

Multi-Agency Hoarding Framework

Guidance for Practitioners in Sandwell



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1. Introduction

It's widely estimated that between 2% - 5% of the population may have symptoms of a hoarding disorder. Based on the 2011 census, Sandwell has approximately 127,000 households, therefore, potentially there could be between 2,500 – 6,000 households affected by hoarding to some degree. Feedback from a recent survey conducted within Sandwell MBC Neighbourhood Services, tells us that they have come across approximately 600 council properties alone in the last 12 months with varying degrees of hoarding. West Midlands Fire Service visited approximately 300 properties during 2015 with severe, dangerous or excessive hoarding. Based on these figures, it appears that this is just the tip of the iceberg and there could be many more people out there that just haven't come to the attention of services yet. This document sets out a framework for collaborative multi-agency working within Sandwell. The framework offers guidance to agencies working with people who hoard. This framework has been developed in partnership between West Midlands Fire Service, Sandwell MBC Neighbourhood Services, Sandwell Adults Safeguarding Board and a wide range of other agencies.

2. Which agencies have been involved in developing the framework

The following agencies have been consulted and/or involved in the development of the framework by taking part in workshops, feeding in to developing a process, accepting their roles within the framework and agreeing to engage fully to provide the best outcome for the individual, while meeting the requirements and duties of their agency or board.

- West Midlands Fire Service
- SMBC Neighbourhood Services
- West Midlands Police
- SMBC Adult Social Care
- Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board
- Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board
- SMBC Children and Families Services
- The Kaleidoscope Plus group
- Murray Hall Trust
- St Albans Community Centre
- SCVO
- Agewell
- Black Country Housing Group
- SMBC Private Sector Housing
- SMBC Public Health
- iCares NHS
- Riverside Housing (Hawthorne Fields)

3. Aims of the framework

- Provide a multi-agency pathway which will maximise the use of existing services and resources and which may reduce the need for enforcement action, and includes a single point of referral.
- Ensure that when solutions are required, there is a process for planning and co-ordinating solutions tailored to meet the needs of the individual and utilising a person centred approach.
- Establish best practice and improve knowledge and support that relates to hoarding behaviour.

4. Definition of hoarding

“Compulsive acquisition of objects, with marked and gross associated difficulties with discard, creating avoidance of discard behaviour”. Steketee et al. (2000)

Hoarding is the excessive collection and retention of any material to the point that living space is sufficiently cluttered to preclude the activities they are designed for.

Hoarding disorder is a persistent difficulty in discarding or parting with possessions because of a perceived need to save them. A person with a hoarding disorder experiences distress at the thought of getting rid of the items. Excessive accumulation of items, regardless of actual value, occurs.

Compulsive hoarding is often considered a form of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) because between 18 and 42 % of people with OCD experience some compulsion to hoard. However, compulsive hoarding can also affect people who don't have OCD.

Hoarding is now considered a standalone mental health disorder and is included in the 5th edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5). However, many people are not diagnosed and hoarding can also be a symptom of other medical disorders.

Hoarding does not favour a particular gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, educational, occupational history or tenure type.

Anything can be hoarded in many different areas including the property, garden or communal areas. Items include, but are not limited to:

- Clothes
- Newspapers, magazine or books
- Bills, receipts or letters

- Food and/or containers
- Collectables such as toys, DVDs or CDs
- Animals

5. Types of Hoarding

There are typically three types of hoarding:

- **Inanimate objects:** This is the most common. This could consist of one type of object or a collection of a mixture of objects, such as old clothes, newspapers, food, containers or papers.
- **Wet hoarding:** including substances arising from bodily functions, this has ramifications for hazardous waste and blood borne viruses (BBV) and health and safety.
- **Animal hoarding:** This is on the increase and often accompanied with the inability to provide minimal standards of care. The hoarder is unable to recognise that the animals are at risk because they feel they are saving them. The homes of animal hoarders are often eventually destroyed by the accumulation of animal faeces and infestation by insects.

6. The following general Characteristics of Hoarding are commonly reported

- **Fear and anxiety:** compulsive hoarding may have started as a learnt behaviour or following a significant event such as bereavement. The person who is hoarding believes buying or saving things will relieve the anxiety and fear they feel. The hoarding effectively becomes their comfort blanket. Any attempt to discard the hoarded items can induce feelings varying from mild anxiety to a full panic attack with sweats and palpitations.
- **Long term behaviour pattern:** possibly developed over many years or decades of 'buy and drop'. Collecting and saving with an inability to throw away items without experiencing fear and anxiety.
- **Excessive attachment to possessions:** people who hoard may hold an inappropriate emotional attachment to items.
- **Indecisiveness:** people who hoard may struggle with the decision to discard items that are no longer necessary, including rubbish.
- **Unrelenting standards:** people who hoard will often find faults with others; requiring others to perform to excellence while struggling to organise themselves and complete daily living tasks.

- **Socially isolated:** people who hoard will typically alienate family and friends and may be embarrassed to have visitors. They may refuse home visits from professionals, in favour of office based appointments.
- **Large number of pets:** people who hoard may have a large number of animals that can be a source of complaints by neighbours. They may be a self-confessed 'rescuer of strays'.
- **Mentally capacious:** people who hoard are typically able to make decisions that are not related to hoarding.
- **Extreme clutter:** hoarding behaviour may be in a few or all rooms and prevent them from being used for their intended purpose.
- **Churning:** hoarding behaviour can involve moving items from one part of the property to another, without ever discarding them.
- **Self-care:** a person who hoards may appear unkempt and dishevelled, due to lack of bathroom or washing facilities in their home. However, some people who hoard will use public facilities in order to maintain their personal hygiene and appearance.
- **Poor insight:** a person who hoards will typically see nothing wrong with their behaviours and the impact it has on them and others.

7. Key Facts

- It is estimated that between 2% and 5% of the population hoard.
- This equates to at least 1.2 million households across the UK.
- It is estimated that only 5% of hoarders come to the attention of statutory agencies.
- Hoarding cases can cost anything between £1000 and £60,000.
- Information from individual Fire Services suggest that up to 25% of accidental domestic fire deaths involve an element of hoarding.
- Often, people who hoard can stop landlords from meeting their statutory duties, i.e. gas safety checks and other certification required for Registered Social Landlords.

8. Mental Capacity

The Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005 provides a statutory framework for people who lack the capacity to make decisions by themselves. The Act has five statutory principles and these are legal requirements of the Act:

- 1) A person must be assumed to have capacity unless it is established that they lack capacity.
 - 2) A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision unless all practicable steps have been taken without success.
 - 3) A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision merely because he/she makes an unwise decision.
 - 4) An act done, or decision made, under this act for, or on behalf of, a person who lacks capacity must be done, or made in his or her best interests.
 - 5) Before the act is done, or the decision is made, regard must be had to whether the purpose for which it is needed can be as effectively achieved in a way that is less restrictive of the person's rights and freedom of action.
- The principles of the presumption of capacity and respecting a person's entitlement to make unwise decisions with capacity (principles 1 and 3 of the MCA) are the starting point for any capacity assessment. So in other words, we need to assume that someone who is hoarding has the capacity to make this decision unless we can find evidence to the contrary. It is up to us as practitioners to use all of our communication skills to determine whether someone is having genuine difficulty making particular decisions for particular reasons. So a presumption of capacity does not mean that we do nothing.
 - Capacity is decision and time specific, saying that someone lacks capacity is meaningless. We need to ask ourselves, "What is the specific decision that needs to be made at this point?" If we don't define this question before we start undertaking the assessment, the exercise will be pointless and may lead us astray. So in other words, we may ask: "Do you understand that your hoarding has become dangerous and is now a real risk to your life?"
 - Preparation assessing capacity – A crucial step is to prepare for the assessment. We need to think about the best ways that we can put someone at ease, so that we can gain the information we need without distressing or isolating them further.
 - Take all practicable steps - What can we do which might mean an individual is able to make the decision for themselves? Think about specific types of communication or language, times of the day, etc.

Applying the test – The MCA test for capacity has two aspects: the **diagnostic** element (is there an impairment of, or a disturbance in the functioning of, the mind or brain; what evidence is there of this?) and the **functional** element (is the person unable to make a decision because of the impairment?). Being unable to make a decision means being unable to understand, retain or “use or weigh” information relevant to the decision, or to communicate their decision.

The MCA Code of Practice states that one of the reasons why people may question a person’s capacity to make a specific decision is that “the person’s behaviour or circumstances cause doubt as to whether they have capacity to make a decision” (MCA Code of Practice, 4.35). Extreme hoarding behaviour may therefore in the specific circumstances of the case, prompt an assessment of capacity.

Guidance on assessing mental capacity in connection to hoarding

When assessing capacity, it is important to remember this is an assessment of whether the adult has capacity to access help for their hoarding – so, does the adult understand they have a problem with hoarding; is the adult able to weigh up the alternative options, e.g. being able to move around their accommodation unhindered, being able to sleep in their bed, take a bath, cook in their kitchen, sit down on a chair/sofa (this list is not exhaustive); can the adult retain the information given to them (e.g. if the accommodation is cleared, you would be able to move around your accommodation, etc) can the adult communicate their decision? It is essential that any capacity assessment is clearly documented on case records. Someone who has difficulty with their executive capacity may have difficulty carrying out specific tasks even when they appear to understand the need for them.

9. Information Sharing and Data Protection/ Information Sharing /Consent

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, we all have the responsibility to ensure that personal information is processed lawfully and fairly. All customers have a right to view any information held about them. Practitioners should consider this when they are recording information about that person. However, the data protection act should not be a barrier to sharing information and which should be shared with agencies where there is a significant risk to the individual, neighbours or workers visiting the property.

Examples:

- Safeguarding children or an adult at risk
- The property is in significant disrepair
- Health and safety issues
- Fire Service would need to know in the event of attending a fire at the property as the risk to Fire Fighters is significantly increased by hoarding.

If in doubt, follow the seven golden rules of information sharing and take advice from your manager.

Seven golden rules for information sharing

- 1) **Remember that the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information** but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.
- 2) **Be open and honest** with the person (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
- 3) **Seek advice** if you are in any doubt, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.
- 4) **Share with consent where appropriate** and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case.
- 5) **Consider safety and well-being:** Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the person and others who may be affected by their actions.
- 6) **Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure:** Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
- 7) **Keep a record** of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

10. Fire Safety

Hoarding increases the risk of a fire occurring and makes it more difficult for people living within the property to evacuate safely. Fire can spread to neighbouring properties if the level of hoarding is severe or if flammable items such as gas containers are being stored. It can also pose a high risk to fire fighters when attending the scene.

West Midlands Fire Service provide a free service called a Safe & Well visit which is a person centred home visit to identify the person's risks and vulnerabilities to fire. The personnel carrying out the visit will be operational fire fighters. They will provide support and guidance, the aim of which is to reduce the risk and vulnerability. This may include recommendations for resources, adaptations and equipment, for example, fire retardant bedding for an individual who smokes in bed.

Cases of hoarding with a number of complexities would be escalated to a Vulnerable Persons Officer (VPO), a fire service member of staff specially trained to deal with complex cases such as hoarders.

Their priorities are:

- Carry out a detailed assessment as a priority
- Make the person/s as safe as possible
- Fit required safety equipment as soon as practicable
- Refer to another organisation where appropriate
- Work with agencies to help resolve issues

To make a referral please contact our Home Safety Centre on 0800 389 5525 or homesafety.centre@wmfs.net or visit www.wmfs.net

11. Environmental Health Powers

Environmental Health has certain powers which can be used in hoarding cases. Some are mentioned below. There is also a link to the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health which notes the growing list of statutory powers available to address hoarding and by means of a case study and the results of a survey, reviews the incidence and diversity of cases coming to the attention of environmental health authorities in the hope that, eventually, that may lead to better ways to resolve them. However, legal action should always be a last resort. To speak to the SMBC Environmental Team, please contact 0121 569 6600, ehs_enquires@sandwell.gov.uk

Public Health Act 1936

Section 79: Power to require removal of noxious matter by occupier of premises

The Local Authority (LA) will always try to work with a householder to identify a solution to a hoarded property; however, in cases where the resident is not willing to co-operate the LA can serve notice on the owner or occupier to "remove accumulations of noxious matter". Noxious is not defined, but is usually "harmful, unwholesome". No appeal is available. If not complied with in 24 hours, The LA can do works in default and recover expenses.

Section 83: Cleansing of filthy or verminous premises

Where any premises, tent, van, shed, ship or boat is either;

- a) filthy or unwholesome, so as to be prejudicial to health; or
- b) verminous (relating to rats, mice other pests including insects, their eggs and larvae)

LA serves notice requiring clearance of materials and objects that are filthy, cleansing of surfaces, carpets etc. within 24 hours or more. If not complied with, Environmental Health can carry out works in default and charge. No appeal against notice but an appeal can be made against the cost and reasonableness of the works on the notice.

Section 84: Cleansing or destruction of filthy or verminous articles

Any article that is so filthy as to need cleansing or destruction to prevent injury to persons in the premises, or is verminous, the LA can serve notice and remove, cleanse, purify, disinfect or destroy any such article at their expense.

Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949

Section 4: Power of LA to require action to prevent or treat Rats and Mice

Notice may be served on the owner or occupier of land or premises where rats and or mice are or may be present due to the conditions at the time. The notice may be served on the owner or occupier and provide a reasonable period of time to carry out reasonable works to treat for rats and/or mice, remove materials that may feed or harbour them and carry out structural works.

Environmental Protection Act 1990 Section 80: Dealing with Statutory Nuisances (SNs)

SNs are defined in section 79 of the Act and include any act or omission at premises that prevents the normal activities and use of another premises, including the following:

Section 79 (1) (a) any premises in such a state as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance

(c) fumes or gases emitted from [private dwellings] premises so as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance

(e) any accumulation or deposit which is prejudicial to health or a nuisance

(f) any animal kept in such a place or manner as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance

The LA serves an Abatement Notice made under section 80 to abate the nuisance if it exists at the time or to prevent its occurrence or recurrence.

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Section 215: Power to require proper maintenance of land

- 1) If it appears to the local planning authority that the amenity of a part of their area, or of an adjoining area, is adversely affected by the condition of land in their area, they may serve on the owner and occupier of the land a notice under this section.
- 2) The notice shall require such steps for remedying the condition of the land as may be specified in the notice to be taken within such period as may be so specified.
- 3) Subject to the following provisions of this Chapter, the notice shall take effect at the end of such period as may be specified in the notice.
- 4) That period shall not be less than 28 days after the service of the notice. For further guidance and information please refer to the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health Officers Professional Practice Note: Hoarding and How to Approach it

12. Sandwell MBC Private Sector Housing

If there is disrepair in the property, officers from the Private Sector Housing Quality Team can inspect the property and ensure that the landlord carries out all repairs. This may be difficult; however, if the tenant has filled the property with possessions and the landlord cannot gain proper access to do the work.

For more information about disrepair contact 0121 569 5232 or email privatesector_housing@sandwell.gov.uk

For support and guidance for tenants, landlords and homeowners, Private Sector Housing has a named officer who may be able to help. For more information, please contact the Home Improvement Agency on 0121 569 2935 and ask for the Healthy Homes Project Co-ordinator.

13. Housing

There are serious reputational risks and legal consequences for all housing providers who fail to respond effectively when hoarding issues are identified. For example, the tragic death in 2012 of a resident hoarding in a social housing property resulted in widespread media coverage. The fire crew who attended the scene emphasised the difficulty and danger of conducting a rescue in a property with hoarded items, and the coroner involved wrote to social housing providers

about the need to reduce the risks hoarding poses to individuals and statutory services. Examples of these risks from the housing perspective include gaining access and not being able to carry out gas safety checks and other statutory repairs; disrepair to the property; impacts on the wider community and neighbour complaints; risk of eviction. There may be times when the individual needs rehousing, for example the property has become uninhabitable or there are serious safeguarding concerns. For housing advice, please contact SMBC Neighbourhood Services 0121 569 6000.

14. Safeguarding Children

Growing up in a hoarding property can put a child at risk by affecting their development and, in some cases, leading to the neglect of a child, which is a safeguarding issue.

The needs of the child at risk must come first and any actions we take must reflect this. Where children live in the property, and the hygiene conditions within the home present a serious and immediate environmental/health risk to children or the physical accommodation places the child in danger, a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) must be submitted to Children's and Families Services. If you have concerns and are not sure if the children meet the threshold, please contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0121 569 3100 for advice.

15. Safeguarding Adults

Safeguarding Adults means seeking to protect an adult's right to live a life free from harm and abuse, as a result of deliberate intent, negligence, ignorance, or exploitation.

Safeguarding is everybody's business, and it is about people and organisations working together, to prevent both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted. This includes having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding upon any action. Adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances, thus autonomy and the capacity to understand risks and safety have to be considered in a balanced approach.

The Care Act 2014 introduced three new indicators of abuse and neglect to Adult Safeguarding, the most relevant to this framework is self-neglect. This covers a wide range of behaviours around personal health, hygiene, and environment and can include hoarding where there is evidence of such neglect. In practice, when an adult with care and support needs is at risk of neglect from their hoarding or is

at risk from a household member who hoards, then a safeguarding enquiry should be considered. Consent from the adult should be gained wherever this is possible and where the adult has mental capacity to understand the referral being made.

If in doubt, contact the Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Team on 0121 569 2266 sandwell_enquiry@sandwell.gov.uk

16. Sandwell Adult Social Care

Adult Social Care offer a range of prevention and re-enablement services to keep people as independent as possible. These services include Floating Support, STAR and fast Response, Sensory Therapies, Community Alarms, and the Joint Prevention Stores who can provide assisted technology and equipment such as commodes, bath seats etc. They can also arrange an assessment of someone's care and support needs. For further information please contact the Enquiry team on 0121 569 2266 sandwell_enquiry@sandwell.gov.uk

17. How to use the Hoarding Pathway

It is recognised that hoarding is a complex condition and that a variety of agencies will come into contact with the same person. It is also recognised that not all the individuals that hoard will receive support from statutory services such as Mental Health. By taking joint responsibility and a joined up approach, the right support can be provided at the right time, hopefully assisting the person to achieve positive outcomes.

The Hoarding pathway on page 22, appendix 1 has been developed to advise agencies of the support options available when they come across a hoarder and a single referral route for those cases that need a more co-ordinated response.

Using the clutter rating pictures on page 19 onwards, enables agencies to decide which picture most resembles the level of clutter in the person's property; this will determine the level of response.

Using the clutter images is only a guide and there may be other factors that professionals need to consider before deciding on the level of risk. For example the clutter image may be at level 1, but may be compounded by safeguarding issues, type of clutter (dangerous substances) or the adult having significant care and support needs which would raise the risks to a level 2 or 3, so there is always some subjectivity involved dependent upon the circumstances. On page 18 there is a level of risk chart that may help to determine this. If the assessment comes out at level 1, then agencies need to refer to the advice in the pathway document. If the clutter resembles a level 2 or 3, the referral form on page 29 needs to be completed and emailed to customer_contact@sandwell.gov.uk If the hoarder is a

Sandwell Council tenant or a housing association tenant, the referral will be passed to SMBC Neighbourhoods Services. If they are a private tenant or owner occupier, it will be passed to West Midlands Fire Service.

In the case of level 3 hoarding cases, the co-ordinator may need to call a professionals meeting to discuss how we can support the individual to recognise that there is a problem and the best way forward.

18. The role of the co-ordinator

It is recognised, that depending on the complexities of the hoarding case, there needs to be a co-ordinated response when trying to support someone who hoards. Taking a more structured approach benefits the person who hoards by ensuring they are not bombarded by many different services which can cause confusion and duplication. It is not about going in and just clearing the hoard, remember hoarding doesn't normally exist in isolation but is usually linked to a whole raft of life issues, this problem has not suddenly happened; it has sometimes taken years to get to the level of hoarding. Persistence and consistency is key. Anybody whose hoard relates to the clutter image pictures between 4 and 9 can be referred through the single referral access route within Neighbourhoods customer_services@sandwell.gov.uk, then depending on the tenure of the property will either be passed to West Midlands Fire Service, Vulnerable Persons Officer (VPO) or Sandwell MBC Neighbourhood Officer (NO). The VPO or the NO will then become the co-ordinator. If the hoarder is the tenant of a Housing Association, then an officer from Neighbourhoods will pass the information on to the Housing Association, where there will be an expectation that one of their officers will take on the co-ordinator role to support their tenant. The role will involve:

- Persistence – it may take weeks or months to develop some sort of relationship with the hoarder, so just because the person may turn you away, the co-ordinator must not give up.
- Consistency – having the same person visit will hopefully enable a relationship to develop in order to gain the hoarder's confidence to accept support.
- Take a person centred approach – this relies on the co-ordinator building a non-judgemental and empathic relationship in order for the hoarder to recognise there is a problem and take personal responsibility to determine, agree and engage with any identified solutions.
- Identify small achievable tasks rather than looking at the whole hoard.

- Co-ordinate the support/solutions to meet the individual's need and not just make numerous referrals which are not going to have any impact or outcome.
- Organise and chair multi-agency meetings to share information and establish a multi-agency approach.

Hazard reduction tips which co-ordinators can use to reduce risk, whilst trying to work with the individual to address the hoard:

- ❖ Contact the Mailing Preference Service to stop junk mail being delivered
- ❖ Eliminate trailing electrical leads, especially under carpets
- ❖ Reduce overloaded sockets
- ❖ Clear doorways to allow doors to close
- ❖ Make utility shut offs accessible
- ❖ Move flammable materials away from heat sources
- ❖ Ensure the smoke alarms are clear from clutter and are working
- ❖ Create alternative escape routes
- ❖ Manage materials used for smoking

19. Level of Risk

Level of risk	
Low Risk	<p>All Doors, Stairways and windows accessible</p> <p>No evidence of pests</p> <p>Clutter obstructs SOME functions of key living area – Look untidy</p> <p>Safe Maintained sanitation conditions</p>
Medium Risk	<p>Blocking of Doors, some windows, possibly major exit</p> <p>Light infestation of pests (e.g. bed bugs, lice, fleas, rats)</p> <p>Clutter obstructing functions of key living space, stairs, entrances, hallways etc.</p> <p>Evidence of non-maintained sanitation conditions (e.g. food preparation surfaces heavily soiled, lots of dirty dishes, obvious odours which irritate etc.)</p> <p>Evidence of burns to the carpet , clothing etc.</p>
High Risk	<p>Whole rooms inaccessible, exits blocked, windows not able to be opened Utilities cut off (e.g. no heating, gas capped)</p> <p>Heavy infestation of pests (rats seen, heard, reported by neighbours, cockroaches fleas etc.)</p> <p>Key living spaces not available for use, person living in one room</p> <p>Evidence of urine/excrement in room, rotting food, very insanitary conditions</p> <p>Evidence of previous fire or burns in the carpet, clothing etc.</p>

20. Clutter Image Rating Tool Guidance

These ratings are via The International OCD Foundation and were originally from a study by Frost RO, Steketee G, Tolin DF, Renaud S. Development and validation of the Clutter Image Rating. Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioural Assessment. 2008;32:401–417.

Clutter Image Rating (CIR) – BEDROOM

Please select the CIR which closely relates to the amount of clutter



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9

Clutter Image Rating (CIR) – LOUNGE

Please select the CIR which closely relates to the amount of clutter



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9

Clutter Image Rating (CIR) – KITCHEN

Please select the CIR which closely relates to the amount of clutter



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9

Appendix 1: Sandwell Hoarding Pathway

<p><u>Level 1 (LOW)</u> Clutter image rating 1-3 Household environment is considered standard. No specialised assistance needed. If resident would like some assistance with general household or feels like they are declining towards higher clutter scale, appropriate referrals can be made subject to age and circumstances.</p>	<p>ALL AGENCIES</p>	<p>Support solutions with consent for consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to West Midlands Fire Service for safe and well check 0800 3895525 • Refer to Adult Social Care Enquiry (0121 569 2266) for referral to Floating Support, Prevention Services, Community Alarm or an assessment for care and support needs • Refer to Early Help, Children and Families Service, contact 0121 569 3100 for advice • Advice and support to register with a G.P. if not registered • Refer to Welfare Rights (0121 569 3158, welfarerights_team@sandwell.gov.uk) if there are benefits or debt issues • Provide details of voluntary organisations within the area • SCVO http://sandwellvcs.info/index.html • Ask Ade https://www.askade.org/ • Sandwell Hub https://www.sandwellhub.org • www.routetowellbeing.info • https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/informationpoint 			
<p><u>Level 2 (MEDIUM)</u> <u>Clutter image rating 4-6</u> Household environment requires professional assistance to resolve clutter and maintenance issues in the property</p>	<p>ALL AGENCIES</p>	<p>Homeowners and Private Tenants</p>	<p>Obtain consent or inform of referral Email referral form to the one point of contact customer_services@sandwell.gov.uk</p>	<p>Refer to West Midlands Fire Service Vulnerable Persons Officers to co-ordinate response</p>	<p>Solutions/Interventions/Support Options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Midlands Fire Service safe and well check 0800 3895525 • Refer to Private sector Housing (0121 569 3158) • Refer to Environmental Health (0121 569 6600) if a public health issue • Refer to Adult Social Care Enquiry (0121 569 2266) for referral to Floating Support, Prevention Services, Community Alarm or an assessment for care and support needs • Refer to Early Help, Children and Families Service contact 0121 569 3100 for advice

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to Welfare Rights (0121 569 3158, welfarights_team@sandwell.gov.uk if there are benefits or debt issues. • Provide details of voluntary organisations who may be able to provide support – Resources • SCVO http://sandwellvcs.info/index.html • Ask Ade https://www.askade.org/ • Sandwell Hub https://www.sandwellhub.org • www.routetowellbeing.info • https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/informationpoint • Refer to RSPCA if there are animal welfare concerns 0300 1234 999 https://www.rspca.org.uk/utilities/contactus/reportcruelty
<p><u>Level 2 (MEDIUM)</u> <u>Clutter image rating 4-6</u> Household environment requires professional assistance to resolve clutter and maintenance issues in the property</p>	ALL AGENCIES	Council and Housing Association Tenants	<p>Obtain consent or inform of referral</p> <p>Email referral form to customer_services@sandwell.gov.uk</p>	<p>Refer to Sandwell Local Centre to co-ordinate response</p> <p>↓ If Housing Association Tenant – Neighbourhood Officer to contact Housing</p>	<p><u>Solutions/interventions/support options</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Midlands Fire Service safe and well check 0800 3895525 • Refer to Adult Social Care Enquiry (0121 569 2266) for referral to Floating Support, Prevention Services, Community Alarm or an assessment for care and support needs • Refer to Early Help, Children and Families Service contact 0121 569 3100 for advice • Refer to Welfare Rights (0121

				<p>Association to advise they need to visit and use the framework</p>	<p>569 3158, welfarerights_team@sandwell.gov.uk if there are benefits or debt issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use tenancy conditions and set realistic goals to clear property • Provide details of voluntary organisations who may be able to provide support – resources • SCVO http://sandwellvcs.info/index.html • Ask Ade https://www.askade.org/ • Sandwell Hub https://www.sandwellhub.org • https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/informationpoint • www.routetowellbeing.info • Refer to Environmental Health (0121 569 6600) if a public health issue • Refer to RSPCA if there are animal welfare concerns 0300 1234 999 https://www.rspca.org.uk/utilities/contactus/reportcruelty
<p>Level 3 (HIGH) Clutter image rating 7-9 Household environment will require intervention with a collaborative multi-agency approach with the</p>	<p>ALL AGENCIES</p>	<p>Homeowners and Private Tenants</p>	<p>Obtain consent or inform of referral</p> <p>Email referral form to customer_services@sandwell.gov.uk</p>	<p>Refer to West Midlands Fire Service Vulnerable Persons Officers to co-ordinate response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as co-ordinator • West Midlands Fire service to carry out a safe and well check with 24 hours 0800 3895525 • Raise a safeguarding concern if there are care and support needs (contact safeguarding team for advice 0121 569 2266) within 24 hours

<p>involvement from a wide range of professionals. This level of hoarding is a significant risk to the health of the householders, surrounding properties and residents. The occupier is often unaware of the implications of their hoarding actions and oblivious to the risk it poses.</p>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the individual does not meet the safeguarding adults threshold, consider a referral to Adult Social Care for an assessment of care and support needs and referral to floating Support (0121 569 2266) • If there are children living in the property, submit a MARF to Children and Families Services (contact MASH for advice 0121 3100) within 24 hours • Refer to Environmental Health (0121 569 6600) due to public health issue • Refer to Sandwell MBC Housing Options Team (0121 569 6000) if the property is uninhabitable • Consider what support the voluntary Sector can provide resources • SCVO http://sandwellvcs.info/index.html • Ask Ade https://www.askade.org/ • Sandwell Hub https://www.sandwellhub.org • www.routetowellbeing.info • https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/informationpoint • Arrange a multi-agency professionals meeting to include Neighbourhoods (Housing), Adult Social Care (if applicable and Children and Families (if
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					<p>applicable) and any agency that you have referred to and may be involved</p> <p>Contact the RSPCA if there are concerns about animal welfare 0300 1234 999</p> <p>https://www.rspca.org.uk/utilities/contactus/reportcruelty</p>
<p>Level 3 (HIGH) Clutter image rating 7-9 Household environment will require intervention with a collaborative multi-agency approach with the involvement from a wide range of professionals. This level of hoarding is a significant risk to the health of the householders, surrounding properties and residents. The occupier is often unaware of the implications of their hoarding actions and oblivious to the</p>	<p>ALL AGENCIES</p>	<p>Council and Housing Association Tenants</p>	<p>Obtain consent or inform of referral</p> <p>Email referral form to customer_services@sandwell.gov.uk</p>	<p>Refer to Sandwell Local Centre to co-ordinate response</p> <p>↓ If Housing Association Tenant – Neighbourhood Officer to contact Housing Association to advise they need to visit and use the framework</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit tenant and inspect whole property • Refer to West Midlands Fire service to carry out a safe and well check within 24 hours 0800 3895525 • Raise a safeguarding concern if there are care and support needs (contact safeguarding team for advice 0121 569 2266) within 24 hours • If the individual does not meet the safeguarding adults threshold, consider a referral to Adult Social Care for an assessment of care and support needs and referral to floating Support (0121 569 2266) • If there are children living in the property, submit a MARF to Children and Families Services (contact MASH for advice 0121 3100) within 24 hours • Consider rehousing if the property is unfit to live in • Use tenancy conditions and set realistic goals to clear property

risk it poses.					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider what support the Voluntary Sector can provide • SCVO http://sandwellvcs.info/index.html • Ask Ade https://www.askade.org/ • Sandwell Hub https://www.sandwellhub.org • https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/informationpoint • www.routetowellbeing.info • Arrange a multi-agency professionals meeting to include Neighbourhoods (Housing), Adult Social Care and Children and Families (if applicable) and any agency that you have referred to and may be involved • Contact the RSPCA if there are concerns about animal welfare 0300 1234 999 https://www.rspca.org.uk/utilities/contactus/reportcruelty
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Appendix 2: Hoarding Referral Form



Hoarding Referral Form

Referral Guidelines

Send referral forms to : customer_services@sandwell.gov.uk

Important: When referring an occupier you must have verbal consent. However the following must be considered should the individual not give their consent.

- Safeguarding
- Care Act
- Environmental health / pests
- Animals
- Capacity
- Affecting neighbouring properties
- Health & Safety
- Children in property
- Inaccessible utilities (gas/electric/water)
- Property in serious disrepair

Referring Organisation

Employee Name : _____ Contact number: _____

Organisation : _____ Email: _____

Referring Information

Occupier Name: _____ Clutter image rating
_____ 4 5 6 7 8 9

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Tenure : Council, housing association, private tenant, owner occupier, other

Concerns: _____

Has the occupier given consent to make this referral Yes/No
(if no, please tell us why you have made the referral) _____

Appendix 3: Framework Contact List

Partner	Contact	Provision
Fire Service	0800 389 5525 Contactcentre@wmfs.net	Vulnerable Person Officer visit Smoke alarm, Hearing Impaired alarm, sprinkler system, throws, bedding
Sandwell Council Neighbourhoods	0121 569 6000	Access to housing teams via contact centre
Access Service for Children Social Care	0121 569 3100	
GP's		Single point of access team Duty clinician assess referral Counselling Referral to Community Mental Health service
Agewell	0121 796 9333	Wardens are us – cleaning company Bereavement counselling Befriending
Black Country Home force	0121 561 1969 info@bchg.co.uk	Handy Persons scheme. 3 hours free labour Material cost up to £50
iCares	0121 507 2664 (option 5) Sandwell.i.cares@nhs.net	Home Accident prevention Safety Assessment Reorganising to clear exits. Private & SMBC 65+ Physio, occupational therapy, community matrons, admission to hospital avoidance.

Partner	Contact	Provision
SMBC Neighbourhoods ASB Team	0121 569 3449 Sandwell_enquiry@sandwell.gov.uk	Positive Engagement Officer providing intensive support to stop ASB
Adult Social Care – Care Management	0121 569 2266	Vulnerability and mental capacity assessment, support planning and packages of care, possible funding for clearance of property.
Private Sector Housing - SMBC	0121 569 2935	Housing Quality Team can deal with disrepair in Private rented housing.
Riverside Housing		Guidance and support to encourage reducing the hoard. Advice regarding risk of fire and referral to Kaleidoscope. Available for Riverside tenants only.
Sandwell safeguarding Children's Board	0121 569 3100	Report safeguarding concerns
Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board	0121 569 2266 Sandwell_enquiry@sandwell.gov.uk	Report safeguarding concerns
Sandwell Community Offer	0121 557 5812 Community.offer@nhs.net	Murray Hall, Be Well, Buds, Agewell, Friends & Neighbours, Kaleidoscope
Kaleidoscope	0121 565 5605 referral@kaleidoscopeplus.org.uk	Sort team supporting Sandwell residents who have a Mental Health Difficulty and a Housing related need

Partner	Contact	Provision
Children's Services – Early Help	Oldbury - 0121 569 7295 Rowley - 0121 569 7296 Smethwick - 0121 569 7297 Tipton - 0121 569 7291 Wednesbury - 0121 569 7294 West Bromwich - 0121 569 7292	Identifies child or young person's needs.
SMBC Adults Community Alarms	0121 569 6800	Community alarms fitted in the homes of elderly, disabled or vulnerable people. An emergency button to wear around their neck or wrist.
St Albans Community Centre Smethwick	0121 558 0018	<u>Luncheon club</u> This is held daily providing a menu consisting of 3 choices of meals each day <u>Outmeals</u> The Centre provides a meal delivery service 5 days a week to those residents who are unable to provide meals for themselves <u>Advice, Support and Advocacy Programme</u> <u>Befriending Service</u> For those over the age of 55 and living in Sandwell.
Refuse / Waste Management	0121 569 6625	Bulky collection service. Household Recycling Centre - Oldbury

Partner	Contact	Provision
RSPCA	0300 123 4999	Animal Welfare
Iris Drug Service	0121 553 1333 sandwellreferrals@irispartnership.org.uk	Advice, Information and Assessment, Drug and Alcohol detoxification. Family support, Needle exchange one to one session, prescription service
Swanswell Alcohol Service	0121 553 1333 support@swanswell.org	
SCVO	0121 525 1127 http://health.showcaseserver.co.uk/	General info regarding the voluntary sector and charities. Social activities, peer support, advice and guidance. Hosts the route to wellbeing website.

Appendix 4: Resources

National Organisations

www.helpforhoarders.co.uk

A comprehensive hoarding website, with a good page of resources with counsellors and groups specialising in hoarding

www.childrenofhoarders.com

Offering support and advice to the families of those that hoard

www.compulsive-hoarding.org

A website dedicated to raising awareness and understanding of hoarding

www.hoardinguk.org

Offer phone, email and advocacy support free of charge

www.hoardinghelpuk.org

Give practical support and offer expert advice to those who hoard

www.ocduk.org/hoarding

Supports those with OCD who hoard

www.animalhoarding.com

Offers information and support around animal hoarding

www.counselling-directory.org.uk/compulsivehoarding

Provides information on hoarding and a list of counsellors who work with those who hoard

<http://global.oup.com>

Treatment That Work site with loads of downloadable tools for working with those who hoard

<http://www.cloudsend.org.uk/>

Offers information, training and one to one support for those that hoard

<http://hoardingdisordersuk.org/>

You will find information on research and resources

http://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/pub.housing.org.uk/Hoarding_briefing_-_August_2015.pdf

National Housing Federation – good examples of best practice when working with hoarders from a housing perspective

<https://www.housing.org.uk/blog/time-to-think-outside-the-box-about-hoarders/>

Practical tips for working with hoarders