Policy title	**Home Condition Policy**
Summary	This Policy details MSV's approach to identifying and handling instances of unsatisfactory home conditions, relating to customer responsibility, and how we work with customers to support improved conditions to live well. The Policy also outlines MSV's approach to resolving cases of unsatisfactory home conditions where improvements are not made by customers.
Scope	The Home Condition Policy applies to General Needs and Later Living customers, as well as directly managed Supported Housing customers where there is no support provider or scheme coordinator on-site.
Author & Job Role	Ross Tomlinson, Head of Neighbourhoods
Directorate	Customers
Document Status	Approved
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Consultation	Leadership Team Involved Customer Group

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1. Introduction/Policy Purpose

1.1 Mosscare St Vincent's Housing (MSV) strives to deliver an excellent customer service to support customers to sustain tenancies and live well in their homes.

1.2 Having a safe, well-maintained and well-kept home contributes to positive physical and mental wellbeing; MSV proactively check customers' home condition, ensuring that homes are well-kept to promote tenancy sustainment.

1.3 MSV are committed to ensuring that our neighbourhoods are attractive, safe and desirable places to call home and that the condition of MSV homes reflect this.

1.4 We recognise that some customers require more support to sustain their tenancies and home condition than others. This Policy ensures earlier identification of support needs and quick intervention to ensure customer safety and wellbeing.

1.5 In some instances, despite intervention and offers of support, home conditions continue to deteriorate and, in these instances, MSV take quick and decisive action to: ensure the safety and wellbeing of customers; prevent deterioration and damage to MSV homes; and to mitigate the negative impact to customers and communities.

1.5 The purpose of this policy is to:

- Detail customer responsibility in relation to their home condition.
- Ensure early identification of customer support needs.
- Ensure that MSV homes and neighbourhoods are environmentally appealing.
- Prevent damage to and deterioration of MSV homes.
- Promote tenancy sustainment and customers living well in their homes.
- Provide a framework for enforcement as a last resort.

1.5 The policy has been developed with consideration to:

- Awaab's Law (2023)
- Care Act (2014)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Environmental Protection Act (1990)
- Fitness for Human Habitation Act (2018)
- Housing Act (1985)
- Housing Act (1988)
- Housing Act (1996)
- Housing Act (2004)
- Human Rights Act (1988)
- Landlord and Tenant Act (1985)
- Prevention of Damage by Pests Act (1949)

2. Scope

2.1 This policy details how MSV will achieve the aims of the Home Condition Policy.

2.2 The Policy sets out how MSV support customers in understanding their responsibilities and improving / maintaining their home condition.

2.3 The Policy sets out how MSV respond to instances of unsatisfactory home condition.

2.4 This Policy applies to General Needs and Later Living customers, as well as directly managed Supported Housing customers where there is no support provider or scheme coordinator on-site.

3. Definitions

3.1 Unsatisfactory home condition is a varied phrase and for the purpose of this Policy relates only to customer responsibility and not where the home condition is deteriorating due to an MSV responsibility, for example planned improvements, repairs and maintenance or building safety. An unsatisfactory home condition usually falls into one of the following categories:

- Build up of waste or items inside or outside of the home.
- Damage to inside or outside of the home caused deliberately or by neglect.
- Fire risks.
- Graffiti.
- Health & Safety issues.
- Lacking or unreasonable decoration.
- Offensive decoration, signs, writing or imagery.
- Repairs that have not been reported to MSV.
- Unhygienic and/or unclean conditions inside or outside of the home.
- Untidy and/or overgrown gardens and hedges.

3.2 Customer responsibility relates directly to the obligations set out within the tenancy agreement and this Policy.

3.3 Outside of the home, for the purpose of this Policy, means an external area which is intended for the sole use of the customer and falls within the boundary of the home i.e. a garden, outhouse, shed, driveway or alleyway.

4. Roles & Responsibilities

4.1 Managers are responsible for implementing the policy.

4.2 Managers are responsible for delivering the policy and ensuring that key performance indicators are monitored and achieved.

4.3 Team Leaders are responsible for day-to-day operational assessment and guidance in relation to the Policy.

4.4 Head of Neighbourhoods is responsible for reviewing the policy and ensuring that it is fit for purpose.

5. Monitoring, Review & Evaluation

5.1 MSV will monitor the effectiveness of the Policy by:

- Review of cases involving unsatisfactory home condition.
- Review metrics in relation to tenancy sustainment.

6. Related Documents

6.1 Abandonment Policy

6.2 ASB Policy

6.3 Good Neighbourhood Management Policy

6.4 Hoarding Policy

6.5 Mutual Exchange Policy

6.6 Recharge Policy

6.7 Safeguarding Policy

6.8 Tenancy Fraud Policy

6.9 Tenancy Visits Policy

7. Version History

Version	Date	Author	Reason
1	24 July 2026	Ross Tomlinson	New Policy

8. Delivering the Policy

8.1 MSV recognise its diverse customer base and that customers have the right to peaceful enjoyment of their home, whilst living in a way that suits their needs, lifestyle and choice.

8.2 We will not unreasonably impose on or inconvenience customers; the identification of unsatisfactory home condition is usually a result of a planned visit, such as a repair; tenancy visit or compliance visit, a report from a third party or professional or when an MSV colleague or contractor has reasonable cause to suspect that the home condition is unsatisfactory.

8.3 MSV customers are responsible for ensuring that homes are maintained to a satisfactory standard. This includes ensuring that there is not a build up of waste or items inside or outside of the home; deliberate or neglectful damage is rectified in a timely manner; the home is free of fire risks and obstacles preventing escape in the event of a fire; there is no graffiti or offensive decoration, signs, writing or imagery inside or outside of the home; the home is adequately decorated; MSV-responsibility repairs are reported in a timely manner; and that there are no unhygienic or unclean conditions inside or outside of the home.

8.4 Where an unsatisfactory home condition is identified or suspected, MSV take quick, proportionate and appropriate action to mitigate risk in relation to the health, safety and wellbeing of customers and the community, making sure that home conditions are maintained in line with the tenancy agreement.

8.5 In all instances where an unsatisfactory home condition is identified or suspected, we are courteous, respectful, kind and empathetic when responding to reports and speaking with customers.

8.6 When an unsatisfactory home condition is suspected but not confirmed, we contact the customer to arrange a visit. If the report highlights an urgent health and safety concern, we may visit the home without notice to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the customer and community.

8.7 We make three attempts to visit a home where an unsatisfactory home condition is suspected or confirmed; if we are unable to gain access into the home on three occasions, we consider legal action to allow us entry into the home.

8.7.1 All attempted visits are arranged with the customer in the first instance where contact is established, and an appointment letter is sent out confirming the visit.

8.7.2 Where it is reasonably suspected that there is an urgent health and safety risk, MSV attempt contact with the customer. If contact is not established and access is not provided, MSV consider urgent action which includes legal enforcement, changing the locks to gain entry and/or the removal of dangerous items.

8.7.3 Where a lock change is necessary and undertaken, MSV may recharge the customer for the cost of the work.

8.8 When an unsatisfactory home condition is confirmed, MSV communicate regularly and respectfully with the customer(s), agreeing reasonable and achievable actions that the customer will undertake before the next visit.

8.8.1 MSV has a statutory obligation to safeguard children and vulnerable adults and will make referrals to the relevant local authorities and partner agencies where appropriate having identified an unsatisfactory home condition. Referrals to internal teams, for e.g. Wellbeing & Tenancy Sustainment and/or Income & Financial Resilience are considered in all cases.

8.8.2 MSV colleagues adopt a trauma-informed, person-centred approach to handling cases of unsatisfactory home condition; working with customers to support independence, tenancy sustainment and improved living conditions.

8.8.3 Hoarding Disorder is a recognised mental health condition and where hoarding is suspected, which includes hoarding both inside and outside of the home, MSV colleagues refer the case to the Wellbeing & Tenancy Sustainment team where appropriately trained colleagues make an assessment of the case. If hoarding is confirmed, the case is managed under MSV's Hoarding Policy.

8.8.4 MSV take photographs of the home condition, during all visits within this Policy, to ensure that accurate records are maintained; improvements or deterioration are documented and any risks are mitigated via checks from the relevant manager or team.

8.8.5 Where customers refuse permission for MSV to take photographs, a home condition checklist is completed by the Officer and stored on our internal system.

8.8.6 We write out to customers, confirming the details of the initial home condition and any actions which must be undertaken before the next visit.

8.8.7 We ordinarily carry out further visits every 4-weeks until the home condition is no longer unsatisfactory. In some circumstances we visit more frequently, for e.g. where there are health and safety concerns, vulnerable occupants and/or at MSV's discretion.

8.8.8 During each further home condition visit, we check that actions have been completed and confirm this with the customer and whether any further actions and visits are required.

8.9 Once a home condition has improved and is no longer unsatisfactory, MSV inform the customer of this and confirm this in writing.

8.9.1 MSV offer advice and guidance to customers to maintain their home condition.

8.9.2 MSV undertake tenancy visits every 2-years in usual circumstances. We consider increasing the visit frequency where there has been a previous unsatisfactory home condition.

8.10 If the home condition remains unsatisfactory and deteriorates further or does not improve, MSV uses tools to enforce the tenancy agreement and legal enforcement where appropriate.

8.11 Where it is the responsibility of the customer to maintain their garden, MSV expect garden conditions to be maintained to a satisfactory standard. Untidy gardens have a detrimental impact on the appearance and desirability of neighbourhoods, as well as causing issues to neighbours in relation to pests.

8.12 MSV customers are responsible for regularly ensuring that grass is cut to a reasonable height, excessive weeds are removed from the garden and pathways, pet foul is cleaned/removed straight away and items are not tipped / left in gardens. Customers are responsible for undertaking any work on trees such as pruning; where customers wish to majorly prune a tree or remove it, permission must be sought from MSV.

8.13 Where an unsatisfactory home condition is the result of garden condition; customers are reminded of their responsibilities and advised what actions must be taken within 28-days to remedy the concern.

8.13.1 If the garden condition remains unsatisfactory, MSV will carry out the work and recharge the customer.

8.13.2 If the garden condition is unsatisfactory again, following MSV carrying out work to the garden, we advise the customer what actions must be taken to remedy the concern. If the garden condition remains unsatisfactory after this period, we pursue enforcement options via civil legal remedies such as civil Injunction orders and, as a very last resort, Possession orders.

9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 - Equality Impact Assessment

10. Impact Assessment

10.1 An equality impact assessment has been carried out and is listed as Appendix 1 in this document.

Appendix 1 - EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

Name of Policy	Home Condition Policy	
Date of Assessment	24 July 2026	
Name & Role of Assessors	Ross Tomlinson, Head of Neighbourhoods	
What are the desired outcomes of the policy?	➢ Detail customer responsibility in relation to their home condition. ➢ Ensure early identification of customer support needs. ➢ Ensure that MSV homes and neighbourhoods are environmentally appealing. ➢ Prevent damage to and deterioration of MSV homes. ➢ Promote tenancy sustainment and customers living well in their homes. ➢ Provide a framework for enforcement as a last resort.	
Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the function?	This policy applies to the Neighbourhood teams, and MSV's General Needs customers.	
Who will be consulted and what types of consultation will be carried out?	Leadership Team – Neighbourhoods Customer Scrutiny Group	
Summarise any evidence considered		
Could the function have a differential impact on:		**What evidence exists to support your analysis?**
	Yes / No	
Race/Ethnicity Consider language and cultural factors	Yes	English is not the first language for some customers, which may lead to communication barriers in relation to reporting repairs or communication in relation to unsatisfactory home conditions.
Gender reassignment Consider people proposing to or have undergone a process of having their sex reassigned.	No	N/A
Disability / Long Term Health Consider physical, visual, aural impairment, mental, learning difficulties	Yes	Customers with a disability or long term health condition may be disadvantaged in relation to unsatisfactory home conditions. Those with physical or mental health needs may face greater challenges maintaining or improving their home condition. Customers with Hoarding Disorder are identified within this Policy.

Age Consider Elderly or young people	Yes	According to the NHS (2021), 24% of men and 28% of women aged 65 and over needed help with at least one Activity of Daily Living (ADL) in the past month. 21% of men and 29% of women needed help with at least one Instrumental Activity of Daily Living (IADL). The proportions needing help with ADLs or IADLs increased with age from 21% of adults aged between 65 and 69 to 52% of those aged 80 and over. Need for help with two or more ADLs or IADLs also increased with age from 15% of adults aged 65 to 69 to 40% aged 80 and over. 22% of adults aged 65 and over had an unmet need for help with at least one ADL, and 15% had an unmet need for help with at least one IADL. Adults aged 65 and over from the most deprived area were twice as likely to need help with ADLs and IADLs as adults living in the least deprived areas. The proportions who had received some help and who had unmet need were also higher in more deprived areas (https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/health-survey-for-england/2021-part-2/social-care#:~:text=Key%20findings%20for%202021,-24%25%20of%20men&text=21%25%20of%20men%20and%2029,those%20aged%2080%20and%20over.)
Sexuality Either know or perceived	No	N/A
Gender	No	N/A
Religion or belief Consider religious or cultural observance including non-belief, practices of worship	Yes	Cultural bathing practices are observed by some customers, which may disadvantage customers in relation to home condition.
Other protected or vulnerable characteristics: • marriage or civil partnerships • pregnancy or maternity?	Yes	Customers who are pregnant and live alone may be disadvantaged by the Policy. A study published in 2022 concluded that:

		Among 324 pregnant women with pelvic girdle pain 96 (29.6%) had small extent level of activity limitation, 185 (57.1%) had moderate activity limitation, and 43 (13.3%) large extent level of activity limitation. (https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9207037/) There are differing views and opinions in relation to physical activity during pregnancy; but where there are complications during pregnancy it is likely to significantly impair a customer's ability to improve unsatisfactory home conditions.

If the answer is NO to all questions and no differential treatment has been found there is no requirement for a full Equality Impact Assessment. Please go back regularly and review the cycle.
If the answer is YES to any of the questions please complete the rest of the form.

In what areas could the differential identified be considered to have an adverse impact in this function and what solutions will be introduced to overcome these adverse impacts?	Race / Ethnicity: We offer translation and interpretation services and a range of ways to access MSV services. We will use verbal and written translations where necessary. Disability / Long Term Health: We will take a person-centred approach; identifying any care / support needs and making referrals to relevant statutory and community agencies where appropriate. MSV's Wellbeing Team support customers who require additional care / support. We also have the Helping Hands project, which provides a range of support for customers who cannot undertake daily living tasks themselves due to a number of different reasons. Where hoarding is identified, we will refer the case to Wellbeing where the Hoarding Officer will take over the case and it will not be managed under this Policy. Age: We will take a person-centred approach; identifying any care / support needs and making referrals to relevant statutory and community agencies where appropriate. We work in partnership with charities such as Age UK for e.g. and will offer appropriate support and signposting to customers who are struggling due to age. We also have the Helping Hands project, which provides a range of support for customers who cannot undertake daily living tasks themselves due to a number of different reasons.

	Religion/Belief: MSV colleagues undertake cultural awareness training to understand different cultures and beliefs and how different situations may impact customers. We will approach all cases individually and sensitively. Where damage is identified, for e.g., as a result of cultural bathing, colleagues will be equipped to identify this and offer appropriate advice and guidance which is culturally appropriate and sensitive. Pregnancy: We take a person-centred approach which includes an awareness of different factors affecting customer ability to undertake actions in cases of unsatisfactory home condition. Where pregnancy is affecting a customer's ability to undertake actions / improve the home condition, we will offer appropriate support and signposting to customers so that they can access services and relevant support.
In what areas could the differential identified be considered a positive impact in this function and what strategies will be introduced to safeguard and spread these positive impacts?	We adopt a problem solving approach, with the aim to support as many customers as possible to sustain their tenancies, maintain satisfactory home conditions and live well. Where the Helping Hands volunteer pilot project is successful, we will look to build on this and develop the project and/or replicate it with other service offers / partnerships.
Which Action Plans have these solutions/strategies been transferred into?	Asset Management Strategy Customer Experience Strategy Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy Neighbourhood Strategy
Who will be responsible for monitoring these Action Plans?	Ross Tomlinson, Head of Neighbourhoods

Ratified by: Committee/ Board / Delegated Approval **Date:**
(Highlight as appropriate)