

Position Status Categories

- 1 - Stop monitoring or determine whether any further action is required
- 2 - Achieved
- 3 - Not fully implemented (Obstacle)
- 4 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- 5 - Not fully implemented (Progress made not acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- 6 - Not for review this session

**Desired Outcome** – To reassure tenants that the primary purpose of home visits is to build good tenant/landlord relations

**Recommendation 1** – That the confused purpose of the ATV be clarified to clearly show that the primary purpose of the ATV is to get to know tenants and understand their needs *not* to detect tenancy fraud.

**Position July 2015**

Agreed, but tenancy verification will still have a secondary role in the ATV.

**Current position:** There has been no change since July 2015. The Annual Home Visit process was revised April 2015, following recommendations made by Tenant Scrutiny Board. Tenancy verification remains an element of the visit; however, there has been a shift in focus to deliver a more customer focused visit which is tailored to meet individual need. The updated staff guidance notes confirm the primary purpose of the visit is about:

- Getting to know our tenants
- Understanding tenant needs
- Promote tenancy sustainment
- Improve customer satisfaction
- Tenancy verification
- Identify support needs, including introduction of Universal Credit

**Position Status (categories 1 – 6)** *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

**Desired Outcome** – To reassure tenants that the primary purpose of home visits is to build good tenant/landlord relations

**Recommendation 2** – That the ‘tarnished’ image of the ATV be improved with a change of name. The phrase ‘*Home Environment Review*’ is suggested as an umbrella term to capture information about the built environment and social environment.

**Position July 2015**

Agree with the proposal to change the name – but feel that ‘Home Environment Review’ is officer type language, and so we would recommend ‘Annual Home Visit’.

**Current position:** The position has not changed since July 2015. The process was reviewed April 2015; this included a change of name. The new process was launched and widely publicised to staff in April 2015 using our weekly staff news bulletin.

Training is now delivered to all new staff at induction, which outlines the purpose of the visit, and how to undertake a quality visit. Area Managers undertake quality assurance checks to ensure quality standards. The Senior Leadership Team receives regular updates on progress, including learning from visit outcomes to drive service improvement.

**Position Status (categories 1 – 6)** *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

**Desired Outcome** – Better use of officer time and improving tenant/landlord relations

**Recommendation 3** – That visits be by appointment in the first instance where possible

**Position July 2015**

Agreed, where appropriate, but not in cases where tenancy fraud is suspected

**Current position:** The position has not changed since July 2015. The revised process confirms visits are undertaken by appointment, unless there are concerns around tenancy fraud. We also offer flexible early morning / evening appointments for tenants who work dependent on staff availability.

**Position Status (categories 1 – 6)** *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

**Desired Outcome – Focussing resources on tenants most in need of support**

**Recommendation 4** – That housing managers have local discretion to extend the period between visits to two years for those tenants they feel are not at risk.

**Position July 2015**

We feel strongly that an annual visit to each tenant is important – shows our commitment to all tenants, communicating on new issues, preventing escalation of issues, so we would like to continue with all of these annually.

**Current position:** The position has not changed since July 2015. The revised process confirms that every tenant will be visited at least once a year; vulnerable tenants may be visited more frequently with their consent, to support tenancy sustainment. We feel this approach underpins our aim of getting to know and understanding our tenants needs and improve customer satisfaction.

**Position Status (categories 1 – 6)** *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

**Desired Outcome – More effective use of officer time**

**Recommendation 5** – That housing officers work smarter with other agencies in terms of planning visits and gaining access.

**Position July 2015**

Agreed

**Current position:** The position has not changed since July 2015. The revised process allows staff to maximise opportunities for combining visits such as; the annual gas service and repair appointments to achieve optimum levels of efficiency. The Housing Officer is directed to undertake a quality, comprehensive visit which captures all of our tenants needs at the one visit, which avoids duplication of visits.

**Position Status (categories 1 – 6)** *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

**Desired Outcome – To reach tenants not already contacted through ATVs**

**Recommendation 6** – That 'Action Days' be used to target areas in the city where landlord/tenant contact is low

**Position July 2015**

Agreed

**Current position:** The position has not changed since July 2015. We routinely arrange multi agency action days to drive environmental and community safety improvements. These are arranged and promoted in advance to local residents, partners and tenant and resident groups, this approach gives a high visible presence. We also take a coordinated approach and target tenants where contact is traditionally low.

**Position Status (categories 1 – 6)** *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

**Desired Outcome – Reduction in duplication of effort**

**Recommendation 7** – That those living in sheltered accommodation be removed from the formal visiting arrangements

**Position July 2015**

Agreed that the ATV needs to be done differently for sheltered tenants who are receiving support, and can look to combine with reviews of support plans.

**Current position:** The position has not changed since July 2015. We combine the Annual Home Visit with our on-going support review plans. We feel this approach is beneficial to tenants as it allows a quality conversation and comprehensive visit, where staff are able to discuss ways to get involved and promote ways to engage with local activities which help combat social isolation.

**Position Status (categories 1 – 6)** *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

**Desired Outcome** – Increased and better targeted and managed contact with tenants

**Recommendation 8** – That Housing Leeds reviews alternative contact methods for identified groups

**Position July 2015**

Similar to comments on recommendation 4

**Current position:** The position has not changed since July 2015. We offer flexible early morning / evening appointments for tenants who work, and combine visits where possible to avoid duplicate visits. We undertake joint visits with support providers and advocates for vulnerable tenants. Additionally, we provide periodic updates in the tenant's newsletter to promote the purpose and benefits of Annual Home Visits.

**Position Status (categories 1 – 6)** *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

**Desired Outcome** – Increased service efficiencies and opportunities for savings

**Recommendation 9** – That the Director of Environment and Housing supports the business case for funding to introduce mobile technology in housing management (subject to a successful pilot) We also request that this Board be provided with an update on the pilot outlining the financial and operation viability of the technology.

**Position July 2015**

Pilot underway to implement mobile working.

**Current position:** The position has not changed since July 2015. An update on mobile technology was presented to Tenant Scrutiny Board at Octobers' meeting.

Following evaluation it has been established that tablets have not been as successful as we would have liked due to running an updated version of the Windows operating system. Therefore, we have now purchased three small laptops

which are currently being tested by Housing Officers.

The new hardware will still give officers access to all housing management applications and therefore still provide the benefits discussed with Tenant Scrutiny Board.

We will provide an update to Tenant Scrutiny Board once additional information is available.

**Position Status (categories 1 – 6)** *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

**Desired Outcome** – To ensure data collected is correct to improve service outcomes

**Recommendation 10** – That the data collected be reviewed as part of the development programme for the introduction of mobile technology and an evaluation be undertaken about how the information collected is shared and translates into service improvement.

### **Position July 2015**

Agreed

**Current position:** The position has not changed since July 2015. The six Housing Leeds priorities were agreed by Housing Advisory Board at their meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015. Getting to know our tenants through the Annual Home Visit process is priority 5. We provide quarterly performance information in the form of a dashboard giving a range of performance and other contextual information, together with supporting commentary to Housing Advisory Board.

Following the Tenant Scrutiny Board Inquiry on Annual Home Visits, the service has improved the way that it records the outcome of visits, which allows greater intelligence of the visit outcomes. The main points that are coming out of the visits are as follows:

A number of our tenants don't have a bank account that allows direct debits. This may be an issue for those tenants as Universal Credit is implemented.

A number of tenants have told us that they need additional support with budgeting and are not confident that they could make a claim on line. Additionally, a number of tenants have indicated they would struggle receiving their benefits on a monthly basis.

This information taken at the Annual Home Visit indicates the scale of additional support our tenants will need during the transition to Universal Credit, but will help us to deliver more targeted support to tenants during the transition period. We have recently appointed 16 additional Housing Officers as part of our Enhanced Income Management Service to provide targeted support to those tenants impacted by Welfare Reform and the introduction

of Universal Credit in Leeds.

Following feedback from a number of customer forums, it is also intended to include a question about tenant insurance at the next process review.

**Position Status (categories 1 – 6)** *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*