secure, and decent home and to be treated with dignity and fairness.
- 17. This Policy supports the Council's Corporate Plan themes of People and Future New Forest objectives in helping those in our communities with the greatest need, meeting housing needs, being financially responsible and designing modern and innovative services to empower our residents to live healthy, connected and fulfilling lives.

Consultation undertaken

18. Consultation has taken place with a wide range of housing officers, including the tenant engagement team, in shaping the new Condensation, Damp, and Mould Policy. Consideration has been given to national best practice, Ombudsman reports, Regulatory Notices, and the learning from 2 years of reports and response.
19. The Tenant Involvement Group have received regular service updates on our approach in dealing with reports of damp and mould, and in shaping our tenant guides and content published in Hometalk. The Policy was presented to the Tenant Involvement Group on 9 December 2024 and received positive feedback.
20. Following Panel Members consideration it is intended that the new Condensation, Damp, and Mould Policy for Housing (Landlord Services) is formally adopted thereafter by Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness Decision.

Financial and resource implications

21. An annual budget funded by the HRA is required to support this policy and this will be agreed as part of the Council's annual budget setting process.
22. There is a need to ensure that appropriate resources are in place as the death of Awaab Ishak demonstrates the severity of the issue if it is not properly managed. The Council has already put in place additional resources to bring about improvements and strengthen the Council's approach to disrepair reports via a dedicated task force of customer services triage lead, inspector, and trade responders.

Legal implications

23. Awaab's Law entered the statute book through Clause 42 of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act in July 2023. Awaab's Law effectively inserts into social housing tenancy agreements a term (called an implied term) that will require landlords to comply with new requirements, to be set in detail through secondary legislation. This means all registered providers of social housing will have to meet these requirements and, if they fail to do so, tenants will be able to hold their landlords to account by taking legal action through the courts for a breach of contract.
24. The Council's complaints procedure aligns with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, meaning we are able to deal with Pre-Action Protocol letters alleging disrepair through the complaints process. Pre-Action Protocol rules govern the conduct of

the parties and what steps should be taken before issuing a claim. This process will support Tenants to resolve issues raised quickly and effectively and will mitigate the risk of litigation and unreasonable costs claims.

Risk assessment

25. The new policy recognises and acknowledges the serious impact damp and mould can have on people, both physically and mentally, and seeks to remedy this at the earliest opportunity.
26. Certain individuals may be at increased risk of the health impacts of damp and mould exposure, and through our health needs risk-based approach we will identify and prioritise those individuals most at risk and prioritise our resources to respond accordingly.
27. The Council foster a collaborative partnership culture to support our tenants and seek to resolve issues raised swiftly. This collaboration supports our tenant engagement strategic priorities of '**listening to our tenants**', '**putting tenants first**', '**knowing our tenants**', and '**how we communicate with tenants**', to ensure everything we aim to achieve is supported by the tenants' voice, and those who will implement the actions.
28. In certain limited circumstances, it will not be possible for the Council to meet the timescales set out within the new policy for reasons beyond our control, but we will take all reasonable steps to do so.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

29. The Council will implement data collection and insight measures, making every contact count to assist with informing us of the possible risks to our properties so that we can undertake proactive measures and prevent repeated visits or reparation work.
30. In certain cases, we will seek to install environmental sensors within our properties to monitor and provide actionable insights into indoor environmental conditions, providing real-time data for analysis and decision-making for improving energy efficiency.

Equalities implications

31. The new policy recognises and acknowledges the serious impact damp and mould can have on people, both physically and mentally, and seeks to remedy this at the earliest opportunity.

32. Certain individuals may be at increased risk of the health impacts of damp and mould exposure. This could be due to health-related or age-related vulnerabilities, or because they are less able to report and act on guidance related to damp and mould or fall with groups that are more likely to live in a home with damp and mould.
33. While damp and mould poses a risk to anyone's health and should always be acted on quickly, it is particularly important that damp and mould is addressed with urgency for those more vulnerable to significant health impacts. The new policy sets out the Council's approach to identify vulnerable residents, in order to prioritise our response within our available resources.

Crime and disorder implications

34. There are no crime and disorder implications arising directly from this report.

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

35. The Council will respond proactively, sensitively and with urgency when engaging with residents following a report of damp, or mould, to identify the severity and potential risk posed to tenants.
36. The Council will not place any requirement on residents who are suffering from health conditions to seek and share evidence from a regulated healthcare professional.

Conclusion

37. The new Condensation, Damp, and Mould Policy sets out the Council's approach in dealing with reports of damp and mould within our homes and our responsibilities as Landlord to achieve statutory legislative requirements, clearly defines roles and responsibilities and the framework to support residents, in order for them to hold us to account.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - HLSPOL18
Condensation, Damp, and Mould
Policy for Housing (Landlord
Services)

Background Papers:

None.

Condensation, damp, and mould policy

Housing Landlord Services

HLSPOL18

Document publish date **TBC** 2025

Version number 1.0

Version	Author	Date
1.0	Ritchie Thomson	01/10/2024

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1 Document history

Name of policy	Condensation, Damp, and Mould Policy
Document reference	HLSPOL19
Purpose of policy	<p>New Forest District Council is committed to its legal and moral obligations as a 'Landlord' for social housing within the District of the New Forest.</p> <p>This policy sets out the framework of guiding principles and arrangements for Housing Landlord Services in identifying and remedying damp, and mould in the home.</p>
Policy applies to	This policy and the subsequent arrangements apply to all directly and indirectly employed housing staff within New Forest District Council and, where appropriate, tenants, contractors, and members of the public.
Lead officer	Sophie Tuffin – Service Manager
First issued	TBC
Latest update	
Version control	V1.0 15 August 2024
Review period	At least every three years from date of issue, or in response to legislative, organisational change or an incident investigation.
Update overview	October 2024, new Policy

2 Introduction

- 2.1 New Forest District Council ('The Council') is committed to its legal and moral obligations as a 'Landlord' for social housing within the District of the New Forest.
- 2.2 Everyone is vulnerable to the health impacts of damp and mould, but people with certain health conditions, children and older adults are at greater risk of more severe health impacts.
- 2.3 Every Tenant has the right to a warm, secure, and decent home and to be treated with dignity and fairness, alongside the Council's priority to provide safe homes, maximise our available resources, and protect the fabric of Council housing assets.

Understanding condensation, damp, and mould

- 2.4 Condensation is the process where water vapour becomes liquid. It is the reverse action of evaporation, where liquid becomes a vapour. Condensation happens one of two ways: Either the air is cooled to its dew point, or it becomes so saturated with water vapour that it cannot hold any more water.
- 2.5 Damp is the continued build-up of moisture in a property. It affects building materials (such as walls, floors, ceilings, foundations) and/or home furnishings and belongings (such as carpets, curtains, wallpaper, furniture, and clothing).
- 2.6 In addition to causing damage, damp and condensation can also lead to the growth of mould and other microorganisms. Damp can occur in homes for a variety of reasons irrespective of the type of damp (condensation, penetrating, rising or traumatic).
- 2.7 Mould is a fungus that grows on wet materials and requires moisture for its growth and reproduces from spores. Mould spores primarily affect the airways and lungs but can also affect the eyes and skin and, in cases of prolonged exposure, leading to severe respiratory illness. The presence of damp and mould in the home can also affect tenants' mental health due to worries about the health impacts of damp and mould, unpleasant living conditions, and destruction of property and belongings.

- 2.8 Condensation, damp, and mould is a complex issue requiring regular action from both the Council as housing provider and our tenants. The nature of diagnosis of many damp and mould issues means that diagnosis is not always possible at the first report.
- 2.9 This policy sets out the framework of guiding principles and arrangements how the Council, in line with current regulations will take every reasonable action to identify, remedy and where required, provide advice on condensation, damp, and mould in the home and will:-
- Provide clarity on the ways in which tenants can report such issues;
 - Provide staff with the ability to understand what is going on by providing them scripts to aid diagnosis;
 - Ensure that tenants are treated in a fair and consistent way;
 - Comply with statutory regulatory, legislative requirements, contractual requirements, and good practice;
 - Focus on working in partnership with tenants ensuring that a safe and healthy internal environment is reasonably possible to achieve;
 - Maximise available resources and ensure that they are used effectively and efficiently to deal with reports of damp, and mould;
 - Ensure that the fabric of Council owned properties are protected from deterioration and damage resulting from excessive condensation, damp, and mould.
- 2.10 The Council will ensure that tenants have access to and/or are provided with comprehensive advice and guidance on managing and controlling condensation, damp, and mould in the home.
- 2.11 The Council will make reasonable attempts to access our housing properties to undertake effective investigations and implement all reasonable remedial repair solutions and improvements to make eradication of damp and mould possible. This includes using every visit opportunity to spot signs of damp and mould growth.

- 2.12 The Council will implement data collection and insight measures to assist with informing us of the possible risks to our properties so that we can undertake proactive measures to eliminate condensation, damp, and mould, before it becomes a problem for our tenants.

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3 Legislative and regulatory context

3.1 Social landlords must adhere to several regulations related to damp and mould. A lack of compliance can place tenants at risk of harm, and landlords at risk of prosecution or financial penalties. The legislation and standards are sometimes different for social and private rented landlords, but include:-

The Housing Act 2004

3.2 The Housing Act 2004 introduced the housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS). The HHSRS is a risk-based evaluation tool used to assess potential risks and hazards to the health and safety of occupants from deficiencies identified in residential properties in England and Wales.

- a) The assessment method focuses on the hazards that are present in housing and tackling these making housing healthier and safer to live in;
- b) The assessment covers 29 categories of hazard which includes damp and mould.

The Environmental Protection Act 1990

3.3 The Environmental Protection Act 1990 gives tenants and local councils powers to take legal action where homes contain a 'statutory nuisance', which includes where they are in such a state as to be prejudicial to health.

3.4 To be a statutory nuisance, the damp and mould must be harmful to the health of the tenant or a nuisance. All homes must not contain conditions that are prejudicial to health.

The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018

3.5 New provisions in the **Landlord and Tenant Act 1985** added by the **Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018** require that properties are free of hazards, including damp and mould, which are so serious that the dwelling is not reasonably suitable for occupation in that condition. The current occupier may be taken into consideration when determining whether the property is suitable.

- 3.6 A home that is fit for human habitation is safe and healthy, which would mean free from damp and mould that could cause significant harm.

The Decent Homes Standard

- 3.7 Social housing specifically must meet The Decent Homes Standard (DHS). To meet the Decent Home Standard, social housing must be free from dangerous 'category 1' hazards. But the DHS also states that social housing must be in a reasonable state of repair and provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort. Either disrepair or inadequate thermal comfort, or both, may result in damp and mould.

The Minimum Level of Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES)

- 3.8 Works to the heating and ventilation systems and replacement of windows are all controlled work. When undertaking controlled work, landlords must comply with the Building Regulations 2010.

Other Legislation, Approved Codes of Practice and Spotlight Reports from Housing Ombudsman

- 3.9 Other legislation, approved codes of practice and Spotlight Reports from Housing Ombudsman relating to condensation, damp, mould, decency, tenancies, and complaint handling , but which is not exhaustive:-

Legislation

- a) The Building Regulations 2010;
- b) The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985;
- c) The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023.

Approved Codes of Practices

- a) Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Guidance: Understanding and addressing the health risk of damp and mould in the home
- b) Property Care Association: Investigation and Control of Dampness in Buildings

Housing Ombudsman Service

- a) Spotlight on Damp and Mould, October 2021

- b) One Year On Follow Up Report, Spotlight on Damp and Mould - -It's not Lifestyle, February 2023

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4 Definitions

Capillary action

4.1 Capillary movement of water in masonry from below, to above, ground level.

Competent Person

4.2 Person(s), whilst not required to possess specific academic qualifications, but:-

- a) Understand the relevant housing legislation.
- b) Have appropriate education, training, knowledge, and experience in the principles of identifying damp and mould.
- c) Have an understanding of how condensation forms and disseminating clear guidance to residents, how to reduce condensation to mitigate the risks of mould developing.
- d) Understand the hazards, risk, and other relevant factors with occupants at special risk within the premises.
- e) If carrying out damp and mould surveys, have appropriate training/experience in this field.

Condensation

4.3 The process whereby water condenses from water vapour to liquid water when the temperature of air containing the water vapour drops to, or below, dewpoint.

Condensation damp

4.4 Condensation damp happens when moisture generated inside the home cools and condenses onto colder parts of the buildings (for example window frames, corners, and low points on walls behind sofas or wardrobes). This is the most common form of damp.

Damp-proof Course (DPC)

4.5 A continuous physical or chemical barrier to prevent capillary movement of water in walls.

Deliquescent

4.6 Becoming liquid due to the absorption of moisture.

Dew Point

4.7 Temperature at which 100% relative humidity is reached and air becomes saturated with water vapour (condenses).

Hygroscopic

4.8 Readily taking water vapour from the air.

Limitations

4.9 These are what are 'imposed' and agreed with the surveyor PRIOR to a survey, such as inspect ground floor only, roof only, no lifting carpets, do not 'damage' walls etc. Specific limits to the survey should be expressly stated in the surveyor's report.

Mould

4.10 Mould is a type of fungus which grows in moist environments. Mould can cause adverse health effects as well as damage to buildings and building contents.

Penetrating damp

4.11 Penetrating damp is water that gets into the building from outside due to defects in the walls, roofs, windows, or floors.

Relative Humidity

4.12 The amount of water vapour contained within a given volume of air compared with the maximum amount of water that could be in the same body of air, at the given temperature (usually expressed as % RH).

Restrictions

4.13 These are discovered by the Surveyor at the time of the survey and that had not been discussed or made aware prior to survey and restricts the inspection e.g. laminate floor to ground floor front room; fitted carpet to ground floor rear room; locked door to access. Specific restrictions should be expressly stated in the surveyor's report.

Rising damp

4.14 Rising damp is moisture from the ground that rises through parts of the building in contact with the ground (walls and floors); it is usually found in older properties and is often misdiagnosed. It can be identified through visual inspection; however chemical testing is the most appropriate way of confirming it. Often it is due to defective damp proof courses and membranes.

Salt Damp

4.15 Damage and contamination of decorative surfaces caused by the action of hygroscopic or deliquescent salts.

Thermal Bridge

4.16 Part of a construction with thermal resistance significantly lower than that of the surrounding construction e.g. a window lintel.

Traumatic damp

4.17 Traumatic damp can be caused by leaking water from waste and heating pipes, overflowing baths or sinks, burst pipes or defective water storage vessels inside the building. Traumatic damp can also originate from outside the property, for example from another building or from environmental flooding.

Triage

4.18 The preliminary assessment to determine the urgency of response or action.

Vapour Pressure

4.19 Pressure exerted due to the presence of water vapour.

5 Landlord roles and responsibilities

5.1 The Council will ensure that all our housing staff are fully aware of their role in order that the Council as 'Landlord':-

- Achieves legal maintenance and repairing obligations of its social housing assets;
- Minimise and prevent risks associated with damp and mould;
- Recognise and acknowledge the serious impact damp and mould can have on people, both physically and mentally and look to address these at the earliest opportunity.

Strategic Director Housing and Communities

5.2 The designated health and safety lead for the Council as a social housing provider under section 126A of The Social Housing Regulation Act 2023.

Assistant Director - Housing

5.3 Strategic responsibility for the Council's approach to manage damp and mould in social housing controlled by the Council and is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of relevant social housing regulation are applied and implemented.

Service Manager – Housing Maintenance Programmes and Servicing

5.4 Operational responsibility for the overall effectiveness of the Housing Landlord Services Condensation, Damp, and Mould Policy, arrangements and action plan for social housing controlled by the Council.

Housing Service Managers

5.5 Responsible for the delivery of services within their respective areas that impact on the overall effectiveness of the Housing Landlord Services Condensation, Damp, and Mould Policy and will:-

- Support and assist the Service Manager for Housing Maintenance Programmes in discharging and undertaking their duties and respond to matters within their respective service areas.

Housing Maintenance Delivery Manager

5.6 Responsible for the day-to-day delivery of the arrangements set out within the Housing Landlord Services Condensation, Damp, and Mould Policy for social housing controlled by the Council.

Housing Decarbonisation and Programme Manager

5.7 Responsible for the delivery of capital decarbonisation and planned preventative maintenance programmes for social housing controlled by the Council.

Gas and Electrical Manager

5.8 Responsible for the delivery of mechanical and electrical cyclical safety inspections, repair and overhaul and planned preventative maintenance programmes covering gas, oil, solid fuel, air source and electrical plant and installations within the Council's housing stock, ensuring compliance with safety legislation and relevant standards.

Private Sector Housing Manager

5.9 Responsible for assisting residents to remain safe and independent in their homes through Disabled Facilities Grants and delivering the council's enforcement and regulatory services in relation to housing standards, licencing of housing in multiple occupation (HMO), bringing empty private properties back into use and overseeing the Council's private sector leasing scheme.

Repairs Supervisor

5.10 Responsible for the supervision of operational trade staff and contractors delivering day-to-day responsive repairs to the council's housing stock in accordance with Policies, technical and statutory standards, repair response times and resources, and actively engage with housing tenants on property repairs.

Maintenance Inspector

5.11 Undertake property inspections of the council's housing stock within inspection priority response times, identify repairing schedules that are the responsibility of the Landlord, assess risk and impact to occupants to determine repair priority and raise subsequent work orders for repair.

Stock Condition Surveyor

5.12 To undertake Stock Condition Surveys on the Council's housing and garage stock to accurately determine the condition and remaining life expectancy of key components, energy performance assessment, and Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) risk assessment.

Housing Customer Services and Planning Supervisor

5.13 Responsible for leading customer services contact triage on damp, mould, and disrepair reports to determine response priority based on assessment with tenants, arranging property inspections and/or subsequent repair and maintenance work orders.

Corporate Health and Safety Team

5.14 Responsible for providing support and guidance in respect of Health and Safety to Housing management and other relevant management for Council Properties and will:-

- Conduct audits to ensure that the provisions within the Condensation, Damp, and Mould Policy are to the standard required;
- Investigate accidents and near miss incidents and subsequently make recommendations to management of controls to reduce the risk of such incidents recurring, to reduce financial loss and to improve health and safety standards;
- Support management in identifying suitable and appropriate training to enable suitable competencies for condensation, damp, and mould assessment and management actions to prevent damp and mould occurring.

Employees

5.15 All employees of New Forest District Council, irrespective of their position, has a responsibility for safety, and will:-

- Take reasonable care for their own Health and Safety and that of other persons, including members of the public, tenants, visitors, and contractors;
- Co-operate with the Council and its managers to enable compliance with this policy and the legal duties it holds;
- Remove or reduce hazards that, in their opinion, may present a serious risk to health of themselves or others;
- Report hazards that have been removed or that may present a serious risk to users;
- If in the course of their normal duties, identify observable evidence of dampness in a building, such as visible mould, mould odour or water damage, including condensation, that they report such concerns, as this is sufficient to indicate a need to remedy to protect the health of tenants and prevent proliferation;
- Report concerns where vulnerable residents may be at additional risk.

6 Tenant responsibilities

6.1 The Tenancy Agreement is a legal Contract describing the conditions of tenancy, and sets out the Council's duties as Landlord, and rights and responsibilities of Tenants. Forming part of the Tenancy Agreement, Tenants must:-

- (a) Report any damage or repairs required to the property or common areas;
- (b) Upon reasonable notice, allow employees of the Council or Contractors into the property to inspect it or carry out required repairs;
- (c) To provide adequate access to the area of repair i.e. removal/replacement of carpet, laminate flooring, possessions, appliances, and furniture;
- (d) Use the house in a proper manner and keep it in good condition;
- (e) Ventilate and heat their home adequately and follow any advice given by the Council to prevent condensation (if condensation occurs, or they may be responsible for the cost of any repair work unless it occurs as a result of a fault in the building);
- (f) Take all reasonable precautions to protect the property against damage, dilapidation, or other harm resulting from fire, flood, decay, infestation, damp, freezing pipes or any other cause;
- (g) Keep the interior of the property clean and decorate the inside of the property, ensuring that the decorations are maintained to a reasonable standard;
- (h) To obtain written permission to carry out any alterations or additions to the property;
- (i) Pay for any damage caused by them, costs associated with neglect by them, members of their household, pets, or visitors;
- (j) Not allow anyone to damage, deface or remove any part of the property without lawful authority (permission);
- (k) Maintain anything installed or improved by them.

7 Responding to reports of damp and mould

7.1 When responding to reports of damp and mould the Council will:-

- a) Respond sensitively and assess the issue with urgency to identify the severity of condensation, damp and mould and potential risk posed to tenants;
- b) Identify and tackle the underlying root cause promptly, and act with urgency when concerns have been raised about medical conditions and impact to health;
- c) Provide tenants with condensation, damp, and mould guidance, including the importance of cleaning down early signs of mould growth and ongoing self-management tools;
- d) Ensure tenants are informed about the steps that will be taken to remove mould (if applicable) and address any underlying issues and establish the timeframes for the work;
- e) Prior to the removal of any mould, photograph and document the location of the mould, to aid monitoring and insight to help identify the source;
- f) In severe cases remove any mould, to address the health risk to tenants, using a qualified professional when appropriate;
- g) Identify and tackle the underlying causes of damp and mould, including building deficiencies, inadequate ventilation, and provide tenants with guidance on managing the build-up of condensation;
- h) Contact tenants who have reported damp and mould at least 6 weeks after guidance has been provided or remedial work has been carried out, to ensure that the issue has been fixed and damp and mould have not reappeared. If damp and mould have reappeared, carry out further investigation and intervention to remedy.

Taking a proactive approach to reduce the risk of damp and mould

- 7.2 The Council will adopt a proactive approach to the identification, tackling and remedy of damp and mould. This will include:-
- a) Record all reports of damp, mould, and remedy activity in order to provide insight on identifying common issues, repeated reports and trends within the Council's housing stock;
 - b) Undertake periodic 5 yearly stock condition surveys of all properties to identify the condition of our Council housing stock to inform future capital planned maintenance, preventive and decarbonisation programme investment;
 - c) The Council recognise that some homes are more difficult to heat, either due to their energy efficiency or cost of living pressures, and that this can lead to increased condensation occurring and the risk of damp and mould developing more likely. The Council will signpost tenants to relevant information to support tenants experiencing financial difficulties and provide guidance to understand what they can do to reduce condensation, and risk of damp and mould developing, where applicable and appropriate;
 - d) Utilise every activity of frontline staff working in tenants' homes to ensure that every opportunity to identify tenants living in homes with damp and mould is utilised, 'making every contact count';
 - e) Provide suitable and sufficient training to ensure staff are aware of the significant health risks associated with damp and mould, the need to address the underlying causes of the issue and not just remove visible mould, are aware of any processes associated with reporting and addressing damp and mould, and understand the importance of being sensitive to tenants' circumstances and vulnerabilities;
 - f) Foster a culture of building positive relationships with tenants, ensuring that tenants feel encouraged to report damp and mould.

Timeframe for investigating

- 7.3 The Council will triage all reports of damp or mould based upon an assessment with tenants to identify the risk and vulnerability of tenants and/or members of their household, and prioritise resources and endeavour to respond within the following targets :-
- a) Households identified as higher risk, where damp and mould is reported will be given a **Priority** response category and an inspection of the property carried out within 5 working days;
 - b) If following initial triage, the risk of damp and mould is identified as being low risk, information, and guidance on managing moisture and cleaning of mould will be provided. In addition, tenants will be asked to provide further photographic evidence to support remote assessment;
 - c) In all other cases, where damp and mould is reported, and determined an inspection is required, these will be given a **Routine** response category and an inspection of the property carried out within 20 working days.
- 7.4 Tenants can report concerns regarding damp, mould, or disrepair in the following ways:-
- During office hours by calling:- **(023) 8028 5222**. The Housing Support Hub is open on Monday to Thursday between 8.30am and 5.15pm, and on Friday between 8.30am and 4.45pm; or
 - Online via our website. More information and advice can be found here:- **Damp, mould, and condensation - New Forest District Council** and report any concerns via the online form **Damp and mould questionnaire**; or
 - Via email:- **HousingSupportHub@nfdc.gov.uk**

The investigation

- 7.5 Where a report of damp or mould has been received and the initial triage has identified the need for a physical inspection, the investigating Officer must sufficiently determine whether a hazard exists, and if so, the level of risk posed to a resident's health or safety.

- 7.6 All investigating Officers from initial triage, remote or physical investigation, will hold appropriate training, knowledge, and experience in the principles of identifying damp and mould.
- 7.7 A physical inspection may not be required in all cases. Where suitable and sufficient visual evidence has been provided by the Tenant, a remote investigation may be sufficient to determine any defect, underlying cause of mould and remedy.

Assessing risk

- 7.8 To determine whether a hazard is negatively affecting a resident's health and safety, or likely to negatively affect a resident's health and safety, Council staff must consider any vulnerabilities of the resident of which they are aware (including if a resident has made them aware).
- 7.9 The Council will triage all reports of damp and mould to determine the priority of response, giving priority to those residents with known or identified vulnerabilities and correlation between vulnerability and health effects of the reported hazard:-
- a) Residents with a pre-existing health condition (for example asthma, COPD, cystic fibrosis, other lung diseases and cardiovascular disease);
 - b) Residents of all ages who have a weakened immune system, such as residents with a cancer diagnosis, or are undergoing chemotherapy, or other people who are taking medications that suppress their immune system;
 - c) Pregnant women, their unborn babies and women who have recently given birth, who may have weakened immune systems;
 - d) The elderly and where households have members aged under 14;
 - e) Residents who are bedbound, housebound or have mobility problems making it more difficult for them to get out of the home.

Tenant engagement

- 7.10 The Council will respond proactively, sensitively and with urgency when engaging with resident's following a report of damp, or mould, to identify the severity and potential risk posed to tenants.

- 7.11 The Housing Service's activities will take account of our tenant engagement strategic priorities of '**listening to our tenants**', '**putting tenants first**', '**knowing our tenants**', and '**how we communicate with tenants**', to ensure everything we aim to achieve is supported by the tenants' voice, and those who will implement the actions.
- 7.12 Our values, LEAF, underpin the council's vision and priorities by shaping our behaviours and the way we work.

Learning

We learn from what we and others do well and where we need to improve, supporting staff development and organisational growth.

Empathy

We show kindness, actively seeking to understand people's different needs, and ensure our services are responsive.

Ambition

We are ambitious for our people and our place, embracing innovation and best practice.

Fairness

We act fairly, honestly, and openly in all that we do.

- 7.13 The Council **will not** place any requirement on residents who are suffering from health conditions to seek evidence from a regulated healthcare professional.

8 Investigation summary findings following report of damp and mould

- 8.1 Following the timeframe for investigating period as set out at Section 7.3, the Council will provide a written summary of findings to the Tenant that includes details of any hazard or building defect identified and (if applicable) next steps, including an anticipated timeline for repair and a schedule of works.
- 8.2 Tenants will be issued with a written summary within 2 working days of the investigation concluding. The written summary will specify, at minimum:-
1. How and when the investigation was conducted;
 2. Job title of the individual who conducted the investigation;
 3. Any follow up investigations that are required, and if so when they will take place;
 4. If a hazard was found and if so what;
 5. Whether the hazard is likely to pose a significant risk to residents' health or safety;
 6. If it does pose a risk:-
 - What temporary repairs are needed to make the property safe until the problem can be permanently rectified;
 - A schedule of works to permanently rectify the problem and the likely timescales to complete the work;
 - Contact details of the Officer who will lead remediation work for the tenant to contact with any queries.
- 8.3 The written summary will be issued to tenants electronically via email or by issuing a hard copy dispatched by postal service, depending on the tenants' communication preferences and needs.

- 8.4 In cases where no hazard was identified following investigation, the written summary will detail how the investigation was conducted and how the conclusion of no hazard was reached, so that tenants can be assured their home is safe and include further guidance on managing moisture within the home.
- 8.5 In cases where the investigation identifies a defect but does not find that the defect poses a significant risk to the tenant's health and safety, the written summary will explain why and that the Council will remedy the defect as a routine repair.
- 8.6 If, within 2 working days of the investigation, the Council is not able to set out full details of wider repair works, and only the immediate steps to be taken (i.e. temporary repairs), the Council will inform the tenant of when they can expect a full schedule of works (or estimated timeframe) where dates are dependent on external contractors' availability and follow up with specific timings. In cases for example:-
- Issues involving further building structural investigation;
 - Commissioning specialist damp survey;
 - Foul or surface water drainage survey.

9 Reparation

- 9.1 If the investigation indicates that any reported conditions of damp, or mould poses a significant risk to the health and safety of the tenant, the Council will endeavour to begin repair works within 7 calendar days of the written summary being issued.
- 9.2 The level of risk that any reported conditions of damp, or mould presents will need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis and consider known vulnerabilities of the tenant or members of their household.
- 9.3 If the Council is unable to determine whether a hazard poses a significant risk to a resident’s health or safety, we will take a cautious approach and take any necessary action to mitigate health risks.
- 9.4 In some cases, the Council will need to take a phased approach to more complex remediation works, and temporary safety works will be required in the first instance before wider works are completed. For example, works to remove mould spores to mitigate the health risk, with wider repair works to follow. In such situations, the Council will still begin works within 7 calendar days, and details of further works will be included in the written summary of findings report set out in Section 8.

Completing repair works

- 9.5 The Council will satisfactorily complete repair works within a reasonable time period proportionate to the defect identified, and for the majority of generalised repairs, fall in line with the Council’s Maintenance and Repair policy response targets set out below:-

Category	Target	Response
E	3 hours	Emergency Response to make safe/temporary repair only
U	24 hours	Urgent Prevent suffering undue inconvenience or further damage to property
P	5 working days	Priority These are repairs that may affect the comfort of residents and likely to cause damage to the property if not carried out as a priority

R	20 working days	Routine Includes all other minor repairs
PW	90 working days	Programmed Works Major items of replacement or requiring weather or safety dependent work planning

9.6 In cases of complex remediation work it is impractical to set a fixed time limit for the completion of all repairs, i.e., those requiring further investigation, commissioning experts, structural damp or those requiring further detailed monitoring.

9.7 In such cases, our tenants will be kept regularly informed and timescales for completing repairs will be proportionate to the scale of the repair and consider the needs of tenants and be carried out as soon as reasonably practicable.

Shortage of labour and/or materials

9.8 In exceptional circumstances, where the Council experiences barriers to meeting timescales due to difficulties sourcing experts, skilled labour, or the required materials, the Council will keep tenants updated on delays and keep a record of the correspondence.

9.9 In such cases, and where a hazard has been identified that poses a significant risk to the health and safety of tenants, the Council will put in place temporary measures to ensure the property is safe, and where it is unable to do so, offer tenants suitable alternative accommodation until it is safe to return.

10 Decanting

- 10.1 If an investigation finds a hazard that poses a significant, or a significant and imminent, risk of harm or danger, and the property cannot be made safe within the specified timescales, the Council will offer to arrange for the occupant(s) to stay in suitable alternative accommodation until it is safe to return at the Council's expense.
- 10.2 Suitable alternative accommodation could include family, friends, vacant social housing stock, bed and breakfast establishment or hotels.
- 10.3 Temporary decanting will only be considered as a last resort and is intended to make sure that occupant(s) can be protected if dangerous hazards cannot be removed within the timescales set.
- 10.4 The Council recognise that some tenants will have reasons to resist being moved from their homes, even if temporarily. In those instances, the Council will take all reasonable steps to address tenants' concerns to aid temporary decant.
- 10.5 Where temporary decant is refused, the Council will provide tenants with clear information on how to keep themselves and their families safe ahead of the hazard being addressed, including if it is the Council's judgement that it is not possible to do so, and will record correspondence with tenants on offering alternative suitable accommodation.

11 Record-keeping

- 11.1 The Council will keep clear records of all attempts to respond to and remedy reports of damp and mould, including records of all correspondence with the tenant and any contractors.
- 11.2 In certain limited circumstances, it will not be possible for the Council to meet the timescales set out within this policy for reasons beyond our control but will take all reasonable steps to do so.
- 11.3 The Council will work with residents to arrange a suitable time for appointments to visit and take into account the needs of our tenants when offering timeslots to visit:-
- If we are unable to access the property within the agreed timeslot, our staff will leave a 'no access' card stating that an attempt was made and provide contact details;
 - The Council will make at least 3 attempts to contact tenants (or appointed representative) to arrange a suitable time to access the property;
 - If a tenant is unwilling or unable to provide access within the timescales, the Council will continue to actively engage and work with the tenant to secure entry.
- 11.4 Throughout this process, the Council will keep a record of all correspondence made with tenants, noting the date, time and actions attempted.

12 Equality and diversity

- 12.1 This policy recognises and acknowledges the serious impact damp and mould can have on people, both physically and mentally, and seeks to remedy this at the earliest opportunity.
- 12.2 Certain individuals may be at increased risk of the health impacts of damp and mould exposure. This could be due to health-related or age-related vulnerabilities, or because they are less able to report and act on guidance related to damp and mould, or fall with groups that are more likely to live in a home with damp and mould, including:-
- people with long term illness;
 - people who struggle to heat their home and/or are experiencing fuel poverty;
 - people on low incomes;
 - people with disabilities;
 - people from ethnic minority backgrounds and;
 - people living in temporary accommodation.
- 12.3 While damp and mould poses a risk to anyone's health and should always be acted on quickly, it is particularly important that damp and mould is addressed with urgency for those more vulnerable to significant health impacts:-
- Residents with a pre-existing health condition (for example asthma, COPD, cystic fibrosis, other lung diseases and cardiovascular disease);
 - Residents of all ages who have a weakened immune system, such as residents with a cancer diagnosis, or are undergoing chemotherapy, or other people who are taking medications that suppress their immune system;
 - Pregnant women, their unborn babies and women who have recently given birth, who may have weakened immune systems;
 - The elderly and those aged under 14;

- Residents who are bedbound, housebound or have mobility problems making it more difficult for them to get out of the home.

12.4 People who fall into more than one of these categories are likely to be particularly vulnerable to the health impacts of damp and mould, and this policy sets out the Council's approach to identify vulnerable residents, to prioritise our response within our available resources.

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13 Working in partnership with tenants

- 13.1 We will make it easy for tenants and officers to report damp and mould issues in our homes, building trust and working in partnership with tenants and stakeholders.
- 13.2 When we receive a report of damp or mould we will:-
- a) Respond sensitively and assess the issue with urgency to identify the severity of damp and mould and potential risk posed to tenants;
 - b) Risk assess each case using a triage risk matrix, and after risk assessing, adapt our approach in each case;
 - c) Identify and tackle the underlying causes of damp and mould, including building deficiencies, inadequate ventilation, and provide tenants with guidance on managing the build-up of condensation;
 - d) In more complex cases, seek the guidance from a qualified professional to avoid misdiagnosis;
 - e) Inspect the home at least 6 weeks after remedial work has been carried out, to ensure that the issue has been fixed and damp and mould have not reappeared. If damp and mould have reappeared, carry out further investigation and intervention to remedy.
- 13.3 We will offer a range of support depending on tenants' individual needs (including, but not limited to, help with language or cultural barriers).
- 13.4 Where vulnerable or disabled residents have no one to help them and are unable to carry out mould washes etc. themselves, we will consider how to support and assist them on a case-by-case basis.
- 13.5 We will approach each report of damp and mould with a 'no blame' culture – working with tenants in partnership, offering clarity on the responsibilities of both tenant and the Council as 'Landlord'.
- 13.6 We will work collaboratively with stakeholders and partners both in terms of addressing damp and mould and educating Officers and Tenants.

- 13.7 With our empty homes, at the time of a void inspection, check each room for damp and mould. If identified, it will be managed and rectified as part of the void maintenance works prior to reletting.
- 13.8 We are passionate about our tenants, their homes, and our communities. We're keen to hear what our tenants have to say about their home, where they live, and how our housing services affect them. We will actively engage with our Tenant Involvement Group when we regularly review this Policy. More information on tenant engagement and participation can be found here:- [**Tenant engagement and participation - New Forest District Council**](#)

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14 Prevention and monitoring

- 14.1 It is very important for our tenants to be able to spot the early signs of damp and mould, and how to tackle it. To support our tenants, our information guides give practical information on how to identify condensation, damp, and mould and how to manage moisture in the home.
- 14.2 The Council will implement data collection and insight measures to assist with informing us of the possible risks to our properties so that we can undertake proactive measures to eliminate the effects of damp and mould before it becomes a problem for our tenants.
- 14.3 In some cases, the Council may seek to install environmental sensors throughout the property to monitor and provide actionable insights into indoor environmental conditions. Environmental sensors are devices designed to measure and monitor various aspects of the surrounding environment, such as temperature, humidity, and indoor air quality. They work by utilising specialised sensors and technologies to detect specific environmental parameters, providing real-time data for analysis and decision-making for improving energy efficiency, monitoring damp and mould risk and identifying residents at risk of fuel poverty.

15 Complaints and learning

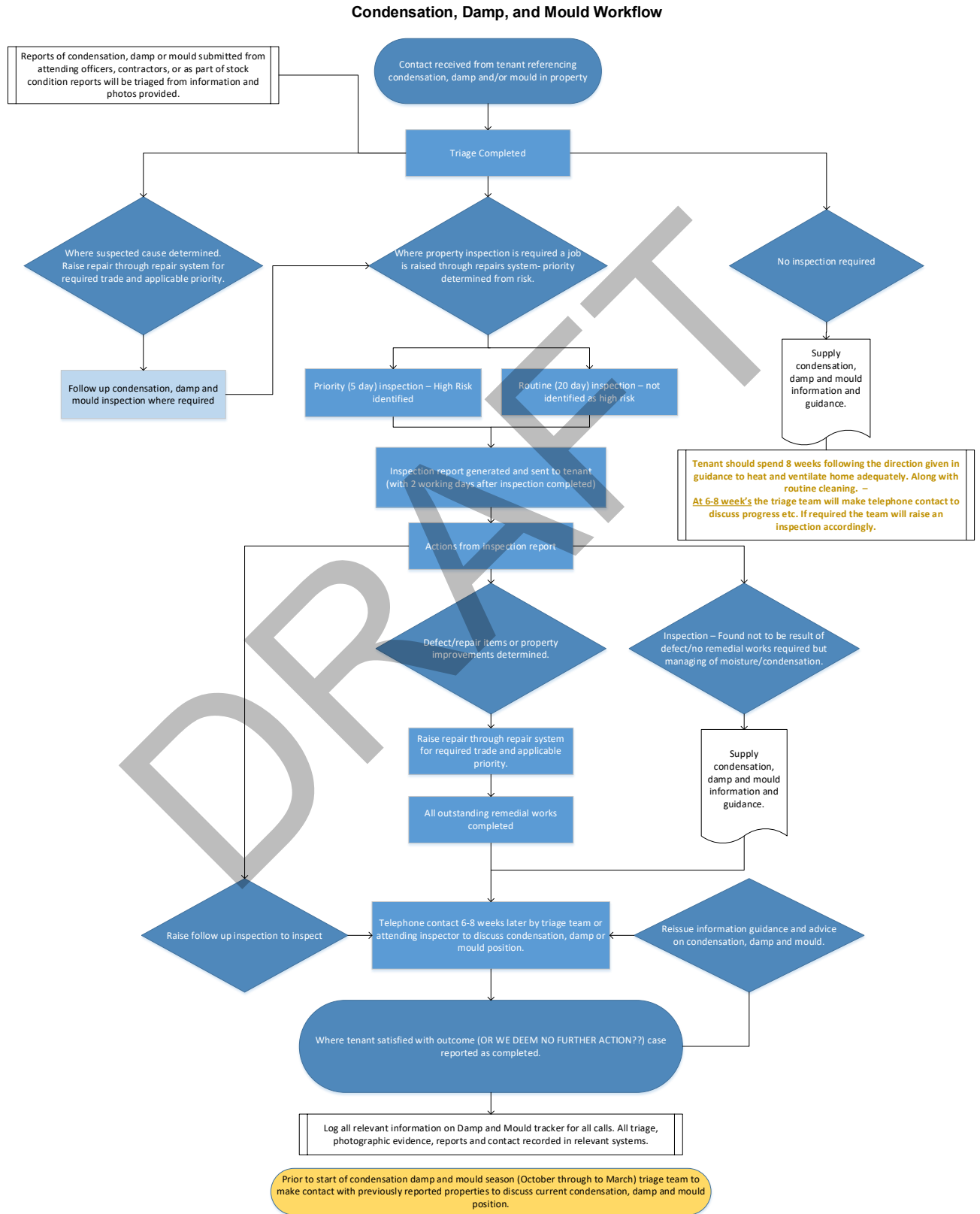
- 15.1 We are committed to providing our tenants with quality services. However, sometimes things do go wrong.
- 15.2 We encourage complainants to tell us when this happens so we can put things right, explain what has happened, learn from our mistakes, and improve our services.
- 15.3 Our aim is to swiftly investigate all corporate complaints impartially, finding solutions locally whenever possible to the satisfaction of both complainant and us.
- 15.4 The Council's complaint procedure has been aligned with the **Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code**
- 15.5 More information on feedback, comments and complaints can be found here:- **Feedback, comments, and complaints - New Forest District Council**

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16 Annexes

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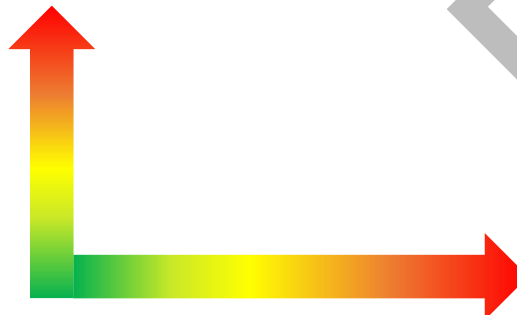
Annex 1 Process map – condensation, damp, and mould triage



Annex 2 Condensation, damp, and mould risk matrix

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Mould Risk	Combined mould surface area: (> the surface of 2 internal door faces)	Medium-High	High	High	High	High
	Combined mould surface area: (≤ the surface of 2 internal door faces)	Medium	Medium	Medium-High	Medium-High	High
	Combined mould surface area: (≤ the surface of 1 internal door face)	Low	Low-Medium	Low-Medium	Medium	Medium-High
	Mould spotting around window reveals/frames/silicon, corners of room or backs/behind furniture	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low-Medium
		No Health Concerns	Minor Health Concerns	Vulnerable Adult, over 80 or under 14	Immuno compromised	Severe Respiratory Disease
		Health Risk				



Annex 3 Tenant condensation, damp, and mould triage questionnaire

Our Council housing tenants can report early signs of damp or mould in several ways, including online via our website.

More information can be found here:-

[Damp, mould, and condensation - New Forest District Council](#)

[Condensation, Damp, and Mould Triage Questionnaire](#)

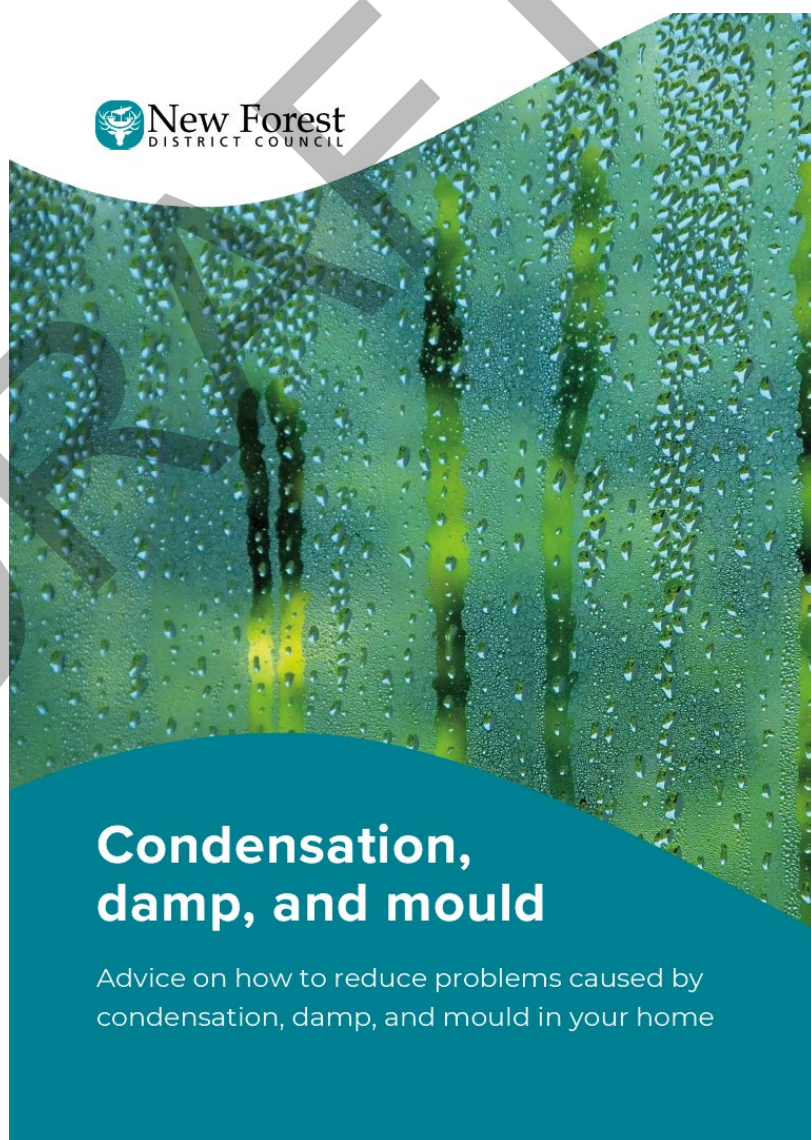
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Annex 4 Condensation, damp, and mould guide

Advice for our tenants on how to reduce problems caused by condensation, damp, and mould in their home, and how to report building defects or concerns can be found on our website.

More information can be found here:-

[Condensation, Damp, and Mould Guide](#)




Annex 5 Managing moisture in your home guide

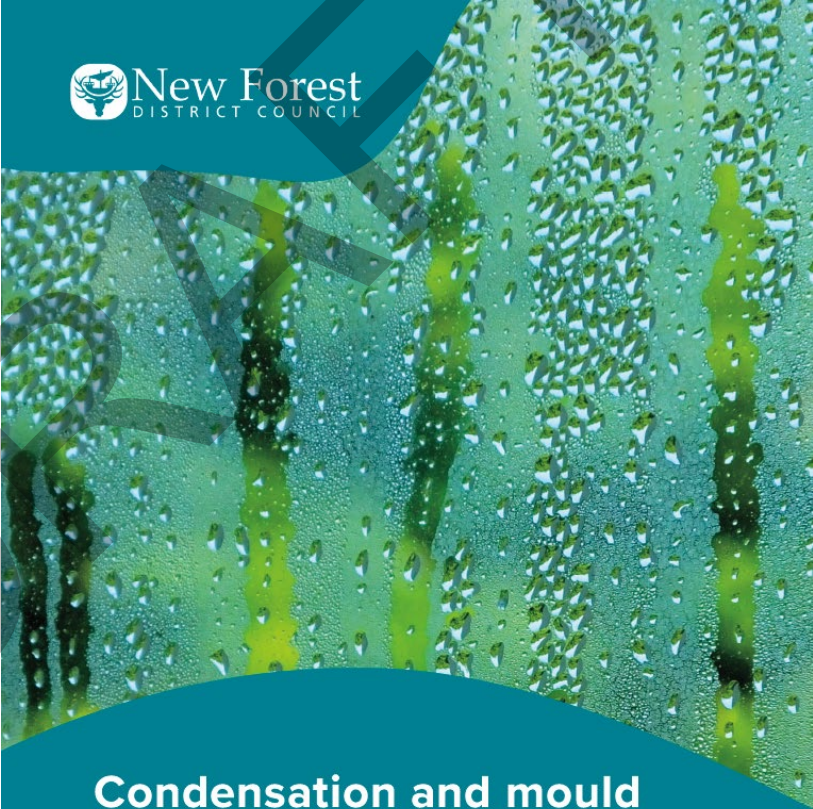
Advice for our tenants on how to manage moisture in their home can be found on our website.

More information can be found here:-

Managing moisture in your home guide






New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL



Condensation and mould

Report mould issues on our website or speak with our housing support team.

 www.newforest.gov.uk/dampandmould

 023 80 285222  housing.supporthub@nfdc.ov.uk

Annex 6 Guidance on condensation, damp, and mould resources

The following external resources are available and indicate how tenants can approach damp and mould in their rented home:-

- a) **Guide for tenants: Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018**:- guide for tenants in the social and private rented sectors on their rights under the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act.
- b) **Damp and mould: what tenants need to know - Shelter**:- includes information for tenants on damp and mould, covering answers to common questions. This covers the health impacts and causes of damp and mould as well as how to address issues.
- c) **Damp and mould in private rented homes - Shelter**:- advice and resources for private tenants who have identified damp and mould in their home, including advice on raising issues with landlords.
- d) Shelter provides housing advice for tenants on housing issues and **legal aid and free legal advice** for tenants who qualify for advice and representation to address serious housing problems.
- e) **Damp repairs in rented housing**:- advice for tenants on different types of damp, who's responsible for addressing them and how, as well as routes to escalate concerns if the landlord doesn't take action.
- f) **Dealing with damp and condensation, NEA leaflet**
- g) **Indoor air pollution (Asthma+Lung UK)**:- resources for people living with a lung condition, including information on the types of air pollution they might have in their home and how to manage allergies caused by indoor pollution at home.
- h) **Moisture in homes (UK Centre for Moisture in Buildings (UKCMB))**:- resource outlining causes of moisture build up in homes and how to manage this. This resource has been developed for homeowners. However, information on how moisture builds up and day-to-day methods for managing this will still be valuable to tenants.

Video on how to reduce damp and mould aimed at homeowners but may still be of interest to individuals who are renting:- **Moisture guidance for existing homeowners**

- i) **Advocacy in mental health**:- resource from Mind explaining what advocacy is and how it can help tenants who require it. This resource includes advice on the type of advocacy that could be sought for tenants who require it to address housing problems.

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Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel - 22 January 2025

Social Housing Regulation Act (2023) Progress Report

Purpose	For review
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	<p>The SHRA (2023) and its regulations came into force for all stock-owning registered landlords including local authorities in April 2024, and the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) has been inspecting landlords from this date against their compliance with the consumer standards.</p> <p>In effect, all councils including New Forest District Council (NFDC) need to be able to demonstrate evidence of compliance against all the consumer standards in place at the time of inspection; or upon request if the regulator seeks to investigate reported compliance failures outside of the timetable of inspection.</p> <p>The aim of this report and linked presentation is to provide the panel with insight into the changes and progress the housing landlord function has made in response to the SHRA (2023), identify our progress and actions to date, summarise our strengths and weaknesses against the consumer standards, and identify the next steps towards achieving full compliance against the standards.</p> <p>The report also formalises the Council’s vision to achieve a compliant rating (C1/2) from the Regulator of Social Housing, and to provide assurance that the correct steps on our improvement journey are being taken.</p>
Recommendation(s)	<p>That the Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider the Housing Department’s compliance with the Social Housing Regulation

	<p>Act 2023 and progress in improving services for tenants.</p> <p>2. Approve and make any further recommendations to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness regarding improving our preparedness for inspection.</p> <p>3. Approve a recommendation to put preparedness for regulatory inspection on the Corporate Risk Register.</p>
Reasons for recommendation(s)	<p>Overall accountability for landlord compliance rests with the elected members of the council as a whole, rather than solely with the housing department's landlord function, or with the responsible Cabinet or Portfolio holder.</p> <p>This report is subsequently presented to the Panel for scrutiny, accountability, and transparency as part of the governance arrangements. This forms part of the corporate risk approach as regularly judgements that identify serious failings (C3/4) may entail unlimited fines, regulatory intervention in operational matters concerning health and safety, as well as risking wider reputational damage to the Council.</p>
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Steve Davies
Strategic Director(s)	Richard Knott – Housing and Communities
Officer Contact	<p>Paul Thomas Assistant Director - Housing 02380 285725 paul.thomas@nfdc.gov.uk</p>

Introduction and background

1. The Social Housing Regulation Act (SHRA 2023) was introduced by government following high profile failures in the social housing sector, namely the Grenfell Tower Fire Disaster in June 2017. This led to fundamental changes in housing regulation with the SHRA

2023 being enacted in July 2023. The Act aims to improve the condition of social housing and increase resident safety. It also places greater emphasis on the rights of tenants, and for their voices to be heard, the absence of which was seen as a major failing in the lead-up to the Grenfell disaster and in other previous cases of fire, deaths, and serious incidents in social housing.

2. Landlord's not responding to previous complaints and requests for service was also seen as factor in the death of Awaab Ishak (Child aged 2 years) in December 2020, which resulted in Awaab's Law (2024). This has further added to the regulatory regime for damp and mould compliance for all social landlords.
3. The social housing regulations came into force for all stock-owning local authorities in April 2024. The stated aim is to drive long term improvements in the social housing sector, and judgements are made on the landlords' abilities to demonstrate compliance with four consumer standards:
 1. Safety & Quality
 2. Neighbourhood & Community standard
 3. Tenancy
 4. Transparency, Influence & Accountability
4. There is an additional consumer standard of Competence and Conduct that relates to the qualifications and behaviours of senior staff. This standard has not fully been taken-up by the housing sector to date, though NFDC has entered a contract with the Chartered Institute of Housing to ensure that all its senior staff are qualified to CIH Level 4 & 5 as per the requirements, and two Service Managers have commenced training from September 2024 as part of a rolling programme of professionalisation in the housing department.
5. The consumer standards apply to all social landlords registered with the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH). Local authorities including NFDC are responsible for all homes under their ownership, whatever the organisational structures such as an Arm's Length Management Company (ALMO) or if they have an outsourced service or repairs contractor for example.
6. Under the new regulatory regime, a landlord's compliance is assessed by the RSH across all the four consumer standards. This will be via a programmed inspection at least once every four years, though there is not a published timetable for when individual landlords will be inspected as the RSH is following a risk-based approach.

7. A reactive inspection may be triggered by events such as a negative Housing Ombudsman's report, or a self-referral by the council itself regarding health and safety matters.
8. In all cases, there will be a rating issued, from C1 to C4, defined as follows:
 - C1 = delivering the outcomes of the standards
 - C2 = some weaknesses and improvement are needed
 - C3 = serious failings and significant improvement is needed
 - C4 = very serious failings and fundamental changes are needed
9. C1 and C2 are classified as compliant gradings, though it should be recognised that even a C1 grading will require on-going work towards a programme of continual improvement in housing services. The consequences of C3 and C4 judgements may entail unlimited fines by the regulator e.g. a housing association has recently received a £900K fine for non-compliance with legionella testing in one older persons' scheme.
10. In the case of wider failings in statutory compliance the RSH also has the powers to intervene directly in operational matters concerning health and safety, with the added risk of wider reputational damage to the council or any other registered provider.
11. To date, early interventions and inspections have often been triggered by negative reports by the Housing Ombudsman or landlords self-referring indicating that a risk-based approach to inspections is being followed by the RSH at this time, albeit with a stated intention to balance out the inspection timetable with other landlords who are not seen as requiring intervention. In short, NFDC cannot be sure when the RSH will inspect the service, only that it will be sometime within the four year programme that commenced in April 2024.
12. As part of the evidence base, for compliance, all social landlords have also been required to submit Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) to the RSH, which have then been published with the regulator emphasising that it is not a league table, but rather an indicator of progress and tenant satisfaction providing a focus for identifying gaps in compliance and/or underperformance which should inform service improvement plans.
13. NFDC has followed the standard methodology for producing this data and is currently in the upper quartile (top 25% of all landlords) with tenants rating our services highly. TSMs consist of a mixture of

management information and tenant perception measures (e.g. 98% of NFDC homes currently meet the decent homes standard).

Current Preparedness for Inspection and Assurance.

14. The Council has taken proactive steps to prepare for the new regularly regime through approving a Corporate plan 2024 to 2028 that has been informed by housing need and has specific expected outcomes for council homes and tenants "baked in". For example, it states as one of its aims is to: *"Work with our housing tenants to understand their needs and provide high quality service standards in line with the government's new Social Housing Charter and regulatory regime"* clearly stating the Council's ambition to achieve a compliant grading and better services for tenants.
15. A more specific measure stated in the Corporate plan is to *"Improve the energy efficiency of over 3,200 council houses by 2030"*. This is out of a stock profile of around 5200 homes, and it is worth noting that coherent spending plans to deliver the decarbonisation of our housing stock are incorporated into the Housing Revenue Account over this time period to deliver this objective, with significant investments in the housing stock already having been made.
16. There are a range of other strategic related housing objectives included in the Corporate plan including ambitious targets for "affordable housing" delivery including developing new council homes. However, as the regulatory focus is on existing council homes and tenants, the Panel can be assured that the percentage score for overall tenant satisfaction with the Council as a landlord determined in the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) is a key performance measure as stated in the Corporate plan.
17. This ensures our landlord services performance is reported and scrutinised at all governance levels through Portfolio Holder Briefings, Executive Management Team, this Panel, Cabinet, full Council, and the regulator on submission of the TSMs as required.
18. As part of the evidence base, landlords have also been required to submit Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) to the regulator, which have published by the regulator with the emphasis that it is not a league table but rather an indicator of progress and tenant satisfaction providing a focus for identifying gaps in compliance and/or underperformance which should help inform service improvement plans.
19. NFDC has followed the standard methodology for producing this data and is in the upper quartile (top 25% of all landlords) with

tenants rating our services highly. TSMs consist of a mixture of management information and tenant perception measures (e.g. 98% of NFDC homes currently meet the decent homes standard).

20. At the same time, whilst our safety and quality compliance performance of around 98% for gas and other measures puts us in the lower quartile for these indicators, it should be noted that landlords both councils and housing associations have used different data-gathering methods and have different working practices including capping gas supplies at first non-access point etc. The RSH is also challenging landlords that are reporting 100% compliance in these indicators as they are reported on a snap-shot basis, and certain assumptions must be being made by those landlords.
21. This does not mean we should be complacent about safety and compliance measures at around the 98% mark, but rather that TSM results should not be viewed in isolation but can provide the basis for identifying gaps in compliance and/or underperformance which should help to inform our service improvement plans. The on-going focus on health and safety measures is a must do in the regulatory context.
22. The housing department has been addressing potential regulatory risks through various service improvement plans informed by a number of mini-service reviews and team restructures that have been taking place over the last few years, often prior to the inspection regime and consumer standards being published. The Housing Department has effectively been on an improvement journey for the last six years.
23. There has been a particular focus on the Safety & Quality standard with a capital investment programme being established alongside a lead service manager and team to deliver major projects that focus on statutory compliance. This has included fire safety works and risk assessments alongside a decent homes programme, with 98 per cent of our homes now meeting the decent homes standard. We have done a 100 percent stock survey and have insight into the homes that do not meet the decent homes standard including for reasons such as non-standard construction, and tenants refusing kitchen & bathroom works etc. This is a good basis to work from.
24. We have established a Consumer Standards Board, employed a Policy Officer, and have been conducting a self-assessment and gap analysis against all four consumer standards. This entails about a hundred separate outcome measures overall and we are rigorously detailing our evidence of compliance with all the required outcomes.

25. The Policy Officer has held discussions with service managers and officers and reviewed available performance data. The outcome of these discussions guided the identification of highest risks or service gaps from a regulatory perspective. Initial areas to review were agreed with senior management and the Portfolio Holder as part of the on-going dialogue, leading to an initial focus on improving tenant engagement outcomes and insight. We have commissioned two tenant insight consultancies, the first one is gathering the TSM data to drive service improvement, and the second is gathering data about households and updating our tenant information including vulnerabilities to update our systems and service responsiveness.

Self Assessment and Action Plan.

26. The RSH expectations of social landlords can be summarised as follows: -

- Landlords maintain tenants' homes so that they are safe and of decent standard.
- Landlords provide a quality housing and repairs service.
- The relationship between tenants and landlords is underpinned by shared expectations of fairness and respect and a shared understanding of respective rights and responsibilities.
- Where things go wrong, complaints are handled effectively, and things are put right.
- Landlords demonstrate that they understand the diverse needs of the communities that they serve, and that their services reflect that.
- Tenants understand, use, and have confidence in the recourse that they have to get problems resolved.
- Stakeholders have confidence that landlords' commitment to their tenants is underpinned by effective consumer regulation.

27. The Council recognises the importance of self-assessing against all the consumer standards to demonstrate to the RSH our commitment and pro-active approach to addressing any identified issues and achieving compliance as well as demonstrating transparency and NFDCs adherence to the spirit of co-regulation.

28. The self-assessment being undertaken is effectively collating evidence and informing the following specific key areas of improvement against the consumer standards in the following aspects:

- Data – collating and analysing data to demonstrate compliance with the standards. Testing accessibility and accuracy. To give assurance on data integrity and to inform service planning.
- Governance - reviewing what structures are in place to ensure effective oversight, challenge and support for the Portfolio Holder, staff leadership, and team.
- Service quality - performance measured and assessed and establishing more effective service mechanisms for doing so.
- Tenant engagement - the Tenants Involvement Group (TIG) is in place to provide assurance on the accuracy of data and the implementation of key policies such as the proposed new Anti-Social Behaviour Policy as presented to this panel. The next stage is determining how representative are those involved of the wider tenant population, and recording what meaningful service changes or impacts of current tenant engagement approaches have been.
- Learning - from tenant complaints, other mistakes or oversights, and any Ombudsman cases, making the necessary changes to policy, procedures, and processes e.g. vulnerable adults' policy, tailoring of services, and accounting for protected characteristics in repairs and estate management procedures.
- Contract management – ensuring the contractors, advisors and agents working on behalf of the council are working on appropriate terms (including third party management of homes and buildings). Focus on assessing skills, experience, track record and/or qualifications.
- Equality and diversity - demonstrating compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (NB, not within the Consumer Standards)
- Assurance - external validations to assess the performance of the housing service, and the integrity of the data that underlies it. Internal and external audits of services and the recent LGA Corporate Peer Review (report awaited) are all included in the collection of evidence list to provide assurance of compliance to elected members and the RSH.

- Cultural change - to ensure all employees and elected members at NFDC understand the importance of regulation. Engaging them in shaping and delivering our improvement plans and landlord services.
29. This is a work in progress and delivery of the action plan will remain on-going, it has involved compiling the evidence base including compliance data, quality assurance checks, including independent audits of housing functions, governance arrangements, and tenant insight as outlined.
30. It is also expected that the council co-regulates with the RSH through our own self-assessment against the standards, knowing our strengths and weaknesses and having robust plans in place to address any gaps in services identified against the regulations and consumer standards.
31. For example, NFDC had a contractor issue in regard to legionella testing in April 2024 in their last month of contract resulting in a lower compliance score for the year. This information was shared with the RSH and was questioned by the regulator, which classified it as a self-referral, however we were able to recover performance quickly with a new contractor in place and this satisfied the regulator with no further intervention required.
32. The Housing Ombudsman Service has also strengthened their investigative approach, and response to landlord failings. Landlords have been notified of the increase in expected standards in a series of special reports from the Housing Ombudsman, who have published landlord complaints where evidence of maladministration has been found, or a significant number of faults are evidenced.

In particular:

- The Ombudsman Spotlight on Knowledge and Information Management (KIM)
 - Complaints about repairs
 - The Ombudsman Spotlight on Attitudes, respect, and rights.
33. Through these reports the Ombudsman has recommended that landlords provide a clear statement of the Council's approach to handling complaints and the way it intends to work with residents and relevant, organisations to remedy and make improvements.
34. A Corporate Complaints Team has been created to fulfil the additional regulatory requirements of both the Housing Ombudsman and Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, with new staff

response and case management processes being actioned to ensure the Council's governance and operational response to complaints mirrors the policy and data requirements of the new housing regulatory regime.

35. Any policy changes resulting from both Ombudsman's recommendations will be incorporated into the consumer standards action plan and policy reviews.

Corporate plan priorities

36. Priority 2: Empowering our residents to live healthy, connected and fulfilling lives. The Corporate Plan 2024-28 states that delivery of this priority will be supported by the delivery of a new Anti-social behaviour strategy.
37. Priority 3: Meeting Housing Needs – particularly in relation to the number of council homes achieving Energy Performance Certification band C and percentage scores for the 5 safety and compliance management Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).

Consultation undertaken.

38. Consultation has been a strong focus throughout the preparation process, with the housing department effective engagement with officers, tenants, senior management, and Members as well as collaborating with colleagues across Hampshire and further away through networks of councils preparing for inspection or having been through one, to share learning and insight on service improvement.
39. Draft policies including the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy for example have been shared with TIG and consultation responses have so far supported the draft proposals. Formal strategy consultation on the developing Landlord Strategy for example is proposed in due course.

Financial and resource implications

40. Any expenditure required by the proposed action plan will be met from existing budgets within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and have already been factored-in the draft 30 Year Business Plan. New policies and systems of work required in the shorter-term at a service level are on-going to improve service delivery and outcomes. Once the service plan is fully adopted the Policies will be updated in line with any changes required and the budget will be continuously reviewed.
41. Failure to raise standards, meet the regulatory requirements of the consumer standards and respond appropriately to complaints could

lead to fines and compensation levied by the Housing Ombudsman or the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Legal implications

42. The Regulator of Social Housing launched its new regulatory framework on the 1st of April 2024 which outlines our requirements as a social housing provider including compliance with its consumer standards.

Risk assessment.

43. This report gives assurance that NFDC currently provides a good overall service to its tenants as evidenced by the TSMs and the risk profile is acceptable and well managed. It is nonetheless considered prudent to add lack of preparedness for inspection to the corporate risk register due to the unknown timescales for inspection to maintain Corporate oversight on this business critical issue.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

44. Whilst the report has no direct implications, the work of NFDC will include improving the energy efficiency of our local housing stock, providing better services on our estates, including open spaces, and the positive contribution to neighbourhoods. This may present further opportunities to contribute to the Council's neighbourhood and climate objectives in the longer term.

Equalities implications

45. The Consumer Standards, particularly the Transparency, Influence and Accountability standard are likely to have a positive impact on NFDC tenants as there is a requirement for landlords to "understand the diverse needs" of tenants, including those arising from protected characteristics, language barriers, and additional support needs' and assess whether all tenants have fair access to, and equitable outcomes of, housing and landlord services. Additionally, the standard requires that landlords must ensure their services are accessible.

Crime and disorder implications

46. It is anticipated there will be potential indirect and direct positive impacts on the Council's tenants and neighbourhoods. The interventions proposed through our improvement to tackling Anti-Social Behaviour as part of the consumer standards is likely to lead to an initial increase in the number of cases prosecuted in the courts, or by the Police, whilst long term interventions proposed should lead to a long-term reduction in crime and disorder.

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

47. The collection, retention and deletion of Tenant data is governed by GDPR and associated guidance. All data will be collected and maintained in line with the required legislation. The Policies are required in the shorter-term at a service level to improve service delivery and outcomes. Once the service plan is fully adopted the Policies will be updated in line with any changes required and will be continuously reviewed

New Forest National Park / Cranborne Chase National Landscape implications

48. The approach of ensuring the Housing Service is fully complaint with the consumer standards including for housing neighbourhoods as well as homes may involve increased and better partnership working with the National Park Authority where the Council's housing stock is also located and managed by the housing landlord.

Conclusion

49. NFDC is delivering a good service to its residents as evidenced by the TSMs and has made significant progress toward meeting the requirements of the Social Regulation Act (2023) and the consumer standards. There is a significant programme of work taking place and many system changes are planned to include CRM, policy and practice improvements that are to be implemented over the next twelve months. However, the reality is it can't all be done at the same time within the resources available. The Housing Department is nonetheless confident in its direction of travel and prioritisation of work plans to maintain and improve its compliance with the consumer standards and offer a better service to its tenants.

50. The delivery of the consumer standards mitigates longer term legal and financial risk to the Council. The self-assessment and activities already being undertaken to prepare for the inspection mitigate against the possibility of the Council being unprepared for regulatory inspection and not achieving a compliant grade.

51. The gap-analysis and subsequent action plan will be completed and approved in full by June 2025, and form a longer-term framework of service delivery and partnering with local agencies and support aligning our goals and resources with the corporate plan objectives.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Consumer Standards Board, Terms of Reference

Appendix 2 – Consumer Standards Self-Assessment current position

Appendix 3 - 2025 interim TSM perception survey results / 2024 comparison.

Appendix 4 – TSM Compliance Dashboard. November 2024

Background Papers:

Consumer Standards Code of Practice (2024)

New Forest District Council Consumer Standards Board Terms of Reference

Introduction / Background

2017 – Following the Grenfell fire tragedy the Government committed to changes to social housing consumer standard regulation and instigated major social housing reform.

2018 – Green Paper: A new deal for social housing, introduced two major strands, Technological (e.g. Building safety) and Social and Community (e.g. relationships between landlords and their residents).

2020 - Government published the social housing white paper. Seven key statements (Written from a tenant's perspective) that every social housing resident should be able to expect are still the go to for aims of the Act.

1. To be safe in your home
2. To know how your landlord is performing.
3. To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly.
4. To be treated with respect, backed by a strong consumer regulator for tenants.
5. To have your voice heard by your landlord.
6. To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in
7. To be supported to take your first step to ownership.

Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023. Finalised a return to consumer regulation (introducing the consumer standards) and inspection, including the regulators' role in working with other bodies (i.e. Housing Ombudsman and Building Safety Regulator).

The four consumer standards (so far).

- The Safety and Quality Standard
- The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard
- The Neighbourhood and Community Standard
- The Tenancy Standard.
 - (The Competency and Conduct Standard)

Scope of Board

What will the board achieve / objectives?

To be compliant with the consumer standards and delivering a great landlord service.

To have all documentation and evidence in place when the Regulator of Social Housing inspectors visit NFDC.

How will this be achieved / Tasks?

Listening to tenants

Learning from complaints

Self-assess against HQN toolkits.
Assigning remedial actions.
Monitor progress.

Timeline / Milestones

- 22nd January 2025 - Housing & Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel (14th January report deadline).

Roles and responsibilities / frequency of meeting

- Key responsibilities for Consumer Standards

The Safety and Quality Standard – Sophie Tuffin. Ritchie Thomson. Clive Turner. (Paul Thomas. Chris Pope. Kirsty Farmer.)

The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard – Kirsty Farmer. Dave Brown. (All in Housing. Paul Thomas. Chris Pope.)

The Neighbourhood and Community Standard – Kirsty Farmer. Chris Pike. (Sophie Tuffin. Paul Thomas. Nikki Swift. Brian Byrne.)

The Tenancy Standard – Kirsty Farmer. Chris Pope. (Nicola Message. Saq Yasin.)

The Competency and Conduct Standard – Paul Thomas. Jane Follett.

- Roles on the Board

Portfolio Holder - Housing and Homelessness - Cllr Steve Davies

Tenant representatives

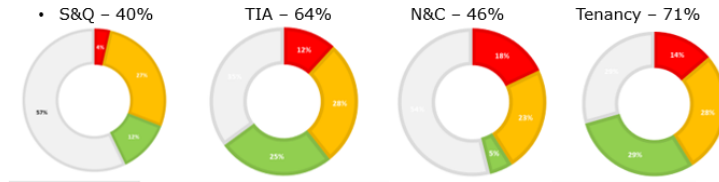
Housing Performance Team

- Monthly meetings

Consumer Standards Self-Assessment current position

Self-Assessment Update

- 7 gap analysis sessions taken place
- RAG rating complete

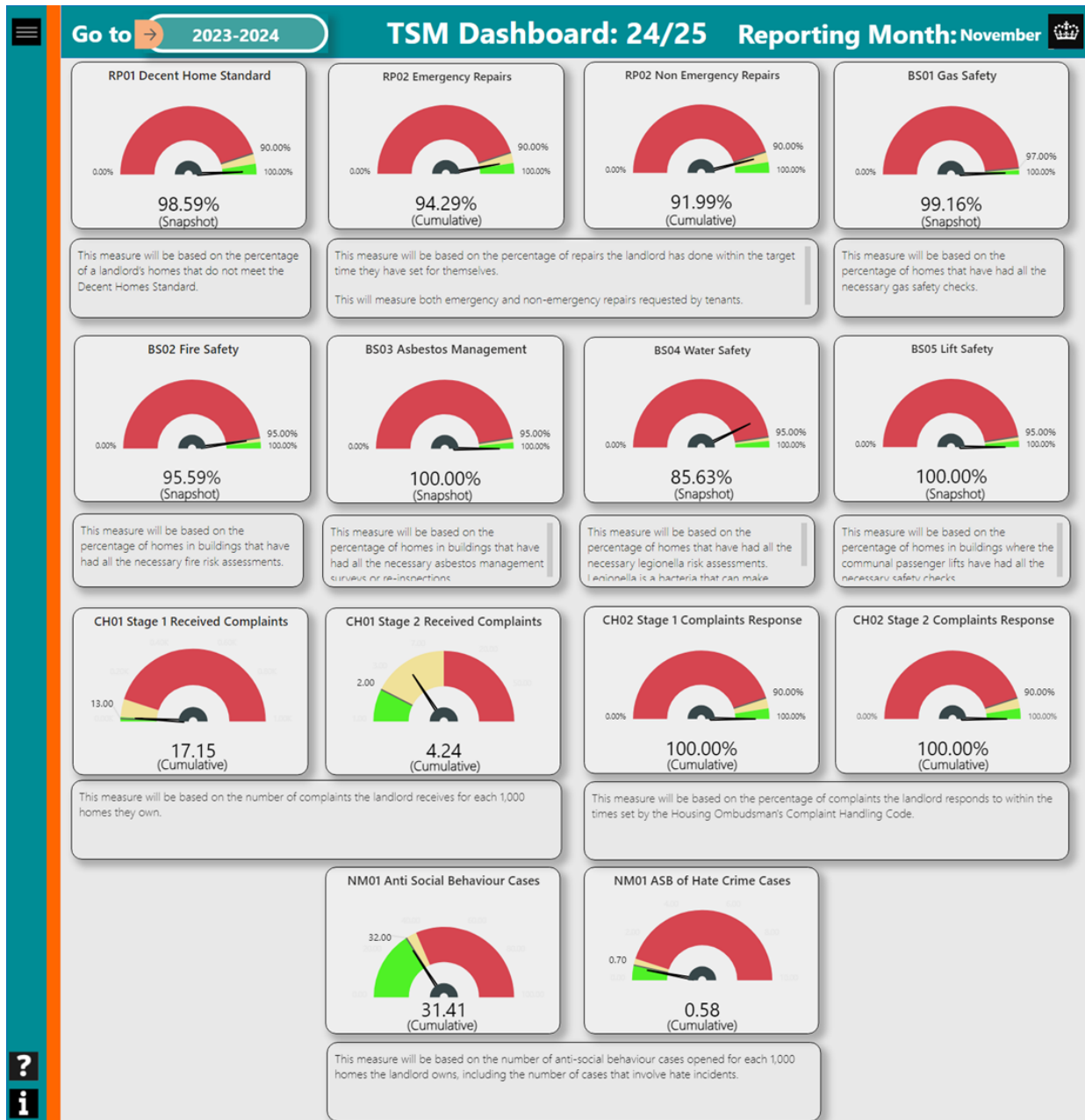


Appendix 3

2025 interim TSM perception survey results / 2024 comparison

Measure	2023/24	2024/25 (interim)	↑↓↔
Overall satisfaction	81%	84%	↑ 3%
Overall repairs	82.8%	79%	↓ 3.8%
Time taken repairs	82.8%	81%	↓ 1.8%
Well maintained home	82.1%	75%	↓ 7.1%
Safe home	84.7%	85%	↔
Listens and acts	67.8%	69%	↑ 1.3%
Keeps you informed	78.9%	78%	↔
Fair and with respect	82.2%	86%	↑ 3.8%
Approach to complaint	29.1%	31%	↑ 1.8%
Communal areas	68.6%	66%	↓ 2.6%
Neighbourhood	72.1%	73%	↔
ASB handling	62%	67%	↑ 5%

TSM Compliance Dashboard. November 2024



HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

WORK PROGRAMME 2024/2025

ITEM	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	LEAD OFFICER
19 MARCH 2025			
Domestic Abuse Strategy including Housing Landlord Policy	To consider the Domestic Abuse Strategy	Report to Panel	Brian Byrne
Landlord Strategy	To consider the Landlord Strategy	Report to Panel	Kirsty Farmer
Safer New Forest Partnership – Consideration of Crime and Disorder Figures	To consider and review the draft Safer New Forest Strategic Assessment for 2024.	Report to Panel	Brian Byrne / Nikki Swift
Penman House – Energy Performance Monitoring Update	To receive an update providing details of the home energy performance monitoring in relation Penman House in Totton.	Report to Panel	Sophie Tuffin
Health and Wellbeing Action Plan	To receive an annual update	Report to Panel	Joanne McClay / Jamie Burton
Homelessness Update	To receive an update on homelessness	Update to Panel	Chris Pope
Social Housing Regulation Act Progress	To receive a progress report on the work related to the Social Housing Regulation Act	Report to Panel	Paul Thomas

ITEM	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	LEAD OFFICER
18 JUNE 2025			
Housing Strategy/ HRA Property development and acquisition update	To receive an update on the progress of the Housing Strategy and HRA property development and acquisition	Update to Panel	Tim Davis
Housing Maintenance Compliance Update	To receive an update on the progress made against the Council's compliance policies	Report to Panel	Ritchie Thomson
Social Housing Regulation Act Progress	To receive a progress report on the work related to the Social Housing Regulation Act	Report to Panel	Paul Thomas
17 SEPTEMBER 2025			
Social Housing Regulation Act Progress	To receive a progress report on the work related to the Social Housing Regulation Act	Report to Panel	Paul Thomas
21 JANUARY 2026			
Social Housing Regulation Act Progress	To receive a progress report on the work related to the Social Housing Regulation Act	Report to Panel	Paul Thomas

ITEM	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	LEAD OFFICER
Community Grants 2026/27	To consider the recommendations for Community Grant allocation for 2026/27 from the Task and Finish Group	Report to Panel	Ryan Stevens/ Jamie Burton
Housing Revenue Account Budget and the Housing Public Sector Capital Expenditure Programme for 2026/27	To consider the HRA budget and the housing public sector capital expenditure programme for 2026/27	Report to Panel	Richard Knott / Kevin Green
18 MARCH 2026			
Social Housing Regulation Act Progress	To receive a progress report on the work related to the Social Housing Regulation Act	Report to Panel	Paul Thomas

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