

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.

February 2016: 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 as of November 2016

No change on position from February.

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’.

February 2016: 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. In addition, we have

introduced a number of initiatives for the revised process which provides flexibility for visits for tenants.

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 as of November 2016

No change on position from February. Process and visit content was further reviewed for the 2016/17 year, to ensure that a greater emphasis was placed on considering additional support needs. All Housing Officers have been trained on the revised process to ensure that a greater focus is placed on having a quality conversation with tenants.

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

February 2016: 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 as of November 2016

No change on position from February.

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.

First Update 2016: 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 as of November 2016

No change on position from February. So far for 2016/17 84% of tenants have received an

AHV.

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

February 2016: 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 as of November 2016

Housing Officers now receive lists of properties that have an outstanding gas check and work with contractors to jointly secure access to properties. This has helped us to gain access to properties to undertake AHVs.

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

February 2016: 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 as of November 2016

The position has not changed since July 2015. We continue to routinely arrange multi agency action days, and as part of these days carry out AHVs.

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.

February 2016: 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 as of November 2016

The position has not changed since July 2015. We combine the AHV with our on-going review of support plans.

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

February 2016: 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 as of November 2016

The position has not changed since July 2015. We continue to offer flexible appointments for tenants who work, and where possible combine visits to avoid duplication.

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.

February 2016: 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 as of November 2016

All Housing Officers now have a laptop available to them to support officers working remotely as part of Changing the Workplace. Housing Leeds are currently re-procuring a new Housing ICT solution and an improved mobile working solution is being sought via this procurement. Separate report to Tenant Scrutiny Board.

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

February 2016: The position has not changed since July 2015. The six Housing Leeds priorities were agreed by Housing Advisory Board at their meeting on 20 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. We provide period information for the details of the surveys we undertake for the majority of visits that are required. Moving on to the issue of flexible appointments and mobile working solutions they will target those for priority. This provides

Position as of November 2016

Housing Leeds continues to use the information collected at the AHV to inform any follow up

actions for each resident, including where there are outstanding repairs, unmet support needs etc. Updated contact and household details are also updated into the tenant record on the Orchard system. The 2016/17 AHV form includes a question on whether the tenant has contents insurance and offers a Tenant Insurance leaflet.

The overall data is used to report trends from the AHVs, such as the number of tenants with access to the internet at home and outstanding repairs.

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