



South Cambridgeshire District Council

Housing Engagement Board

Special Meeting

26 March 2026 – 2pm to 4pm

Agenda Pack

Housing Engagement Board – Special Meeting – Agenda

Date: **Thursday, 26 March 2026**

Time: **2pm – 4pm**

Venue: **Monkfield Meeting Room, SCDC Offices, Cambourne**

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1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair will welcome all present and apologies will be noted.

2. Quorum

A quorum shall consist of 50% of members.

3. Endorsement of Policies

The following policies are to be endorsed following Cabinet approval on 24 March 2026, with delegated authority given to the Lead Member of Housing to approve minor amendments following consideration by the Housing Engagement Board.

- Compensation Policy
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- Housing Safety Policies relating to:
 - Fire Risk Management Strategy
 - Lifts and Lifting Equipment Safety Policy
 - Asbestos Management Policy

The following documents are enclosed:

Title	Documents
Compensation Policy	Report to the HEB – Compensation Policy Appendix A – Compensation Policy Appendix B – Policy Panel Feedback (Compensation Policy)
Repairs and Maintenance Policy	Report to the HEB – Repairs and Maintenance Policy Appendix A – Repairs and Maintenance Policy Appendix B – Policy Panel Feedback (Repairs Policy)
Housing Safety Policies	Report to the HEB – Housing Safety Policies Appendix A – Fire Risk Management Strategy Policy Appendix B – Policy Panel Feedback (Fire Risk Management Strategy) Appendix C – Lifts and Lifting Equipment Safety Policy Appendix D – Policy Panel Feedback (Lifts and Lifting Equipment Policy) Appendix E – Asbestos Management Policy Appendix F – Policy Panel Feedback (Asbestos Management Policy)

3.1 Compensation Policy

The following documents are enclosed:

- Report to the HEB – Compensation Policy
- Appendix A – Draft Compensation Policy
- Appendix B – Policy Panel Feedback (Compensation Policy)

Julie Fletcher to report.

Report to:	Housing Engagement Board 26 March 2026
Lead Cabinet Member:	Councillor John Batchelor – Lead Member for Housing
Lead Officer:	Peter Campbell – Head of Housing

Compensation Policy

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that the Housing Engagement Board endorses the Compensation Policy, as set out in Appendix A, following Cabinet approval on 24 March 2026, and that the Lead Member for Housing, under delegated authority, approve any minor amendments arising from the Board’s consideration.

Details

2. The Compensation Policy at Appendix A outlines how the Council’s Housing Landlord Services will access and award compensation to tenants affected by service failures. It provides a structured framework for fair, proportionate, and transparent redress, aligned with Housing Ombudsman Compensation guidance effective from 1 April 2026.
3. Key features include:
 - **Scope:** Applies to council-managed housing and landlord services; excluding council-owned companies and non-landlord services.
 - **Types of Compensation:**
 - **Quantifiable Loss:** based on evidence (example, receipts, increased costs)
 - **Loss of Service:** Daily rate for loss of amenities (example, heating)
 - **Distress / Inconvenience:** Discretionary payments based on impact
 - **Complaint handling failures:** Discretionary payment where we have not complied with the Complaint Handling Code (2024) or have failed to follow our own complaints procedure
 - **Goodwill Gestures:** Non-financial offers (example, vouchers)
 - **Exclusions:** No compensation for statutory payments, tenant-caused issues, or matters resolved via insurance / legal action.

4. The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code and Compensation Policy Guidance set clear expectations for landlords to provide fair, proportionate, and transparent redress when service failures occur. While not a statutory requirement, having a formal compensation policy is considered best practice and supports compliance with the Housing Ombudsman's standards. It helps to ensure consistency in decision-making, reduces the risk of Ombudsman maladministration findings, and demonstrates the Council's commitment to accountability and tenant wellbeing.

Reasons for Recommendations

5. The Compensation Policy is recommended for adoption as it provides a clear, consistent, and fair framework for assessing and awarding redress to tenants. It aligns with the Housing Ombudsman expectations and best practice and supports improved complaint resolution. The Policy will help the Council manage reputational, legal, and regulatory risks by demonstrating accountability and compliance.

Options

6. The alternative option would be to reject the Compensation Policy in its current form or consider amendments to the proposed amounts offered as compensation. However, without a policy, the Council would require continued reliance on ad hoc compensation decisions, potentially leading to inconsistency and reputational risk. The amounts offered are aligned to the compensation guidance issued by the Housing Ombudsman.

Implications

7. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

Financial and Fraud Impact

8. Potential financial impact from increased compensation payments, although these are expected to be modest and proportionate. In the long-term it may reduce costs by resolving complaints earlier and avoiding escalation.

Legal

9. The Compensation Policy supports compliance with Housing Ombudsman guidance and reduces the risk of legal challenge by providing a clear and documented process.

Risks / Opportunities

10. Without a clear framework, there is the risk that the Council may either under-compensate (leading to legal challenges) or over-compensate (resulting in unnecessary financial loss). A policy helps balance fairness with financial accountability.

Consultation responses

11. The draft policy has been reviewed by the Policy and Procedure Panel, comprising tenant representatives and officers. This has resulted in changes, mostly relating to points of clarification. Appendix B provides a summary of the feedback and how the policy has been changed. However, it should be noted that following consultation with the Policy and Procedure Panel, the Housing Ombudsman published additional guidance on compensation, and further revisions have been made to ensure full alignment with that guidance.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

Healthy and Supported Communities

12. This policy contributes to healthy and supported communities by recognising the impact of service failures on tenants' wellbeing, including physical and emotional distress.

Background Papers

[Housing Ombudsman Compensation Guidance](#)

Appendices

Appendix A: Compensation Policy

Appendix B: Policy Panel Feedback (Compensation Policy)

Report Author:

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Appendix A

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Compensation Policy relating to the Council's Housing Landlord Services

Version	Draft (v0.7)
Ownership	Head of Housing
Approved by	Cabinet
Policy Contact	Head of Housing
Approval date	24 March 2026
Publication date	1 April 2026
Date of next review	March 2031

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC)'s Housing Department aims to provide excellent customer service, but we recognise that mistakes can happen, and we may sometimes fall short of the standards we strive to deliver.
- 1.2 Where it is found that we have not met the level of service that was expected, SCDC will issue an apology to the person(s) affected and will aim to rectify the issue that the complaint was made about. Where appropriate, in some cases SCDC will offer additional compensation as part of the remedy.
- 1.3 Compensation may be financial or non-financial (for example replacement of items or a goodwill gesture). Where maladministration is found, goodwill gestures will not replace appropriate compensation.
- 1.4 This policy takes effect from 1 April 2026, following Cabinet approval and implementation of the Housing Ombudsman guidance. In most cases, we will not consider compensation claims under this policy relating to closed complaints where issues occurred before this date unless the problem is ongoing. However, where legislation permits us to review cases involving earlier issues, we will assess those claims accordingly.
- 1.5 Claims for compensation should be raised as soon as reasonably practicable. We will consider circumstances and vulnerabilities if a claim is late, in line with the Complaint Handling Code (2024).
- 1.6 SCDC adopts the Housing Ombudsman's 'single vision of fair compensation' demonstrating its key principles of fairness, putting things right and learning from outcomes. This policy aligns our awards of compensation with the Ombudsman's approach to avoid significant discrepancies.

2. Scope and Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that residents are not financially disadvantaged as a result of any failure by the Council or its appointed contractors in the management or maintenance of Council-managed homes.
- 2.2 This policy explains how we assess, calculate and award compensation so that redress is fair, reasoned and proportionate, restoring residents to the position they would have been in had the failing not occurred. Our approach aligns with the Housing Ombudsman's compensation guidance and Complaint Handling Code (2024).



2.3 This policy applies to:

- All tenants of council-managed housing.
- All landlord-related services provided by the local authority.
- Compensation arising from service failures, loss of amenities, or breaches of statutory obligations.

It does not apply to:

- Council-owned companies (example, Ermine Street Housing, Shire Homes Lettings).
- Non-landlord services (example, homelessness support, private sector adaptations).
- Other services provided by the Council.

2.4 Contractors must operate compensation arrangements aligned to this policy. Where liability is shared or unclear, SCDC may make interim payments to the resident and recover costs from the contractor later. Payments will not be duplicated.

3. Principles

3.1 The principles are as follows:

- **Fairness:** Compensation reflects actual loss, inconvenience, or distress.
- **Transparency:** Clear criteria and processes are communicated to tenants.
- **Proportionality:** Awards are based on the severity and duration of the impact.
- **Accountability:** Decisions are documented with written justifications.
- **Flexibility:** Each case is assessed on its individual merits, including any vulnerabilities disclosed or identified.
- **Alignment:** We aim to align awards with Ombudsman practice to avoid significant discrepancies.

4. Types of Compensation

4.1 The types of compensation are:

- **Mandatory Payments:** Required by law (example, Home Loss, Right to Repair). As these are mandatory, they are not included within this policy.
- **Quantifiable Loss Payments:** For actual financial losses with evidence (example, receipts).
- **Discretionary Payments:** For time and trouble, or distress, and inconvenience.



- **Goodwill Gestures:** Modest, non-obligatory offers (example, vouchers, flowers).
- **Specific compensation orders instructed by the Housing Ombudsman:**
Including percentage of rent awards where appropriate.

5. Compensation Categories and Calculation

5.1 No tenant should be financially disadvantaged because of a failure of the housing service or its contractors. Compensation will be assessed based on:

- Severity and duration of the issue
- Impact on the resident (including vulnerabilities)
- Evidence provided

SCDC will ensure that any vulnerabilities disclosed or identified, such as health conditions, disabilities, age-related needs, or other personal circumstances, are fully considered when assessing compensation. In line with the Housing Ombudsman's increasing emphasis on recognising the heightened impact vulnerabilities can have on residents, we will assess each case individually and may make higher awards where vulnerabilities have exacerbated the distress or inconvenience caused. This approach supports the Ombudsman's core aim that compensation should be fair, proportionate, and restore residents to the position they would have been in had the service failure not occurred.

Each case will be assessed individually, with examples below. More than one factor can be compensated (example, financial loss plus loss of service and distress / inconvenience).

In relation to repairs-related complaints, SCDC follows the defined repairs timescales as set out in the Repairs and Maintenance Policy. The examples outlined below may apply in cases where repairs have exceeded these target timescales and appropriate temporary measures to mitigate the issue were not in place (example, temporary heaters provided during a loss of heating).

5.2 Financial Loss (Quantifiable)

Compensation for quantifiable financial loss will be based on receipts, invoices, or reasonable estimates. Eligible costs may include:

- Alternative accommodation: example, hotel costs when a property is uninhabitable due to a major leak – if not arranged by the Council
- Increased utility costs: example, use of electric heaters during boiler failure.

- Damaged belongings: example, carpets ruined by a sewage backup, considered via insurance where appropriate.

Note: An insurance settlement for financial loss does not prevent additional compensation for distress, inconvenience or complaint-handling failures.

5.3 Loss of Service (Quantifiable)

The daily rate of compensation for quantifiable loss of service will be based on severity, and type of service lost, reflecting impact and duration.

Example: Heating or hot water loss = £8 – £15 per day

Factors considered:

- Duration and time of year
- Household vulnerability

Compensation will only be considered for the period that is greater than the target time for that repair, and where there are no issues with the Council or contractors accessing the property.

Additional payments may be made to cover financial loss and / or distress and inconvenience, where applicable.

5.4 Distress and Inconvenience (Discretionary)

Compensation levels are benchmarked against current Ombudsman Guidance, which may be subject to change:

- Minor impact: £50 – £100
- Moderate impact: £100 – £600
- Significant impact: £600 – £1,000
- Severe long-term impact – £1,000 +

Discretionary payments will account for all service failures, including when multiple compounding issues occur. Issues taken into consideration include:

- Recurring service failures – repeated instances of the same or similar issues
- Impact on health and wellbeing – physical or emotional distress caused by the issue
- Disruption to daily life – interference with normal routines or essential activities
- Prolonged duration of the issue – the length of time the problem persisted without resolution

There is no fixed cap on compensation. Awards reflect the circumstances and impact. Payment above £2,000 require approval by the Head of Housing.

5.5 Complaint Handling Failures (Discretionary)

Where we fail to follow the Complaint Handling Code (2024) or our own complaints procedure, additional compensation may be awarded for time and trouble, delay, or poor communication, in addition to any award for the underlying issue.

- Minor complaint handling failure: £50 – £150
- Moderate complaint handling failure: £150 – £400
- Significant / severe failure: £400 – £1,000+
- Specific compensation orders made by the Housing Ombudsman

5.6 Examples of Compensation Cases

Compensation will generally not be considered for planned works or repairs that are completed within agreed timescales. Disruption to personal working arrangements, such as loss of earnings for self-employed individuals or those unable to work from home during the period for planned works / repairs, will not be eligible for compensation in these circumstances.

Any compensation will be determined based on specific circumstances of each case.

The following examples are provided for illustrative purposes only.

Case 1: Missed Repairs and Heating Loss – A daily award in the region of £8 – £15 may be applied for the period beyond the target repair timescale, with additional discretionary compensation considered for any distress or inconvenience experienced. The level of any further award will take into account seasonal factors and the vulnerability of the household.

Case 2: Poor Complaint Handling – An additional payment may be made under the complaint-handling failures category from £50 upwards, where appropriate, depending on the nature of the complaint, the extent of the delay or error, and the impact this had on the tenant.

Case 3: Temporary Relocation – Compensation may include reimbursement of verified actual financial losses associated with temporary relocation, together with an additional discretionary award to recognise the disruption caused, where justified by the circumstances of the case.



Case 4: Loss of facilities – Compensation may include a daily award to reflect the loss of service, with an additional discretionary payment considered to recognise any distress or inconvenience arising from the loss of essential facilities, depending on the specific circumstances of the case.

Case 5: Exposure to damp and mould – Higher levels of compensation may be appropriate under a discretionary award where exposure to damp and mould has occurred over a prolonged period, particularly where this has had a greater impact due to the vulnerability of the household or the severity and duration of the issue.

5.7 Awards calculated as a percentage of net weekly rent

In exceptional cases, awards may be calculated as a percentage of net weekly rent for the period affected, where this better reflects the loss of use or overall impact on the household. Percentage-based awards may be more appropriate than daily rate calculations where the issue affects the fundamental habitability or enjoyment of the home, or where the scale or duration of the impact is not adequately captured by a fixed daily amount. This approach may be used alongside or instead of daily rate calculations, depending on the circumstances.

6. Remedies beyond Compensation

6.1 The Council may offer other remedies other than financial compensation. This may include:

- Practical actions (example, repairs, redecoration)
- Apologies and service improvements
- Goodwill gestures (example, flowers, vouchers) – used in addition to, not instead of, appropriate compensation where maladministration occurred

Examples:

- A £20 payment and apology letter for a delay in resolving a pest infestation.
- A repaint of a room affected by damp, in addition to financial compensation.

7. Process

Step 1 – Advised

Tenant informs SCDC, or we are made aware, of the issue.



Step 2 – Log Complaint

Record in housing complaints system and acknowledge within three working days of receipt.

Step 3 – Investigate

Review records, inspect property and gather evidence.

Step 4 – Assess Eligibility

Apply policy criteria and guidance.

Step 5 – Calculate Offer

Use standard rates and document rationale. Where appropriate make an early offer to resolve the complaint at Stage 1.

Step 6 – Approval and Communication

Manager approval required; tenant receives a clear written explanation. Stage 1 response within 10 working days and Stage 2 within 20 working days (with extensions only by exception), in line with the Complaint Handling Code (2024).

Step 7 – Monitor and Learn

Outcomes reviewed to improve services.

8. Authorisation of Compensation

- 8.1 Compensation claims will be considered by either the relevant Service Manager or Team Leader / Manager. These will usually be made as part of the complaints process (see point 12 below – how to make a complaint) or may be offered directly because of a failing identified by the Council. We will aim to make proportionate awards at the earliest stage to avoid escalation, in line with Ombudsman expectations.
- 8.2. If a resident is unhappy with the decision for compensation, they can ask for it to be reviewed by the Head of Housing. This request must be made within 20 working days of being told the outcome and will be considered as part of the Stage 2 complaints process. A final response will be given within 20 working days of the review being acknowledged.
- 8.3 To request a review, please follow the process outlined in 12.3. below.

9. Exclusions

9.1 Compensation will not be awarded for:

- Statutory payments already made.
- Tenant negligence (example, failure to report issues promptly or deliberate damage)
- Third-party issues outside council control (example, utility provider failures)
- Where financial loss is fully covered by insurance or legal action. However, we may still award compensation for distress, inconvenience, loss of use, or complaint handling failures.

10. Accessibility and Inclusion

10.1 SCDC is committed to engaging with tenants and residents in line with the [Equality Act 2010](#). Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure services are accessible to all. This may include:

- Contact preferences
- Offering home visits
- Use of advocates or interpreters
- Alternative communication formats, such as large print or translated materials
- Offering mutually convenient appointment times

11. About this Policy

11.1 This policy will be reviewed every five years. However, earlier reassessment may be required following tenant feedback, further guidance or where there are changes in operations and / or legislation.

11.2 Trends and lessons learnt, including lessons from Ombudsman decisions and maladministration reports, will be reported to the Housing Engagement Board and Cabinet.

11.3 This policy has been produced in consultation with tenant representatives. If a tenant is interested in getting involved in shaping the housing service, further information is available on the [website](#), or contact resident.involvement@scambs.gov.uk.





12. Complaints and Service Requests

- 12.1 This Policy is often applied alongside the formal complaints process. Compensation may be offered to help resolve a complaint at either Stage 1 or Stage 2.
- 12.2 If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome, any compensation offered by the Council does not prevent them from seeking further resolution through the Housing Ombudsman.
- 12.3 For more information about our complaints policy, please visit our [website](#) or telephone 01954 713 000 or email housing.complaints@scambs.gov.uk.

12.4 **Service Requests:**

A service request is a request from a tenant to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. A complaint is when a tenant expresses dissatisfaction in any form.

A tenant should report initial service requests, such as repairs or safety concerns through the designated channels:

Repairs – Online – via the Council’s website

By phone – via the Repairs Hotline: 0800 085 1313

Through the **M&Me** Mobile App

General Queries – Telephone – 01954 713 000 or

Email – duty.housing@scambs.gov.uk

The [Communications Charter for tenants and leaseholders](#) sets out detailed guidance on how to contact the Council and the service standards that can be expected in relation to communication and responsiveness.

13. Our Values

Ambitious

We are proactive and take a forward-thinking approach to addressing challenges.

We create smart solutions and reach our goals with determination and a clear vision.

Collaborative

We foster a culture of teamwork and open communication.

We work with and involve stakeholders, to improve how the organisation works and serves the public.



Compassionate

We prioritise empathy and understanding in decision-making and service delivery.

We consider the wellbeing of people and communities in everything we do and we replicate this when we talk to our colleagues because we know that when we support each other, we all do better.

Accountable

We take responsibility for our actions and decisions.

We own up to mistakes and make sure we fulfil our commitments.

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Ref.	Notes	Response Y / N / P / C	Place and Notes	Updated Reference
2.4	Can tenants request the contractors' compensation policy	Y	<p>This should not be necessary as the Council will act as the point of contact in terms of determining whose responsibility it is for payment of compensation through its Complaints Policy. It will be up to the Council to recoup any monies owed through payment of compensation where it is the fault of the contractor.</p> <p>Suggest rewording for further clarity.</p>	<p>2.4 reworded: Contractors must operate compensation arrangements aligned to this policy. Where liability is shared or unclear, SCDC may make interim payments to the resident and recover costs from the contractor later. Payments will not be duplicated.</p>
5.2	<p>In the 'Financial Loss (Quantifiable)' section:</p> <p>Bullet point 3 – <i>“Does this mean that the Landlord covers losses if tenant hasn't taken out household contents insurance? If fault a factor?”</i></p> <p>Bullet point 2 – <i>“I once had a contractor leave two electric fires to 'dry the paint' when I had a scheduled repair / upgrade done. Would this count?”</i></p>	Y	<p>Bullet point 3 – No, tenants are expected to take out household contents insurance as part of their tenancy.</p> <p>Wording strengthened to provide clarification.</p> <p>Main point of policy is to ensure that no tenant is out of pocket as a result of any failure by the Council. Additional paragraph provided at 2.1 for clarity.</p> <p>Bullet point 2 – If there was evidence provided that the tenant had been financially disadvantaged over something SCDC or its contractors had done and a complaint was submitted, then this would be considered under the policy. However, we cannot consider historical events for compensation. Clarification provided at Paragraph 1.4.</p>	<p>Additional wording added: 2.1: The purpose of this policy is to ensure that residents are not financially disadvantaged as a result of any failure by the Council or its appointed contractors in the management of Council-managed homes.</p> <p>Para 5.2 has been amended to state: Note: An insurance settlement for financial loss does not prevent additional compensation for distress, inconvenience or complaint-handling failures.</p> <p>Additional para added at 1.4 – This policy takes effect from 1 April 2026, following Cabinet approval and implementation of the Housing Ombudsman guidance. In most cases, we will not consider</p>

Ref.	Notes	Response Y / N / P / C	Place and Notes	Updated Reference
				compensation claims under this policy relating to closed complaints where issues occurred before this date unless the problem is ongoing. However, where legislation permits us to review cases involving earlier issues, we will assess those claims accordingly.
5.3	The current day rate for heating and hot water loss is insufficient at £3 – £5 per day. A hotel room and even running electric heaters exceeds this. A range of £10 – £50 / day would be a better reflection of the inconvenience with the higher end for winter months, households with children, elderly tenants or those with chronic / long term health issues.	Y	Policy amended to align with latest Ombudsman guidance of between £8 – £15 per day. Further clarification at 5.3 provided to explain that more than one category of payment can be made. The example of the cost of a hotel room would be paid for in full under 5.2 'Financial Loss (Quantifiable)'. 	5.3 wording added: 'Additional payments may be made to cover financial loss and / or distress and inconvenience, where applicable.'
5.3	Alter payment to £10 – £15 per day.	Y	Policy amended to align with latest Ombudsman guidance of between £8 – £15 per day. Further clarification at 5.3 provided to explain that more than one category of payment can be made.	5.3 updated to £8 – £15 per day. Additional wording: Additional payments may be made to cover financial loss and / or distress and inconvenience, where applicable.
5.4	According to the Ombudsman's Guidance remedies these figures are slightly off. Minor impact: £50 – £100; Moderate impact: £100 – £600; Significant impact: £600 – £1,000; Severe impact (missing) £1,000+	Y	Policy amended to reflect Ombudsman Guidance. Wording amended – financial information may change if guidance changes	5.4 amended figures and wording amended to state 'Compensation levels are benchmarked against current Ombudsman Guidance, which may be subject to change'.

Ref.	Notes	Response Y / N / P / C	Place and Notes	Updated Reference
	<p>These numbers better reflect the actual inconvenience and cost to the tenant and creates a stronger financial incentive for the council to fix the issues quickly.</p>			
5.4	<p>What about compensation for loss of earnings for people that are self-employed due to disruptions to their working schedule?</p> <p>What about people that develop chronic long-term illnesses due to poor handling of mould and damp issues? Do they receive any financial support from the council to manage their health issues?</p>	Y	<p>Clarification provided around disruptions to working schedules.</p> <p>Chronic long-term illnesses would not be considered as part of the compensation policy and would fall under Exclusions – Claims resolved through insurance or legal action.</p>	<p>5.6 – text added: Compensation will generally not be considered for planned works or repairs that are completed within agreed timescales. Disruption to personal working arrangements, such as loss of earnings for self-employed individuals or those unable to work from home, will not be eligible for compensation in these circumstances.</p>
6.1	<p>I had a similar issue when the Dwelling Doctors installed the wrong vents which left a big hole in my roof which caused a rat infestation in my loft, and I was told that any pest infestations are the tenants responsibility. Is that not the case? So, my question is who decides what is compensation worthy and what is not?</p>	Y	<p>This will be considered as part of the complaints process. Further clarification provided in policy as to who is responsible for making decisions and how an appeal can be made.</p>	<p>Additional section provided at point 8 under Authorisation of Compensation.</p>
7.	<p>Tenants should be given a clear timeframe for this process at Step 2 when the complaint is logged and informed both when the investigation begins as well as on Step 6. If the tenant does not agree with the</p>	Y	<p>Align with the stage 2 complaints process.</p>	<p>Point 7 and 8.2 – wording amended to include timescales.</p>

Ref.	Notes	Response Y / N / P / C	Place and Notes	Updated Reference
	resolution and the compensation, what are the steps they can take to appeal that decision?			
10.1	<p>“SCDC is committed to engaging...” “SCDC will engage”?</p> <p><i>“Adjusting appointment times or locations to accommodate mobility or health needs”</i></p> <p>Include work commitments?</p>	Y	Agreed to change wording to: Offering mutually convenient appointment times.	Point 10 amended.

3.2 Repairs and Maintenance Policy

The following documents are enclosed:

- Report to the HEB – Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- Appendix A – Draft Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- Appendix B – Policy Panel Feedback (Repairs and Maintenance Policy)

Eddie Spicer to report.

Report to:	Housing Engagement Board 26 March 2026
Lead Cabinet Member:	Councillor John Batchelor – Lead Member for Housing
Lead Officer:	Peter Campbell – Head of Housing

Repairs and Maintenance Policy

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that the Housing Engagement Board endorses the Repairs and Maintenance Policy, as set out in Appendix A, following Cabinet approval on 24 March 2026, and that the Lead Member for Housing, under delegated authority, approve any minor amendments arising from the Board's consideration.

Details

2. The Repairs and Maintenance Policy forms part of a suite of housing policies that demonstrate compliance with the Council's legal, regulatory, and safety obligations as a landlord. Whilst the policy is new, it does not change existing procedures which have been in operation for some time and reflects the contractual arrangements in place.
3. The policy sets out our statutory responsibilities, service standards, performance expectations, and approach to delivering repairs and maintenance to its housing stock. It explains what tenants can expect from the service, what repairs the Council is responsible for, and the responsibilities placed on tenants.
4. The policy has been developed to ensure compliance with the Social Housing (Regulation) Act, the revised Consumer Standards, the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) requirements, and forthcoming changes associated with Awaab's Law¹. The policy strengthens the Council's approach to health and safety,

¹ [Social Housing Regulation Act](#) – strengthening the regulation of social housing by enhancing the powers of the Regulator of Social Housing and improving standards, safety, transparency and accountability among social landlords.

[Consumer Standards](#) – setting out the expectations social housing landlords must meet from April 2024 to ensure safe, good quality homes, transparent services and strong accountability to tenants

[Housing, Health & Safety Rating System](#) – A risk based tool used to identify and address potential health and safety hazards in residential properties

[Awaab's Law](#) – A legal requirement for social landlords to investigate and fix serious hazards, especially damp, mould and emergency risks, within strict timeframes to prevent situations like the tragic death of Awaab Ishak.

responsive repairs, planned maintenance, tenant responsibilities, and safeguarding; supporting a consistent and transparent approach to repairs delivery.

5. To provide context for the Repairs & Maintenance Policy, a total of 15,330 responsive routine repairs and 6,635 emergency repairs were completed in 2024 / 2025. Performance remained strong, with 94.7% of responsive repairs completed within target timescales and 100% of emergency and urgent repairs delivered on time.

Reasons for Recommendations

6. It is a requirement that the Council has robust policies in place demonstrating how we comply with the legal, regulatory and safety obligations as a landlord. This policy will form part of a suite of policies that set out the Council's approach to the health and safety of our tenants.

Options

7. The alternative option would be to reject the Repairs and Maintenance Policy in its presented form. However, without approved policies the Council would not be able to demonstrate that it is meeting the requirements of the new Consumer Standards.

Implications

8. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

Financial and Fraud Impact

9. None.

Legal

10. Having comprehensive policies in place as to the Council's approach to health and safety for our tenants demonstrates how we are meeting our legal obligations as a landlord.

Staffing

11. As part of the implementation of the Consumer Standards there are additional burdens placed on the Council in terms of extra staffing resources to ensure full compliance, with robust documentation and monitoring. Additional resource has been identified to support this work within existing budgets.

Risks / Opportunities

12. Non-compliance of housing stock in terms of health and safety following the introduction of the Social Housing Regulations 2023 and subsequent standards is monitored as a risk on the risk register.

Health and Wellbeing

13. The policy aims to support the health and safety of those living in our council properties.

Consultation Responses

14. The draft policy has been reviewed by the Policy and Procedure Panel, comprising tenant representatives and officers. This has resulted in changes, mostly relating to points of clarification. Appendix B provides a summary of the feedback and how the policy has been changed.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

Healthy and Supported Communities

15. The policy aims to support the health and safety of those living in our council properties.

Sustainable Homes and Vibrant Places

16. The policy aims to ensure that our council homes are safe and sustainable into the future.

Background Papers

Feedback from the Policy and Procedure Panel as part of the consultation process.

Appendices

Appendix A: Repairs and Maintenance Policy

Appendix B: Policy Panel Feedback (Repairs Policy)

Report Author:

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Appendix A

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Repairs and Maintenance Policy (Housing)

Version	Draft (v0.3)
Ownership	Head of Housing
Approved by	Cabinet
Policy Contact	Service Manager – Housing Assets
Approval date	24 March 2026
Publication date	31 March 2026
Date of next review	March 2031

DRAFT



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1. Introduction

1.1 This document outlines the main aspects of the Housing Repairs policy for South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC), providing definitions, explanations, and signposts to other relevant maintenance policies affecting the repair service.

1.2 Types of repairs

- Emergency / Urgent repairs: These are repairs carried out when there's a serious risk to people or the building.
- Responsive repairs: These are everyday fixes needed to keep tenants safe and the building in good shape.
- Cyclical repairs: These happen regularly, like yearly gas safety checks.
- Programmed repairs: These are for bigger or less urgent problems that are scheduled in advance.
- Planned repairs: Planned repairs will address defects as part of a package of work, rather than individually.

2. Scope and Standards

2.1 SCDC aims to provide a responsive repairs service that:

- Meets agreed standards of customer service
- Is tailored to tenant needs
- Is reliable and value for money
- Considers the environmental impact of the service

2.2 To achieve this, SCDC will:

- Carry out repairs in one visit (if possible) within agreed appointment slots
- Agree appointments to inspect and carry out work where necessary
- Maintain regular communication with residents throughout the repair process
- Set high standards for the quality of work for staff and contractors
- Consult with residents and mitigate the impact of repair issues
- Set, publish, and regularly monitor key performance targets
- Manage the budget effectively
- Mitigate the stress and impact of repairs on tenants

2.3 This policy applies to all residential and communal buildings and garages owned by and managed by SCDC. This does not include leasehold, equity share or shared ownership



properties (except for external repairs and maintenance or unless stated otherwise within the lease agreement).

2.4 Properties managed by Ermine Street Housing or Shire Homes Lettings are excluded from this policy, as they have their own policies.

3. Fair and Equitable Services Commitment

3.1 SCDC is committed to delivering equitable services to residents, adapting services to meet specific needs of residents and their households. Constraints related to available resources, such as financial resources and availability of alternative or temporary accommodation, will be considered.

4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

4.1 SCDC's Repairs and Maintenance Policy is based on legal obligations as a landlord and the Tenancy Conditions. The main legislation relating to this policy include (but are not limited to):

- [Landlord and Tenant Act 1985](#)
- [Environmental Protection Act 1990](#)
- [Disability Discrimination Act 1995](#)
- [Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993](#)
- [Housing Health and Safety Rating System \(HHSRS\) \(Section 9 of the Housing Act 2004\)](#)
- [The Hazards in Social Housing \(Prescribed Requirements\) \(England\) Regulations 2025 \(Awaab's Law\)](#)
- [Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities \(Right-to-Repair\) Regulations 1994](#)
- [Housing Regulator Consumer Standards](#)
- [Housing Ombudsman Complaints Procedures](#)
- Compliance and safety regulations, as currently in force.



5. SCDC's Repair Responsibilities

5.1 South Cambridgeshire District Council is responsible for keeping the structure and outside of the property in good repair, including:

- External walls, doors, window frames, handles, and sills
- Drains, gutters, external pipes
- Paths and steps to individual properties where health and safety concerns exist under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- Roof and chimney (excluding sweeping unless there is a council-owned solid fuel appliance)
- External decoration
- Installations / maintenance for water, gas, electricity, and sanitation
- Installations / maintenance for space heating and water heating fitted by the Council
- Internal wall plaster and timber fixtures
- Stairs and balustrades
- Floor to wet areas (bathrooms only)
- Loft access hatches and insulation
- Mechanical extraction equipment
- Ceramic tiling, kitchen worktops, sanitary fittings
- Lifts, rubbish chutes, shared lighting serving the building or estate
- Fences and gates adjacent to public boundaries
- Boundary walls, fences, and gates confirmed as the council's responsibility, to meet HHSRS requirements

5.2 Additional information on standard fittings, relets, fencing responsibilities and internal wall repairs can be found in Appendix A – Guide to Repair Specifics.

5.3 While every effort will be made to align styles and colours where feasible when undertaking a repair, an exact match may not always be possible. All repairs will be completed professionally and to a reasonable standard, taking into account the age and condition of the building's components.

5.4 SCDC is responsible for the repair and maintenance of external elements of housing blocks and estates, including communal equipment and shared areas. Where repairs may impact leaseholders / neighbouring properties, the Council has a duty to consult with them in advance or act within [Section 20](#) guidance – except in cases where urgent action is required due to an emergency.



6. Tenants' Duties and Responsibilities

6.1 Tenants are responsible for repairs defined by the [Housing Act 1988](#) and the Council's Tenancy Conditions, including:

- Internal doors, door catches, glazing, fittings and fixtures
- Internal decorations
- Plumbing connections to the tenant's own appliances (such as washing machines and dishwashers). SCDC remain responsible for the fixed plumbing within the property.
- Blockages within internal waste pipes
- Doors and drawers to kitchen units
- Letter boxes
- Repairs to items damaged by the tenant or their visitors
- Replacing light bulbs (except maintenance-free LED fixtures) installed by SCDC.
- Lock changes
- Replacing batteries in smoke alarms (SCDC will upgrade to mains-powered alarms on request)
- Maintenance of gardens, grounds, driveways and paths within the property boundary
- Repairs to their own equipment and installations, including:
 - TV aerials and satellite dishes
 - Timber sheds
 - Any tenant-installed alterations or improvements

6.2 Tenants are required to report any defects promptly and take reasonable steps to minimise or prevent any resulting damage or loss. This obligation includes concerns related to damp and mould.

7. Repairs

7.1 Reporting Repairs

The Council provide multiple channels for reporting repairs, including the 24-hour Repairs Helpline, 'M&Me' app, online, and through council staff or representatives. Tenants are expected to grant access to their homes for necessary works, inspections, or surveys. Where damage is found to be caused by tenants, their household members, or visitors, the Council reserves the right to recover the cost of repairs.

7.2 Repairs Priorities and Response Targets

Repair priorities comply with Right to Repair regulations and are used to decide how urgent a repair is and how long it can take to fix. Categories include emergency, urgent, routine, planned, and adaptations.

- Emergencies – 4 Hours
- Urgent – 24 hours
- Routine – 20 working days
- Routine Planned – 30 Days (this is where a routine repair is escalated to a planned works activity, for example a roof repair becomes a re-roof)
- Adaptations – dependent on works (see Section 12 of the [Disabled Adaptations Policy](#))

As stated above, SCDC will aim to attend emergency repairs within 4 hours of the repair being reported. The purpose of the initial visit is to make safe.

Where the full repair cannot be completed during the emergency visit, any follow-up works required to complete the repair will be categorised as urgent and carried out within 24 hours.

The following repairs are considered emergencies:

- a total loss of electric power or water supply, unless it is the responsibility of the utility company
- an uncontrollable water leak
- total loss of heating during the winter months
- a blocked, leaking or non-flushing toilet (when there is only one in the property)
- a water mains leak
- insecure ground floor windows, doors or locks
- An immediate hazard with potential to cause harm

7.3 Appointments

Routine repair appointments will be scheduled at the time of request, with a range of time slots available. The repairs helpline operates 24 / 7; however, appointments can only be booked during standard office hours (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm). Appointments are generally available during these hours, with evening and Saturday morning slots offered by prior arrangement. For more complex repairs requiring access over multiple days, a detailed programme of work will be provided, including estimated timescales and a work schedule.



7.4 M&Me app (January 2026) Live operative Tracking and Communication

On the day of the scheduled appointment, tenants will receive a text message displaying the operative's location and estimated arrival time via a live map. Tenants can use the provided link to communicate directly with the operative, share additional information, and offer feedback.

7.5 Online Repairs

Tenants can report most repair issues online, book appointments, and monitor the progress of their request without needing to contact the repairs helpline. For planned maintenance or specialist repairs and Damp and Mould / Hazards, these must be arranged through other channels, as they are not available via the online system.

7.6 Making Good

After completing a repair, SCDC will prepare surfaces around the repair area for tenants to redecorate. Extensive damage will be prepared for redecoration and repainted.

7.7 Providing a Safe, Inclusive and Responsive Service

In certain circumstances, the Council can tailor its service to accommodate individual needs, such as requests for enhanced privacy, added security, or same-sex operatives. While we cannot always guarantee these arrangements, we will make every effort to meet them. Tenants are encouraged to share any special requirements confidentially so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Residents affected by anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, or harassment should contact their local Housing Services Officer (HSO) for advice and support. SCDC will complete repairs needed as a result of criminal damage at no cost to the tenant. Criminal damage must be reported to police and a crime number obtained.

7.8 Rechargeable Repairs

Rechargeable repairs are those the landlord is obliged to carry out for health and safety or welfare reasons following damage caused by tenants. The Council charges for repairs needed due to tenant negligence, forced entry, unauthorised DIY, or any other circumstances the Council determines to be the tenant's responsibility.



8. Security

- 8.1 SCDC is committed to maintaining the security of homes at all times. All windows and external doors must be lockable to prevent access from outside, though this may not always require a key. Where new frames or doors are being manufactured, temporary security measures may be put in place. If glazing is found to be insecure, it may be boarded over to ensure safety until permanent repairs are completed.

9. Gas Appliance Safety Checks

- 9.1 SCDC must ensure all gas appliances and flues are maintained in a safe condition by carrying out annual Landlord Gas Safety Checks. Tenants must give access to gas engineers for these checks, and failure to do so will result in court action.

10. Electrical Safety Checks

- 10.1 SCDC will undertake an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) at least every five years, or more frequently where risk assessments indicate greater need. A full electrical test is also undertaken at each change of tenancy and tenants will be provided with copies of all relevant certification. Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) will be undertaken alongside the EICR for all landlord-supplied electrical equipment where a White Goods service charge applies, with unsafe equipment removed from use and repaired or replaced promptly.

11. Planned Programmes of Work

- 11.1 Cyclical and planned maintenance programmes aim to reduce reliance on reactive repairs and manage long-term costs effectively. General information about upcoming works is available on the Council's website. Property-specific details can be provided upon request as a guide; however, no work is guaranteed until a formal survey confirms the need.

12. Guarantees and Warranties

- 12.1 Contractors provide guarantees and warranties for certain types of work, such as new roof coverings, windows, or fire doors. If issues arise within that period, SCDC will request that the contractor resolves them under these guarantees or warranties.

13. Handyperson Service

- 13.1 SCDC offers a Handyperson service designed to support older or disabled residents with minor home repairs and improvements. This service is chargeable.



14. Adaptations to Properties

- 14.1 SCDC is responsible for maintaining and servicing any adaptations it has installed and will replace them when necessary. Tenants who need adaptations are advised to get in touch with their Housing Services Officer (HSO).

15. Insurance

- 15.1 Tenants are responsible for insuring their personal belongings and covering any loss or damage to their home caused by theft, flooding, fire, or accidental incidents. SCDC strongly recommends taking out tenants content insurance.

16. Fire Safety

- 16.1 SCDC ensures that common parts of blocks of flats or converted houses have up-to-date Fire Risk Assessments. Front doors must resist smoke and fire travel, and self-closing devices must be maintained. Security gates or grills must not be installed, as these can obstruct escape routes.

- 16.2 SCDC will carry out annual inspections and servicing of all fire doors within flat blocks, including individual flat entry doors. Tenants and leaseholders are required to provide access for these checks.

- 16.3 The block will have published Fire Risk Assessments and fire safety strategies in place. It is essential that all residents familiarise themselves with these documents and be prepared to follow the guidance in the event of a fire.

17. Asbestos

- 17.1 Asbestos-containing materials must not be tampered with or touched. Tenants should report any damaged asbestos immediately to the repairs team.

- 17.2 Current Asbestos assessments will be provided to the property when completed.

18. Health and Safety Hazards covered by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

- 18.1 The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is a risk-based tool used by local authorities to identify, assess and address potential hazards in residential properties that may pose a risk to the health and safety of occupants or visitors. The system assesses 29 categories of housing hazards, including issues such as damp and mould, excess cold, fire risks, poor sanitation, electrical hazards and structural risks. Its purpose is to ensure homes provide a safe and healthy living environment. Awaab's Law



introduced in 2025 further strengthens the HHSRS by prescribing specific timeframes for remediation.

- 18.2 SCDC operates a zero-tolerance approach to all significant health and safety hazards covered by the HHSRS. This includes, but is not limited to, damp, mould, excess cold and any other hazard that may pose a risk to tenants' health or wellbeing.
- 18.3 Any report of a potential hazard will be treated as a priority and investigated promptly by an appropriately qualified officer. Where issues are identified, SCDC will ensure timely and effective remedial action is taken, and tenants will be supported with clear advice and guidance to help prevent issues from recurring.

19. Drains and Waste

- 19.1 Residents are responsible for disposing of waste correctly to help prevent blockages. While the Council maintains drainage stacks and underground drainage systems, any blockages within internal waste pipes fall under the responsibility of the tenant. If a blockage is found to be caused by neglect or misuse, a recharge may be applied to cover the cost of repairs.

20. Pest Control

- 20.1 Tenants are primarily responsible for preventing and managing pest infestations within their home, including maintaining good hygiene, securely storing food, and arranging and paying for pest control treatments where issues arise through normal household circumstances.
- 20.2 The Council will provide assistance where an infestation is linked to a structural defect, disrepair, or failure of the building fabric for which the Council is responsible. The Council may also intervene where pests affect communal areas, pose a significant public health risk, or have the potential to spread to neighbouring properties. Where there is reasonable belief that an infestation has arisen from causes other than normal household circumstances, the Council will consider what action is required

21. Improvements

21.1 Tenant improvements

Tenants have a legal right to make improvements or alterations to their home, provided they obtain written permission from their Housing Services Officer (HSO). All gas and electrical work must be completed by registered contractors, and asbestos testing may be required depending on the nature of the work.



Permission requests must follow the formal tenant alterations procedure and be approved before any work begins. Once completed, the work must be signed off by SCDC. Structural changes are unlikely to be permitted, and any proposals that raise concerns under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) will be refused.

21.2 Inherited Improvements

Inherited improvements refer to alterations made by previous tenants, that the current tenant has signed to accept responsibility for. This means the current tenant is responsible for any repairs, ongoing maintenance, or replacement of these features – unless they fall within SCDC's standard planned replacement schedule.

22. Safeguarding

22.1 Staff have a duty to report any safeguarding concerns involving children or adults who may be at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. In urgent cases, concerns must be reported directly to the police. For non-urgent matters, staff should refer the issue to the Housing Services team or the designated Safeguarding Officer for appropriate review and action.

23. Legal Disrepair

23.1 Tenants have the legal right to expect their homes to be properly maintained, and landlords are responsible for ensuring necessary repairs are carried out. If significant repair issues are not resolved within a reasonable timeframe, tenants may submit a disrepair claim against the Council. Should tenants be dissatisfied with the initial response from council officers regarding the standard repairs service, they are encouraged to follow the formal complaints process for further review.

24. Accessibility and Inclusion

24.1 SCDC is committed to engaging with tenants and residents in line with the [Equality Act 2010](#). Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure services are accessible to all.

This may include:

- Contact preferences
- Offering home visits
- Use of advocates or interpreters
- Alternative communication formats, such as large print or translated materials
- Adjusting appointment times
- Adjusting locations to accommodate mobility or health needs

25. About this Policy

25.1 This policy will be reviewed every five years. However, earlier reassessment may be required following tenant feedback, further guidance or where there are changes in operations and / or legislation.

25.2 This policy has been produced in consultation with tenant representatives. If a tenant is interested in getting involved in shaping the housing service, further information is available on the [website](#), or contact resident.involvement@scambs.gov.uk.



26. Service Requests and Complaints Process

26.1 A tenant should report initial service requests, such as repairs or safety concerns, through the designated channels:

Repairs – Online – via the Council's [website](#).

By phone – via the Repairs Hotline: 0800 085 1313

Through the **M&Me** Mobile App

General Queries – Telephone – 01954 713 000

E-mail – duty.housing@scambs.gov.uk

The [Communications Charter for tenants and leaseholders](#) sets out detailed guidance on how to contact the Council and the service standards that can be expected in relation to communication and responsiveness.

26.2 SCDC aims to provide excellent customer service but recognise that mistakes can happen. If a tenant is dissatisfied with the service received following a service request, they can make a complaint in accordance with the Council's Complaints Policy. To make a complaint, visit our [website](#) or telephone 01954 713 000 or email housing.complaints@scambs.gov.uk.

27. Our Values

Ambitious

We are proactive and take a forward-thinking approach to addressing challenges.

We create smart solutions and reach our goals with determination and a clear vision.

Collaborative

We foster a culture of teamwork and open communication.



We work with and involve stakeholders, to improve how the organisation works and serves the public.

Compassionate

We prioritise empathy and understanding in decision-making and service delivery.

We consider the wellbeing of people and communities in everything we do and we replicate this when we talk to our colleagues because we know that when we support each other, we all do better.

Accountable

We take responsibility for our actions and decisions.

We own up to mistakes and make sure we fulfil our commitments.

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Appendix A – Guide to Repair Specifics

1. Standard Fittings

- 1.1 We provide a standard selection of fixtures and fittings designed to be accessible and practical. These include items such as lever taps, thermostatically controlled showers, baths, basins, sinks, and kitchen units. Bespoke or non-standard items requested by tenants will not be installed by the council and will be considered tenant alterations, meaning tenants are responsible for their installation and ongoing maintenance (the permission process for tenant alterations would need to be adhered to).
- 1.2 SCDC regularly reviews the products used to ensure they offer good value, sustainability, and reliability. Tenant feedback is always welcomed and considered, but we are unable to guarantee changes to the standard range.
- 1.3 In bathrooms and kitchens, wall boards are prioritised over ceramic tiles.

2. Newly Relet Properties

- 2.1 All properties made available for relet will meet the minimum requirements outlined in our relet standard. Full decoration and floor coverings are not guaranteed (except in kitchens and bathrooms), however decoration vouchers may be offered to new tenants where appropriate. Each property will be handed over in a safe and secure condition, with heating, hot water, and all essential services connected.

3. Fencing

- 3.1 Where a property boundary adjoins a public area, such as a footpath, car park, or open space, a 6ft wooden close-boarded fence will be installed to provide privacy and security. Access through the fenced area may or may not be available, but this cannot be guaranteed.
- 3.2 In most cases, boundary fencing for front gardens is not required and therefore not provided.
- 3.3 For boundary fencing between properties, SCDC will install a chain-link fence along the boundary line where it holds responsibility. If the neighbouring property is responsible for the boundary, SCDC will request that the resident ensures the fencing is secure.
- 3.4 Tenants are responsible for ensuring their gardens are adequately secured to prevent pets from escaping or causing a nuisance. For further guidance, please refer to our Pets Policy. Tenants are responsible for installing and maintaining any additional fencing required to accommodate pets or ensure the safety of children.



3.5 If a property's boundary brick wall becomes unsafe, it will be replaced with a fence, unless planning regulations or listing requirements prevent this.

4. Internal Walls

4.1 Tenants are responsible for keeping internal walls in good condition and avoiding damage. If issues arise due to age-related wear or property faults, the Council will carry out necessary repairs and repaint any newly plastered areas.

4.2 Minor repairs will be prepared for painting with a mist coat of emulsion. If there is a discrepancy in colour matching, the council may choose to repaint only the affected wall.

4.3 Where feasible, wall and ceiling repairs will be matched to the existing finishes. However, an exact match cannot be guaranteed in every instance.

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Ref.	Notes	Response Y / N / P / C	Place and Notes	Updated Reference
1.2	“Emergency / Urgent repairs: These are repairs done when...” Suggest changing done to carried out	Y	Wording changed to ‘repairs carried out’ Note: timescales are set out at point 7.2.	1.2
2.3	“This policy applies to all residential and communal buildings and garages owned by and managed by” Suggest adding the word by.	Y	Wording amended	2.3
5.1	Boundary walls, fences, and gates confirmed as the council’s responsibility policy. 5.1 last Paragraph. Suggested change to say ‘Boundary walls, fences, and gates confirmed as the council’s responsibility as detailed in the Tenancy Agreement ’.	C / Y	Discussed during the policy panel meeting, Service Manager – Housing Assets suggested to amend “...to meet HHSRS requirements rather than as detailed in the Tenancy Agreement”. Wording updated.	5.1
5.3	“All repairs will be completed professionally and to a reasonable standard” Surely if a professional repair it would be to a good standard?	C	During the Policy Panel meeting, the Service Manager – Housing Assets advised that the term ‘reasonable standard’ is an established and widely recognised industry term and therefore should remain unchanged within the policy to ensure consistency with regulatory expectations.	N / A
5.4	“within Section 20 guidance” Include a link to Section 20 guidance	Y	Link added to Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985.	5.4
7.8	Rechargeable repairs – Is an estimate / Quote of repair costs given to the tenant prior to work being carried out? My reason for asking being that the tenant may not be financially able to pay or may wish to Get a second estimate / Quote	C	SCDC has a statutory responsibility to ensure that repairs are undertaken where health, safety or welfare concerns are identified. Accordingly, the completion of such works is mandatory and cannot be treated as optional.	N / A

Ref.	Notes	Response Y / N / P / C	Place and Notes	Updated Reference
10.1	Suggest it should say ‘those without access to the council website could find the information on the notice board in the communal hall’ as to make them inclusive	C	Discussed during the policy panel meeting, Service Manager – Housing Assets confirmed that programmes are property-specific, so notice boards unfortunately wouldn’t be suitable. However, information is available upon request and on the website. Commitment re-iterated to ensure accessibility for all tenants.	N / A
14.1	“SCDC strongly recommends taking out home insurance” Is this building and contents insurance or contents only insurance?	Y	Discussed during the policy panel meeting, Service Manager – Housing Assets confirmed that this should be re-worded to say ‘tenants content insurance’.	15.1
15.1	“SCDC ensures that common parts of blocks of flats or converted houses ” Please define Converted houses and should this not say converted properties	C	The term “converted houses” is correct, as this will typically refer to a property configured in a manner similar to an HMO. However, the term “HMO” cannot be used, as it specifically relates to licenced Houses in Multiple Occupation, whereas these properties may not be required to be licensed but still let on a room-by-room basis.	N / A
16.1	Asbestos-containing materials must not be tampered with or touched. Tenants should report any damaged asbestos immediately to the repairs team. Are tenants made aware of any asbestos that is in their property? If not, how can they Comply with the above request?	C	Not all properties currently hold a complete asbestos map. This will be addressed through the re-inspection programme commencing in April 2026. Until updated survey data is available, actions can only be taken based on known asbestos-containing materials (ACMs). Identified ACMs are generally labelled, subject to the age of the property.	N / A
22.1	“If significant repair issues are not resolved within a reasonable timeframe” Please define reasonable.	C	This is specific to significant repairs which can vary greatly in timeframe, the phrase reasonable timeframe is a legal term within the disrepair requirements and therefore cannot be further defined. The wording should remain unchanged.	N / A

3.3 Housing Safety Policies: Fire Risk Management Strategy, Lifts and Lifting Equipment Safety Policy and Asbestos Management Policy

The following documents are enclosed:

- Report to the HEB – Housing Safety Policies
- Appendix A – Draft Fire Risk Management Strategy
- Appendix B – Policy Panel Feedback (Fire Risk Management Strategy)
- Appendix C – Draft Lifts and Lifting Equipment Safety Policy
- Appendix D – Policy Panel Feedback (Lifts and Lifting Equipment Safety Policy)
- Appendix E – Draft Asbestos Management Policy
- Appendix F – Policy Panel Feedback (Asbestos Management Policy)

Eddie Spicer to report.

Report to:	Housing Engagement Board 26 March 2026
Lead Cabinet Member:	Councillor John Batchelor – Lead Member for Housing
Lead Officer:	Peter Campbell – Head of Housing

Housing Safety Policies: Fire Risk Management, Lifts and Lifting Equipment Safety and Asbestos Management

Executive Summary

1. The Council has reviewed its housing safety policies to ensure full compliance with the strengthened Consumer Standards introduced by the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023. The updated policies set out clear, robust approaches to managing fire safety, lift and lifting equipment safety, and asbestos within Council-owned buildings. They establish proportionate and legally compliant frameworks for risk assessment, inspection, maintenance and tenant safety, supported by clear organisational responsibilities and strengthened monitoring arrangements.
2. To reinforce governance and provide assurance that statutory responsibilities are met, the Council is introducing a new Housing Stock Group and a revised reporting framework from April 2026. This will include enhanced KPI reporting to Cabinet and the Housing Engagement Board, as well as an Annual Compliance Report summarising performance. Adoption of these policies will ensure the Council continues to maintain high standards of health and safety, respond effectively to regulatory changes, and prioritise the wellbeing of tenants across its housing stock.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that the Housing Engagement Board endorses the housing safety policies relating to Fire Risk Management, Lifts and Lifting Equipment Safety and Asbestos Management as set out in Appendices A, B, and C, following Cabinet approval on 24 March 2026, and that the Lead Member for Housing, under delegated authority, approve any minor amendments arising from the Board's consideration.

Details

4. The Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 introduces strengthened Consumer Standards that place a statutory duty on social housing providers to ensure tenant safety and wellbeing. Key health and safety-related provisions include:
 - Safety and Quality Standard: Providers must ensure homes are safe, decent, and legally compliant with health and safety regulations.
 - Health and Safety Lead: Each provider must appoint a designated lead responsible for monitoring compliance, assessing risks, and advising on remedial actions.
 - Timely Risk Management: Providers are required to act promptly on health and safety assessments and mitigate risks within appropriate timescales.
 - Awaab's Law: Introduced to enforce timely investigation and resolution of serious hazards.
5. The Regulator of Social Housing now has enhanced powers to inspect, enforce compliance, and impose penalties where standards are not met. These changes aim to improve tenant outcomes and restore confidence in the sector's ability to provide safe, secure housing.
6. The Council is therefore in the process of reviewing all of its processes and policies to ensure that we are fully compliant with the Consumer Standards in relation to health and safety of our tenants and that we are meeting our obligations as a landlord.
7. The Council has historically maintained a strong position on health and safety. The policies appended to this report build on this solid foundation by setting out a comprehensive framework for our approach to tenant safety. The policies align with the technical standards mandated by law. As part of the review process, we have enhanced our monitoring systems and introduced greater scrutiny of the landlord service performance.

Fire Risk Management Strategy (FRMS)

8. The Fire Risk Management Strategy (FRMS) establishes a clear, proportionate and robust framework for identifying, assessing and controlling fire risks across all multi-occupied housing with common areas, including sheltered housing communal rooms. It outlines the Council's approach to maintaining high standards of fire safety through competent Fire Risk Assessments, prioritised action planning, and routine inspection and maintenance of all fire safety systems.

9. Whilst the FRMS refers to high rise buildings of 11 metres or more which have additional fire safety requirements, the Council currently does not have any high-rise buildings within its stock. However, these provisions have been included within the Strategy to ensure it remains fit for purpose if this was to change in the future.
10. The Council currently operates a “*stay put*” evacuation strategy in all residential blocks of flats. This approach is based on the buildings being designed with effective fire-resisting compartmentation, meaning the construction is intended to prevent fire and smoke from spreading rapidly beyond the flat or area where the incident begins. Effective compartmentation keeps the fire contained long enough to protect residents and allow for a managed evacuation if required.
11. Full compartmentation surveys have been completed across all flat blocks, with all remedial works carried out where required. The stay-put policy remains in place for all properties where compartmentation meets the necessary standards and is considered appropriate.
12. In contrast, all sheltered housing communal rooms operate under a “full” evacuation strategy.
13. At the time of writing, the Council is fully compliant, with all required Fire Risk Assessments completed and up to date. There are currently 13 outstanding actions, all assessed as tolerable and not overdue. These actions remain open pending the receipt of certification or notices from the assessor.

Lifts and Lifting Equipment Safety Policy

14. The Lifts and Lifting Equipment Safety Policy sets out how the Council ensures that all landlord-owned lifting equipment, such as communal lifts, stairlifts, hoists and through-floor lifts, is safely installed, maintained and compliant with health and safety legislation.
15. The policy defines responsibilities across the organisation, sets standards for inspection, servicing and emergency response, and outlines expectations for residents. It includes arrangements for risk assessment, record-keeping, communication with tenants, contractor management and performance monitoring.
16. The Council currently manages six communal lifts, 52 stair lifts and 23 hoists or lifting equipment in individual homes. At the time of writing this report, all statutory safety checks for communal passenger lifts have been completed, and servicing for lifts and lifting equipment in individual homes are up to date, with documentation pending for 21 installations.

Asbestos Management Policy

17. The Asbestos Management Policy sets out the Council's approach to ensuring that asbestos-containing materials within its housing stock are identified, managed and monitored in line with statutory requirements and best practice.
18. The policy outlines responsibilities for staff, contractors and residents; establishes a proactive regime of surveying, risk assessment, reinspection and record keeping; and requires that only competent, accredited contractors undertake asbestos-related works. The policy applies to all buildings owned and managed by the Council.
19. The Council currently manages 311 buildings where asbestos has been identified. At the time of writing this report, all asbestos management surveys that are required under the Control of Asbestos Regulations are up to date.

Governance and Performance Monitoring

20. To strengthen governance and oversight of housing safety, the Council is in the process of implementing a new Housing Stock Group, comprising the Head of Housing, Service Managers, the Asset and Compliance Manager and the Operations Manager. This group will meet monthly to provide strategic oversight of key areas, including KPI performance, overdue safety actions, resource requirements and audit findings.
21. From 1 April 2026, a revised reporting framework will be introduced to provide enhanced assurance that the Council is meeting its statutory health and safety responsibilities across all council-owned buildings. This will include expanded KPI reporting to both the Housing Engagement Board and Cabinet on a quarterly basis, alongside the publication of an Annual Compliance Report summarising overall performance and progress.

Reasons for Recommendations

22. It is a requirement that the Council has robust policies in place demonstrating how we comply with the safety requirements around fire risk, lift safety and asbestos maintenance. These policies will form part of a suite of policies that set out the Council's approach to the health and safety of our tenants.

Options

23. The alternative option would be to reject the housing safety policies in their presented form. However, without approved policies the Council would not be able to demonstrate that it is meeting the requirements of the new Consumer Standards.

Implications

24. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

Financial and Fraud Impact

25. None.

Legal

26. Having comprehensive policies in place as to the Council's approach to health and safety for our tenants demonstrates how we are meeting our legal obligations as a landlord.

Staffing

27. As part of the implementation of the Consumer Standards there are additional burdens placed on the Council in terms of extra staffing resources to ensure full compliance, with robust documentation and monitoring. Additional resource has been identified to support this work within existing budgets.

Risks / Opportunities

28. Non-compliance of housing stock in terms of health and safety following the introduction of the Social Housing Regulations 2023 and subsequent standards is monitored as a risk on the risk register.

Health and Wellbeing

29. The policies aim to support the health and safety of those living in our council properties.

Consultation Responses

30. The draft policies have been developed in consultation with the Policy and Procedure Panel which consists of tenant representatives and officers. Appendix D provides a summary of the feedback and how the policy has been changed.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

Healthy and Supported Communities

31. The policies aim to support the health and safety of those living in our council properties.

Sustainable Homes and Vibrant Places

32. The policies aim to ensure that our council homes are safe and sustainable into the future.

Appendices

Appendix A: Fire Risk Management Strategy (Housing)

Appendix B: Policy Panel Feedback (Fire Risk Management Strategy)

Appendix C: Lifts and Lifting Equipment Safety Policy (Housing)

Appendix D: Policy Panel Feedback (Lifts and Lifting Equipment Policy)

Appendix E: Asbestos Management Policy (Housing)

Appendix F: Policy Panel Feedback (Asbestos Policy)

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Appendix A

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Fire Risk Management Strategy (Housing)

Version	Draft (v0.7)
Ownership	Head of Housing
Approved by	Cabinet
Policy Contact	Service Manager – Housing Assets
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DRAFT



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) is committed to managing fire risk effectively within its housing stock in order to protect residents, visitors and staff, and to comply fully with all relevant fire safety legislation and guidance.
- 1.2. This Fire Risk Management Strategy sets out the Council's policy for ensuring full compliance with all mandatory fire safety requirements, minimum standards, and statutory duties. It establishes the framework through which the Council will manage, monitor, and maintain fire safety across all premises within scope, ensuring risks are identified, controlled, and regularly reviewed to safeguard residents, staff, and visitors.
- 1.3. Compliance with this Strategy is required for all relevant staff, contractors, tenants and leaseholders (where applicable).

2. Scope and Purpose

2.1 In Scope

- Common parts of all multi-occupied residential buildings managed by SCDC (purpose-built blocks and conversions).
- Communal rooms associated with housing (including those on sheltered schemes, even where dwellings are dispersed bungalows).

2.2 Out of scope

- Individual dwellings (houses, bungalows or flats) with no common parts – these follow SCDC's property safety standards (example, smoke / CO alarms, gas and electrical safety) but are not subject to communal Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs).
- Properties managed by Ermine Street Housing or Shire Homes Lettings as they have their own policies

- 2.3 The Strategy applies to both tenants and leaseholders living in properties that are in scope, identified at point 2.1 above.
- 2.4 Clarification for sheltered housing – Where a sheltered scheme comprises communal facilities and common internal routes, those areas are in scope, as well as any communal room serving the scheme. Dispersed sheltered bungalows with no shared internal common parts are not in scope.
- 2.5 The purpose of the Strategy is to ensure effective, proportionate and continuously improving fire risk management across the Council's housing stock, supported by strong



governance, a risk-based assessment approach, prioritised action planning and robust assurance mechanisms.

2.6 The objectives of the Strategy include:

- Maintaining strong governance and open oversight
- Competent, risk-based Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) and proportionate actions
- Prioritising and delivering remedial actions effectively
- Implementing building specific Fire Safety Management Plans (FSMPs)
- Providing clear assurance through monitoring and audit
- Resident engagement and inclusion
- Driving continuous learning and improvement

2.7 We will co-operate, co-ordinate and actively collaborate with all third parties and enforcing authorities, fostering a culture of trust and transparency.

3. Legislative and Regulatory Context

3.1 This Strategy is informed by, and supports compliance with, the following legislation and guidance, including but not limited to:

- **Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO)** – duty to carry out / maintain a suitable and sufficient FRA and maintain precautions in the common parts.
- **Fire Safety Act 2021** – FRA must explicitly consider external walls (including cladding / balconies) and flat entrance doors between dwellings and common parts.
- **Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022** – additional duties by building height, including resident fire safety information (all buildings with common parts), quarterly communal and annual flat-door checks (above 11 metres high), and monthly checks of lifts and essential fire-fighting equipment (high-rise buildings above 18 metres / 7+ storeys)
- **Building Safety Act 2022** (where applicable) – for higher-risk buildings (above 18 metres / 7+ storeys with residential units), duties for Accountable Persons including maintaining the golden thread and producing a safety case
- **Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) Consumer Standards – Safety and Quality Standard** – requiring accurate property data and timely completion of statutory safety actions
- Housing Act 2004
- Relevant statutory guidance and British Standards.



3.2 In summary, the Council must:

- Assess fire risk
- Act to reduce risk
- Maintain fire safety measures
- Provide information and training
- Keep clear records

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Responsible Person (in law – Fire Safety Order): South Cambridgeshire District Council as the employer / landlord

Accountable Person (AP) / Principal Accountable Person (PAP) (in law – Building Safety Act and Higher-Risk Buildings): South Cambridgeshire District Council where it meets the criteria – maintains 'golden thread' (that is, keeping complete, accurate, digital, up to date records for that particular building) and producing a Safety Case Report that shows how risks are being controlled.

Accountable Officer: Head of Housing

Has ultimate responsibility for the implementation of the Strategy and ensures its delivery

Lead Officer: Service Manager – Housing Assets

Manages Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs), actions, maintenance, compliance records, key performance indicators (KPIs) and reports

Deputy Officer: Asset and Compliance Manager

Supports the Lead Officer in the day-to-day management of this Strategy

Building Managers: Housing Officers, Sheltered Estate Officers and other nominated staff

Responsible for local inspections, implementing Fire Safety Management Plans (FSMPs), provision of information and signage, record keeping for individual buildings, resident communication and escalation of risks.

All housing staff / contractors

Reporting hazards and incidents; follow training and be competent for tasks undertaken



Residents

Residents are expected to work with SCDC staff in dealing with fire safety. This includes keeping common parts clear, following building fire instructions and reporting concerns promptly.

5. Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs)

5.1 General Requirement

SCDC will ensure that all buildings within scope have an up-to-date Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) completed by a competent, suitably qualified person and have in place a risk-based review programme. The FRA provides a systematic evaluation of the building to identify fire hazards, assess risk to occupants, and determine the measures required to maintain safety. In line with the Fire Safety Act 2021, each assessment will also include consideration of external walls and flat entrance doors.

Taking a risk-based approach ensures that FRAs are proportionate and tailored to the risks associated with the building and the needs of the people living in it. This approach is integrated with broader investment planning and includes specific requirements for assessment types, review frequencies, and triggers for reassessment.

5.2 Type of FRA

- **Type 1 (non-destructive, common parts)** is the default assessment for most buildings in scope
- More intrusive assessments (Types 2 – 4) will be commissioned where risk indicates, including:
 - Building type, construction and layout
 - Height and scale
 - Occupancy levels
 - Converted buildings
 - Known or suspected deficiencies
 - Resident vulnerability
 - Previous incidents or intelligence

Type 1 Fire Risk Assessment (FRA)

SCDC will adopt Type 1 Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) as the standard approach for residential buildings, with more intrusive FRA types undertaken only where specific risks warrant further investigation, or where the building exceeds 11 metres in height. A Type



1 FRA is the standard non-destructive fire safety assessment required under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. It evaluates the building's overall fire safety measures and identifies any evident fire risks that require action.

It does not involve opening walls, floors ceilings, or service risers, and focuses solely on the shared internal areas of the building, such as communal rooms (including sheltered communal rooms), corridors, stairwells and entrances. It does not include inspections inside individual dwellings.

More Intrusive Assessments (Types 2 – 4)

SCDC will undertake Type 2 – 4 FRAs where a standard FRA identifies concerns and / or is based on professional judgement and risk profile, including buildings over 11 metres in height. Intrusive assessments involve looking behind the surfaces of the building to check how well it would perform in a fire. These types of FRAs are not routinely undertaken as they involve disruption, such as noise, dust and temporary access to homes. Type 2 – 4 FRAs can include:

- Opening up walls, floors or ceilings to check fire-stopping (materials that slow the spread of fire).
- Inspecting hidden areas such as service risers, ducts and voids.
- Checking inside individual properties in some cases, especially where the building has a higher risk profile.
- Testing the construction to confirm that fire safety measures are installed properly and meet required standards.

5.3 FRA outcomes are used to:

- Identify risk-critical issues
- Inform prioritisation of remedial works
- Shape capital investment planning
- Determine interim risk controls where needed

5.4 The Strategy recognises that some structural improvements may require longer-term programmes and budgeting, and that risk must be managed proportionately in the meantime.

5.5 FRA review frequency

SCDC will apply a risk-based approach to determining the frequency of Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) reviews, ensuring they remain suitable and sufficient for each



building's level of risk. Review intervals will be adjusted where necessary to reflect building height, resident vulnerability, complexity of layout, materials present, or any other factors that may increase fire risk.

Note: There is no statutory review interval. Reviews are risk-based and must remain suitable and sufficient.

6. Managing FRA Actions

- 6.1 SCDC will ensure that all FRA findings must be recorded, prioritised and tracked to completion using the Council's compliance system.
- 6.2 The findings of the FRA will be used to develop a proportionate and effective action plan. This plan will set out a prioritised schedule of all physical and managerial measures required to ensure that fire risk is maintained at, or reduced to, an acceptable level. It is recognised that major capital works may not be deliverable immediately; therefore, actions will be categorised to reflect their urgency and the timeframe within which they should reasonably be implemented.
- 6.3 Actions are prioritised as follows:
- **Priority 1** – Immediate / Urgent Action
Actions required to address deficiencies that present a significant and immediate risk to life or indicate non-compliance with critical fire safety legislation.
 - **Priority 2** – Within 1 month
Actions required to address risks that are significant but not immediately dangerous, or issues that could escalate if left unresolved.
 - **Priority 3** – Within 1 – 2 months
Actions that relate to moderate or lower-level risks or improvements that enhance overall fire safety but do not pose immediate danger.
 - **Priority 4** – Within 2 – 6 months
Measures that require major investment, design work, procurement, or structural alteration. These actions often form part of a long-term capital or refurbishment programme and may have interim mitigations in place.
 - **Priority 5** – Long-term actions (1 – 3 years)
Actions that are not required for statutory compliance but represent good practice and could further strengthen fire safety resilience.



6.4 Where immediate remediation is not possible, interim risk-reducing measures will be considered and recorded.

7. Fire Safety Measures and Maintenance (minimum standards)

7.1 SCDC will ensure that all fire safety measures across its residential buildings are properly installed, routinely inspected, and effectively maintained in accordance with legal requirements, relevant British Standards, and recognised best practice. The Council will implement clear maintenance regimes, carry out regular checks of all life safety systems, and ensure that any defects are addressed promptly. Compliance will be monitored through robust recording, auditing, and performance management processes. The following minimum standards apply:

7.2 Fire Doors

- Fire doors must remain shut at all times and must not be propped open under any circumstances.
- In buildings with a top storey over 11 metres high, SCDC will undertake checks of communal fire doors and conduct annual checks of flat entrance doors, including self-closers. Attempts to gain access must be recorded where entry is refused.
- All findings and remedial actions will be recorded and monitored via key performance indicators.

7.3 Fire Detection and Alarm Systems

- Purpose-built blocks with verified compartmentation operating a 'Stay Put' Evacuation Strategy typically do not require a communal fire alarm system.
- Where a communal / fire alarm is installed SCDC will:
 - Conduct weekly user tests and maintain logs.
 - Arrange periodic servicing by a competent contractor in line with BS 5839-1 (non-domestic systems)

7.4 Lifts and Essential Fire-fighting Equipment (high-rise only)

- Monthly checks of firefighting / evacuation lifts, evacuation alert systems (where present), rising mains, smoke control suppression and other key equipment.
- Faults not rectified within 24 hours will be reported to the Fire and Rescue Service and records will be displayed for residents.



7.5 Other systems

- Emergency lighting, smoke control, rising mains, suppression systems, wayfinding signage (where required), and any other life-safety systems will be maintained by competent contractors and fully recorded.
- Electrical intake cupboards and lateral mains will be kept secure and free of storage.
- Gas systems will be maintained to legal standards.

7.6 All inspections, tests and remedial works will be recorded and auditable.

7.7 Residents will receive annual fire safety information relevant to the property they live in, where the building is in scope.

7.8 Further detail on stock-specific standards can be found at Appendix A.

8. Fire Safety Management Plans (FSMPs)

8.1 SCDC will ensure that every in-scope building has a comprehensive Fire Safety Management Plan (FSMP). Each FSMP will clearly set out the building's evacuation strategy, outline the required local inspection and testing routines, include key building information (including details of any secure building information box where required), and provide clear contact details for residents and the Fire and Rescue Service.

9. Evacuation Strategy and Resident Information

9.1 SCDC will ensure that each building in scope will have a clearly defined Evacuation Strategy based on its construction, design and risk profile:

- **Stay Put Evacuation Strategy unless affected by heat or smoke or told to leave** – typically purpose-built blocks with verified compartmentation
- **Full Evacuation Strategy, leaving by the nearest safe exit and not to re-enter** – typically converted or higher-risk buildings and public buildings such as communal rooms.
- **Temporary Simultaneous Evacuation Strategy** – May be adopted following risk assessment (example, façade / compartmentation concerns) and kept under review

9.2 Any new dwellings that SCDC constructs or acquires will undergo a Fire Safety Management assessment, through which an appropriate evacuation strategy will be determined and documented.



9.3 Stay Put Evacuation Strategy

All residential dwellings that are in-scope and currently supported by a Fire Safety Management Plan (FSMP) operate under a Stay Put Evacuation Strategy. This strategy applies to buildings designed with effective fire-resisting compartmentation, meaning the construction is intended to prevent fire and smoke from spreading rapidly beyond the flat or area where the fire originates. Compartmentation keeps fire contained long enough to protect residents and support safe evacuation if required.

Under the Stay Put Strategy:

- **If a fire occurs inside a flat**, the occupants of that flat should leave immediately, close the door behind them, and call the Fire and Rescue Service.
- **If a fire occurs elsewhere in the building**, occupants of unaffected flats should remain inside their own flat unless they are directly affected by fire or smoke or are instructed to evacuate by the Fire and Rescue Service.

9.4 Full Evacuation Strategy

Full evacuation is a strategy where all occupants leave the building immediately once a fire alarm is activated or when instructed to do so. All sheltered housing communal rooms operate a Full Evacuation Strategy.

Under a Full Evacuation Strategy:

- All occupants follow the designated escape routes to exit the building.
- No-one should remain inside

9.5 Fire Action Notices will be displayed and residents will be provided with building-specific fire safety information, including the importance of fire doors. Lifts must not be used during a fire.

10. PEEPs (Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan)

10.1 In sheltered housing blocks of flats, SCDC will adopt a person-centred approach and, where appropriate, Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS) and General Emergency Evacuation Plans (GEEPs) or equivalent measures consistent with emerging national guidance will be put in place.

10.2 Sheltered Housing Officers are responsible for the production and maintenance of PEEPs for all residents who they consider require one and will liaise with the Asset and Compliance Manager as required. All PEEPs will be held in the Premises Information Box and on file.



10.3 PEEPs will be completed for residents in general needs properties on an ad-hoc basis as residents are identified by the Housing Officer.

10.4 A flag identifying residents with PEEPs will be visible on the housing management system.

11. Communal Areas and Prohibited Items

11.1 Instructions on what to do in the event of a fire will be displayed in communal areas.

11.2 Communal escape routes must be kept clear at all times

- A zero-tolerance approach applies to storage in common parts.
- Managed use may apply in specific agreed locations with strict limits, such as a named sheltered scheme.
- Prohibited and restricted items are listed in Appendix B.
- SCDC will work with residents first to ensure access is not blocked, but enforcement action may be taken where significant risk remains.
- Costs of removal may be recharged where appropriate.

12. Fire and Rescue Service Access

12.1 SCDC will always maintain clear and unhindered access for fire appliances and operational crews. To support effective emergency response:

- **Access routes:** All designated access roads, parking areas, and approach routes for Fire and Rescue Service vehicles must be kept unobstructed.
- **Emergency entry systems:** Door entry systems must allow for immediate emergency access. Any non-standard locking arrangements must be agreed in advance with the local Fire and Rescue Service.
- **Premises Information Boxes (PIBs):** Where PIBs are installed they must be secure and maintained in good order and kept up to date with key building information.

13. Refurbishment and Major Works

13.1 SCDC will ensure that all refurbishment, maintenance and major works are planned and delivered in a way that maintains or enhances fire safety.

Specifically:

- **Design and specification:** All design briefs must consider the original fire protection strategy of the building and ensure compliance with current fire safety standards and regulations.



- **Protection of fire safety measures:** Works must not weaken any passive or active fire safety systems. If fire stopping, fire-resisting materials or fire safety equipment are disturbed during the work, they must be properly reinstated to the required standard.
- **Regulatory consultation and control measures:** Building Control will be consulted where required. All hot works (that is, any activity that creates heat, sparks or an open flame) must be carried out under an approved permit system and in accordance with established control procedures.

14. Data, Records and the Golden Thread (where applicable)

- 14.1 FRAs, action logs, testing / maintenance records and building information will be kept within SCDC's compliance systems, retained in line with the corporate retention schedule.
- 14.2 For high-rise buildings, SCDC will maintain a digital golden thread as required by the Building Safety Regulator (design, construction and in-occupation) and ensure information is accurate and up to date.

15. Monitoring, KPIs and Reporting

- 15.1 As a minimum, SCDC will report Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) through its Housing Stock Group, the KPI and TSM Tenant Panel and via corporate reporting channels.

These KPIs will include:

- % of buildings with an in-date Fire Risk Assessment (FRA)
- % of high and very-high priority actions completed on time
- % of high or very-high priority actions overdue
- % of Fire Safety Management Plans (FMPs) in date
- % of required fire safety training completed
- % of weekly alarm tests completed where communal alarms exist
- % of annual flat-entrance door checks completed for buildings over 11 metres in height
- % of monthly Regulation 7 checks completed (high-rise only)
- % of in-scope residents who receive their annual fire safety information notice within the required timeframe



16. Governance and Assurance

16.1 Fire safety governance is provided through the Housing Stock Group, which includes:

- Head of Housing
- Service Managers
- Asset and Compliance Manager
- Operations Manager

16.2 The group meets monthly to provide strategic oversight of:

- KPI performance and emerging trends
- Significant or overdue Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) actions
- Material risks and incidents
- Resource requirements and investment priorities
- Audit outcomes and associated recommendations

16.3 The Head of Housing will escalate any issues arising to the Council's Leadership Team.

16.4 Update reports will be presented to the Housing Engagement Board as required. Fire safety performance will also be monitored by the KPI and TSM Tenant Panel and Cabinet through quarterly performance reporting.

16.5 Overall fire risk management will be summarised within the Annual Compliance Report, which is presented to both the Housing Engagement Board and Cabinet.

16.6 A robust assurance framework is maintained through:

- Management controls
- Internal audit and peer reviews
- External audits and liaison with Fire and Rescue Services
- Compliance accreditation

17. Learning and Continuous Improvement

17.1 SCDC will use data, fire incident reports, near-miss information, audit findings and emerging guidance to:

- Continuously review and strengthen fire safety practices
- Support informed decision-making and effective prioritisation
- Enhance resident engagement and ensure clear, proactive communication



18. Training and Competence

- 18.1 SCDC will ensure that all staff will receive basic fire awareness training at induction and refresher training for relevant staff will be reviewed annually, with refresher training at least every three years.
- 18.2 Role specific training will be given as necessary, such as those responsible for building management, including Housing Services Officers and Sheltered Estate Officers.
- 18.3 SCDC will only use competent FRA assessors and contractors, aligning with Home Office / National Fire Chiefs Council guidance on competence and selection.

19. Resident Engagement

SCDC will:

- Provide fire safety instructions and fire door information to residents in line with the 2022 Regulations (all multi occupied buildings with common parts).
- Engage residents on building specific arrangements (FSMPs / evacuation) and meet the Regulator for Social Housing Safety and Quality Standard's expectations for accurate data and timely safety actions.
- Use person centred approaches in specialised / sheltered settings to support vulnerable residents, aligning with National Fire Chiefs Council Person Centred Framework.

20. Accessibility and Inclusion

- 20.1 SCDC is committed to engaging with tenants and residents in line with the [Equality Act 2010](#). Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure services are accessible to all. This may include:
- Contact preferences
 - Offering home visits
 - Use of advocates or interpreters
 - Alternative communication formats, such as large print or translated materials
 - Adjusting appointment times
 - Adjusting locations to accommodate mobility or health needs

21. About this Strategy

21.1 This Strategy will be reviewed every five years. However, earlier reassessment may be required following tenant feedback, further guidance or where there are changes in operations and / or legislation.

21.2 This Strategy has been produced in consultation with tenant / leaseholder representatives. If a tenant or leaseholder is interested in getting involved in shaping the housing service, further information is available on the [website](#), or contact resident.involvement@scambs.gov.uk.



22. Service Requests and Complaints Process

22.1 A tenant / leaseholder should report initial service requests, such as repairs or safety concerns, through the designated channels:

Repairs – Online via the Council's website

By phone – via the Repairs Hotline: 0800 085 1313

Through the **M&Me** Mobile App

General Queries – Telephone – 01954 713 000 or

Email – duty.housing@scambs.gov.uk

The [Communications Charter for tenants and leaseholders](#) sets out detailed guidance on how to contact the Council and the service standards that can be expected in relation to communication and responsiveness.

22.2 SCDC aims to provide excellent customer service but recognise that mistakes can happen. If a tenant / leaseholder is dissatisfied with the service received following a service request, they can make a complaint in accordance with the Council's Complaints Policy. To make a complaint, visit our [website](#) or telephone 01954 713 000 or email housing.complaints@scambs.gov.uk.

23. Our Values

Ambitious

We are proactive and take a forward-thinking approach to addressing challenges.

We create smart solutions and reach our goals with determination and a clear vision.



Collaborative

We foster a culture of teamwork and open communication.

We work with and involve stakeholders, to improve how the organisation works and serves the public.

Compassionate

We prioritise empathy and understanding in decision-making and service delivery.

We consider the wellbeing of people and communities in everything we do and we replicate this when we talk to our colleagues because we know that when we support each other, we all do better.

Accountable

We take responsibility for our actions and decisions.

We own up to mistakes and make sure we fulfil our commitments.

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Appendix A – Stock-Specific Fire Safety Standards (Summary)

1. Houses and Bungalows

- Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms installed and maintained in line with current regulations.
- Electrical installation tested at least every five years.
- Annual gas safety checks where gas is present.
- A Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) is not normally required for single domestic dwellings.

2. Flats Without Communal Areas

- Fire detection and alarm systems to meet current standards for individual flats.
- Escape arrangements to comply with relevant building and fire safety requirements.
- No communal FRA is required as there are no shared common parts.

3. Flats With Communal Areas

- For buildings operating a Stay Put strategy, a communal fire alarm system is not provided unless required by design.
- Communal fire doors, flat entrance fire doors, compartmentation, and smoke control systems (where installed) must be maintained in effective condition.
- Communal areas to be subject to an FRA in accordance with the programmed inspection cycle.

4. Flat Blocks and Communal Rooms within Sheltered Housing Schemes

- Annual FRA required.
- A robust and up to date Fire Safety Management Plan (FSMP) must be in place.
- Routine fire door checks carried out for flat entrance doors and all doors within common parts.
- Information contained within Premises Information Boxes must be kept accurate and current.



Appendix B – Prohibited and Restricted Items

1. Prohibited Storage in Blocks of Flats

1.1 Residents must not store the following anywhere within the building, including inside their dwelling, designated store cupboards or communal areas:

- **Pressurised or contained gases**, except for oxygen or other prescribed medical gases (example, BBQ gas, LPG cylinders).
- **Vehicles**, including mopeds, scooters, e-bikes, e-scooters, or any other battery powered or fuel powered vehicles. These must not be stored inside flats or in communal areas.

Medical Gases

1.2 Where medical gases are used, residents must inform their Housing Services Officer (HSO). The HSO will record this on the resident's housing record and ensure details are included on the vulnerable resident list held in the Premises Information Box for the block.

2. Prohibited Items in Communal Areas in Blocks of Flats

2.1 Residents must not use or store the following items within any communal parts of the building:

- **Chemicals** such as paints, varnishes, solvents, brush cleaners, turpentine, petrol, oil, diesel, fertilisers, weed killer, or industrial cleaning fluids.
- **BBQs or BBQ fuels**, including firelighters, charcoal, briquettes, or similar. BBQ use is **not permitted** in internal communal areas or on private balconies.
- **Naked flame items** such as candles, tea lights, incense sticks, lighters, or matches.
- **Upholstered furniture or fabrics**, including padded chairs, armchairs, curtains, net curtains, or wall hangings.
- **Plastic items**, such as plastic garden furniture or children's toys.
- **Recycling and household waste**:
 - Recycling bins / boxes must be stored **outside** the building.
 - Refuse must be disposed of directly in the bin room or chute and must **not** be left outside flat doors.
- **DIY materials**, including timber, wood, mastics, glues, adhesives, or similar combustible materials.



- **Bicycles**, unless the block provides a designated internal cycle storage facility.
- **Clothing and footwear**, including loose items or laundry.
- **Washing lines**, which must not be fixed to any pipework or building infrastructure.
 - Any washing lines installed in this way will be removed and returned to the resident.

2.2 SCDC reserves the right to require the immediate removal of any item considered to present a significant fire safety risk, including items not specifically listed above.

3. **Communal Rooms within Sheltered Schemes**

3.1 SCDC will ensure that all communal rooms within sheltered housing schemes are managed in accordance with fire safety legislation, relevant guidance, and the Council's own safety standards. As part of this responsibility, SCDC will assess and control fire risks within these spaces, including the removal of any items not provided or approved by the Council where such items present (or could reasonably be expected to present) a fire risk. Communal rooms will be routinely monitored to ensure they remain safe, free from unauthorised furnishings or equipment, and suitable for use by residents.

Ref.	Notes	Response Y / N / P / C	Place and Notes	Updated Reference
7.7	<p><i>“Residents will receive annual fire safety information relevant to the property they live in, where the building is in scope”.</i></p> <p>When and where is this carried out, as I have never had one in 16 years residency?</p>	C	Discussed in the panel meeting – in scope buildings are flat blocks etcetera, so bungalows / houses don’t fall into scope in the context of 7.7.	N / A
15	<p>Via KPI’s where is this detailed on the estate inspection sheets, I appreciate it’s a year since I last carried out one but don’t recall this heading notation?</p>	C	Please be advised that Fire Risk is not reported on the estate inspection sheets as the inspections are held to look at landscaping issues that affect the communal areas on our estates. We do look at some other issues, examples being fly-tipping and trip hazards.	N / A
18.1	<p><i>“SCDC will ensure that all staff will receive basic fire awareness training at induction and refresher training for relevant staff”.</i></p> <p>How often should be noted?</p>	18.1	Service Manager – Housing Assets confirmed in the meeting that 18.1 can be updated to read “...and refresher training for relevant staff will be reviewed annually, with refresher training at least every three years.”	18.1
Appendix A, 4.	Communal kitchen fire sensor / smoke detectors? / exhaust fans, yes and sensor, fire blanket, co / 2 fire extinguisher. Enough for use with chip pan fires?	C	Discussed during panel meeting – Communal rooms have a no chip pan policy. All the aforementioned items are held within the spaces, to meet all the requirements of a commercial kitchen.	N / A



Appendix C

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Lifts and Lifting Equipment Safety Policy (Housing)

Version	Draft v0.5
Ownership	Head of Housing
Approved by	Cabinet
Policy Contact	Service Manager – Housing Assets
Approval date	24 March 2026
Publication date	31 March 2026
Date of next review	March 2031

DRAFT



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Lifts and lifting equipment are essential for ensuring safe, accessible housing, particularly for residents with mobility needs and in multi-storey buildings.
- 1.2 South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) has a statutory duty to ensure that all lifting equipment it provides, whether in individual homes or communal areas, is safely maintained, regularly inspected and compliant with all relevant regulations.
- 1.3 SCDC owns and manages a range of lifting equipment, including communal passenger lifts in blocks of flats and in individual homes, such as hoists, stairlifts and through-floor lifts. As part of our duty of care, we will ensure all such equipment is maintained to a safe standard and remains in good working order.

2. Purpose and Scope

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all lifts and lifting equipment are safe, reliable and legally compliant, and that risks to residents, visitors, staff and contractors are minimised.
- 2.2 This policy applies to all residential and communal buildings owned by and managed by SCDC as part of its housing landlord function. This does not include any individual leasehold, equity share or shared ownership properties other than the lifts in communal areas that facilitate access. Properties managed by Ermine Street Housing or Shire Homes Lettings are not included, as they have their own policies.
- 2.3 The policy relates to the following:
 - Passenger lifts in blocks of flats
 - Platform lifts (for disabled access)
 - Stair lifts and through-floor lifts in individual homes
 - Hoists and other lifting equipment installed by SCDC for individual use
- 2.4 It does not apply to resident-owned equipment installed via grants or private arrangements.
- 2.5 Under the Health and Safety Act, any carers engaged by the resident should carry out their own risk assessment(s) of any equipment prior to its use.



3. Legal and Regulatory Framework

3.1 This policy is informed by, and will be implemented in accordance with relevant legislation and standards, including (but not limited to):

- [Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974](#)
- [Housing Act 2004 \(HHSRS\)](#)
- [Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations \(LOLER\) 1998](#)
- [Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations \(PUWER\) 1998](#)
- [Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#)
- Building Regulations (Approved Documents M & B)
- [Fire Safety \(England\) Regulations 2022](#)
- [Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations \(RIDDOR\) 2013](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Lifts Regulations 2016](#)
- [Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards](#)
- Relevant British and European Standards (example, BS EN 81 series for lifts)

3.2 In accordance with the relevant regulatory requirements, SCDC will put in place robust arrangements for inspection, maintenance and emergency response, together with effective communication with residents. This policy provides the framework through which these responsibilities are met and ensures that lifts are safe, reliable and fit for their intended purpose.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 SCDC will:

- Ensure all landlord-owned lifting equipment is safe and fit for purpose, complying with all relevant legislation.
- Allocate sufficient resources for inspection, maintenance / servicing and renewal.
- Maintain accurate records of servicing, inspections and examinations.
- Put in place effective arrangements with competent and qualified contractors.
- Ensure staff are skilled, experienced and well-trained as appropriate.
- Seek independent assurance and challenge on our performance.
- Report to the Housing Engagement Board, Leadership Team and Members on our lift management performance.



- Ensure that where others manage or operate properties on behalf of the Council, that suitable checks are carried out to confirm compliance with all relevant legislation.

4.2 The Asset and Property Services Team are responsible for:

- Maintaining an up-to-date register of all lifts and lifting equipment.
- Arranging routine servicing, repairs and statutory inspections.
- Ensuring faults are addressed within agreed timescales.
- Managing contracts with lift and equipment service providers.

4.3 We will ensure that contractors:

- Be suitably qualified, competent and insured.
- Comply with all health and safety legislation and this policy.
- Report defects, risks or safeguarding concerns immediately.
- Provide certificates, reports and documentation as required.

4.4 Residents are expected to:

- Use equipment in accordance with instructions.
- Report defects or concerns promptly.
- Not interfere with or misuse lifting equipment.
- Allow SCDC or our appointed contractors access to carry out equipment inspections / maintenance.

5. Communal Passenger Lifts

5.1 Provision and Design

Communal lifts will be:

- Designed and installed to relevant standards
- Accessible, where reasonably practicable, for disabled residents
- Fitted with emergency communication systems

5.2 Inspection and Maintenance

- All inspection and maintenance of communal lifts will be carried out by SCDC appointed contractors.
- Passenger lifts to be inspected monthly, to include visual and functional checks including non-lifting parts such as checking that alarms are operating correctly.
- Routine servicing will be carried out in accordance with manufacturer guidance.



- Communal lifts will receive a thorough examination at least every six months or following any substantial alterations or major repairs.
- Statutory reports and defect notices will be acted upon without delay.

5.3 Breakdown and Emergencies

- 24 / 7 emergency breakdown response arrangements will be in place.
- Clear procedures will exist for resident entrapment and communication.
- Prolonged outages will be risk assessed, with mitigation measures considered.
- Where a communal lift is out of service, SCDC will aim to have a lift contractor dispatched within 24 hours.

6. Lifting Equipment in Individual Properties

6.1 General Principles

- Lifting equipment installed in individual properties may include, but is not limited to, stairlifts, hoists and through-floor lifts.
- Equipment will be suitable for the tenant's needs based on an Occupational Therapy assessment (see the [Disabled Adaptations Policy](#) for further information).
- Installation will be carried out by competent contractors.
- The safety of both tenants, those living in the household, visitors and staff will be considered as part of any installation.
- SCDC is responsible for ensuring all lifting equipment is safe and properly maintained. Tenants must provide reasonable access for inspections, maintenance and statutory safety checks.
- SCDC or its contractors will make reasonable efforts to arrange appointments at convenient times. Continued refusal of access may constitute a breach of tenancy and could result in legal action to allow the Council to fulfil its statutory duties.

6.2 Inspection and Examination

- All lifting equipment in individual properties will be inspected as per installation guidance or risk assessment (dependent upon the type of lift).
- Lifting equipment will be serviced in line with manufacturer guidance.
- All lifting equipment in individual properties will receive a thorough examination at least every six months or following any substantial alterations or major repairs.
- Defects identified as presenting an immediate risk will result in the equipment being taken out of use.



6.3 Changes in Occupancy or Need

- Equipment in individual properties will be reviewed when a tenancy ends or a tenant's needs change.
- Decisions on removal, retention or adaptation will be risk-based and documented.

7. Reporting of Defects

- 7.1 Tenants should report defects with any lifting equipment in individual properties to the appropriate service provider, as specified.
- 7.2 Communal Lifts will display information for who to contact in an emergency / report a defect.
- 7.3 If a member of staff or contractor identifies a defect, it must be reported without delay to the Property Services Team.
- 7.4 Where defects are reported to SCDC rather than directly to the service provider, SCDC will promptly notify the designated lift repairs and maintenance provider to ensure the issue is addressed. Where a defect is assessed as serious or significant, the lift will be taken out of service until the problem has been fully resolved.

8. Risk Assessment and Management

- 8.1 Risk assessments will be undertaken for lifting equipment where appropriate.
- 8.2 Additional controls will be introduced for vulnerable residents or complex installations.
- 8.3 Fire safety, power failure and evacuation risks will be considered.

9. Communication and Resident Engagement

- 9.1 SCDC will:
- Provide residents with clear information on safe use
 - Explain how to report faults and emergencies
 - Consult residents where significant works or changes are planned

10. Records and Documentation

- 10.1 SCDC will maintain accurate records, including:
- Asset registers
 - Service and maintenance logs
 - Thorough examination reports
 - Certificates of conformity and compliance



- Records will be retained in line with organisational retention policies and legal requirements.

11. Tenant-Owned Equipment

11.1 Where tenants install their own equipment:

- SCDC will set out clear conditions for consent.
- Responsibilities for maintenance, inspection and insurance will be the responsibility of the tenant.
- SCDC reserves the right to require evidence of safety and compliance.

12. Training and Competence

12.1 SCDC Staff involved in managing or inspecting lifting equipment will:

- Receive appropriate training
- Understand their health and safety responsibilities
- Know how to escalate risks and defects

13. Roles and Responsibilities

13.1 SCDC will appoint a Responsible Person to ensure that the commitments in this policy are carried out as well as the actions identified in any risk assessment – see management structure below:

- **Duty Holder:** Head of Housing
Has ultimate accountability for lift and lifting equipment safety, ensuring that adequate resources are made available to enable the objectives of the policy to be met.
- **Responsible Person:** Service Manager – Housing Assets
Oversees the operational delivery of the policy and that this policy is reviewed and kept up to date.
- **Deputy Responsible Person:** Asset and Compliance Manager
Supports the Responsible Person in the day-to-day management of this policy, ensuring that all associated procedures remain current and are effectively implemented. This role is also responsible for monitoring and reviewing the policy, promoting staff awareness, coordinating relevant training, and contributing to ongoing policy development.

- **General Duties:** Asset and Compliance Team
Responsible for organising, managing and monitoring the maintenance and service contracts, which includes the servicing programme as well as supporting resident communication and ensuring timely responses and resolutions.

14. Measuring Compliance

14.1 Compliance with this policy will be monitored through audits and performance reporting.

14.2 The Service Manager – Housing Assets will regularly report to the Leadership Team, Members and tenants in accordance with approved Key Performance Indicators, which shall include:

- The [LOLER](#) inspection Program
- The Service and Maintenance Program
- Lift remediation outstanding actions against an action plan for completion
- Lift remediation actions that are overdue against an action plan for completion.

14.3 Serious incidents will be investigated and learning shared.

15. Accessibility and Inclusion

15.1 SCDC is committed to engaging with tenants and residents in line with the [Equality Act 2010](#). Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure services are accessible to all.

This may include:

- Contact preferences
- Offering home visits
- Use of advocates or interpreters
- Alternative communication formats, such as large print or translated materials
- Adjusting appointment times to accommodate mobility or health needs

16. About this Policy

16.1 This policy will be reviewed every five years. However, earlier reassessment may be required following tenant feedback, further guidance or where there are changes in operations and / or legislation.

16.2 This policy has been produced in consultation with tenant representatives. If a tenant is interested in getting involved in shaping the housing service, further information is available on the [website](#) or contact resident.involvement@scambs.gov.uk.





17. Service Requests and Complaints Process

- 17.1 A tenant should report initial service requests, such as repairs or safety concerns, through the designated channels:

Repairs – Online via the Council's website

By phone – via the Repairs Hotline: 0800 085 1313

Through the **M&Me** Mobile App

General Queries – Telephone – 01954 713 000 or

Email – duty.housing@scambs.gov.uk

- 17.2 The [Communications Charter for tenants and leaseholders](#) sets out detailed guidance on how to contact the Council and the service standards that can be expected in relation to communication and responsiveness.
- 17.3 SCDC aims to provide excellent customer service but recognises that mistakes can happen. If a tenant is dissatisfied with the service received following a service request, they can make a complaint in accordance with the Council's Complaints Policy. To make a complaint, visit our [website](#) or telephone 01954 713 000 or e-mail housing.complaints@scambs.gov.uk.

18. Our Values

Ambitious

We are proactive and take a forward-thinking approach to addressing challenges.

We create smart solutions and reach our goals with determination and a clear vision.

Collaborative

We foster a culture of teamwork and open communication.

We work with and involve stakeholders, to improve how the organisation works and serves the public.

Compassionate

We prioritise empathy and understanding in decision-making and service delivery.

We consider the wellbeing of people and communities in everything we do and we replicate this when we talk to our colleagues because we know that when we support each other, we all do better.



Accountable

We take responsibility for our actions and decisions.

We own up to mistakes and make sure we fulfil our commitments.

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Ref.	Notes	Response Y / N / P / C	Place and Notes	Updated Reference
2.2	This policy applies to all residential and communal buildings owned by and managed by SCDC. Add extra word.	Y	Added.	2.2
2.5	Does SCDC carry out its own risk assessment as well as the care agency that the tenant employs? If so, are both assessments made available to both parties?	C	As specified at point 6.2, all lifting equipment will be inspected as per installation guidance or risk assessment (dependent upon the type of lift) and serviced in line with manufacturer guidance. Records are kept of all servicing / certification which can be provided upon request. A risk assessment should be completed by any carer / employer of the carer as part of their working practices in accordance with the Health & Safety Act. Sight of any risk assessment undertaken by the carer / employer of the carer is a matter between the client and agency.	N / A
6.2	When the appropriate inspections, servicing or emergency repairs are carried out is a copy of the relevant paperwork left with the tenant so that their employed carers are kept informed?	C	Equipment will have service stickers on it and the documentation that goes with the equipment will have service date etcetera, in it. Records / certification Records are kept of all servicing / certification which can be provided upon request.	N / A
7.1	Tenants should report defects with any lifting equipment in individual properties should be reported to the appropriate service provider, as specified. Remove this text.	Y	Amended.	7.1

Appendix D – Policy Panel Feedback (Lifts and Lifting Equipment Safety Policy) Y – Yes, N – No, P – Partial, C – General Comment

Ref.	Notes	Response Y / N / P / C	Place and Notes	Updated Reference
12.1	<p>SCDC Staff involved in managing or inspecting lifting equipment will: Add extra word.</p>	Y	SCDC added.	12.1
14.3	<p>“Serious incidents will be investigated and learning shared”. Who will investigate incidents and who will this be shared with?</p>	C	This would be with the HSE.	N / A



Appendix E

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Asbestos Management Policy (Housing)

Version	Draft (v0.3)
Ownership	Head of Housing
Approved by	Cabinet
Policy Contact	Service Manager – Housing Assets
Approval date	24 March 2026
Publication date	31 March 2026
Date of next review	March 2031



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) is committed to ensuring that all tenant homes and communal areas are safe.
- 1.2 Asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) can pose health risks when damaged or disturbed. This policy sets out our approach to managing asbestos in a responsible, compliant and transparent way, safeguarding the health and safety of staff, contractors, residents and visitors.

2. Scope and Purpose

- 2.1 This policy outlines how SCDC will comply with the Regulatory requirements for Social Housing in England, including best practice standards and continual improvement in compliance performance in relation to asbestos safety.
- 2.2 SCDC aims to protect the occupiers of its properties, visitors, staff, contractors, and the public, from the risks associated with asbestos so far as is reasonably practicable. This document sets out key policy objectives, control measures and accountabilities to protect residents, staff, and contractors from harm.
- 2.3 This policy applies to all buildings owned and managed by SCDC as part of its housing landlord responsibilities. It does not apply to leasehold, equity share, or shared ownership properties where the occupier is responsible for managing asbestos within the demised premises (that is, the parts not owned by the Council), unless the lease agreement states otherwise. In such cases, leaseholders and shared owners are expected to seek their own independent specialist advice regarding asbestos management. The policy also excludes properties managed by Ermine Street Housing or Shire Homes Lettings, as each operates under its own asbestos policy.

3. Policy Objectives

- 3.1 The council adopts a proactive approach to asbestos safety which is in line with the HSE Asbestos Essentials Guidance and the Council's Technical and Procedural Manual. SCDC will:
 - Identify and manage ACMs in accordance with HSE guidance (HSG 264, HSG 210, HSG 247, HSG 248)
 - Maintain an accurate asbestos register covering all relevant properties and communal areas in scope



- Undertake risk assessments to determine the condition and potential exposure risks of ACMs, as appropriate
- Implement control measures such as encapsulation, monitoring, or removal of ACMs as required
- Operate a risk-based reinspection programme for identified ACMs, as appropriate
- Ensure work does not disturb ACMs unless appropriate controls are in place
- Conduct management and refurbishment / demolition surveys as required
- Provide training and awareness for staff and contractors, as appropriate
- Ensure only competent, accredited contractors carry out asbestos-related work
- Respond quickly to asbestos incidents and keep residents informed as they occur
- Monitor, audit, and review compliance quarterly, reporting to the Housing Engagement Board, Leadership Team and Members

4. Legislation and Regulatory Framework

4.1 SCDC will meet all obligations set out in:

- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 (CAR 2012) (Regulation 4 duty to manage applies to communal and non-domestic areas)
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (Responsibilities for tenants' homes)
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (Provision of pre-construction information)
- Housing Act 2004 (HHSRS) and Defective Premises Act 1972 (Asbestos is identified as a Category 1 hazard)
- Environmental Protection Act 1990 / Hazardous Waste Regulations 2005 (Affecting ACM disposal)
- Emerging requirements under Awaab's Law and the Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) Regulations 2025

5. Responsibilities

5.1 SCDC has a duty to manage asbestos risks effectively. The following roles are defined to ensure that the commitments in this policy are carried out:

- **Duty Holder:** Head of Housing

Has ultimate accountability for the safety management of Asbestos.



- **Responsible Person:** Service Manager – Housing Assets
Oversees the overall implementation of this policy.
- **Deputy Responsible Person:** Asset and Compliance Manager
Supports the Responsible Person in the day-to-day management of this policy.
- **Operational Managers and Surveyors**
Ensures compliance within work programmes and contractor oversight.

5.2 Where contractors carry out works on SCDC's behalf, they will be required to meet our health and safety standards and be appropriately qualified and accredited as confirmed through procurement processes and annual contract reviews.

5.3 Tenants and Leaseholders (where applicable) must report any suspected asbestos, avoid disturbing ACMs and allow access for inspections and remedial works.

6. Our Commitment to Residents

6.1 Duty of Care:

- When asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) are identified but safe if left undisturbed, tenants will be informed and advised not to carry out any DIY or maintenance that could disturb them (example, drilling, sanding, attaching fixtures).

6.2 Providing Information to Tenants:

- Tenants will receive clear, accessible details on the location and condition of any known ACMs.
- Information may be delivered via written communication, leaflets, or verbal briefings at tenancy sign-up or inspections.
- Guidance will include safe living practices where ACMs are present.

6.3 Remedial Action for ACMs in Poor Condition:

- If ACMs are damaged, deteriorating, or likely to be disturbed, SCDC will arrange appropriate remedial works such as sealing, encapsulation, or removal by licensed contractors.
- Tenants will be kept updated on the type of work, expected timescales, and any temporary relocation needs.

6.4. **Tenant Reporting Responsibilities:**

- Tenants are encouraged to report any damage or deterioration of materials suspected to contain asbestos.
- Reports should be made to the Housing Officer or Property Services team.
- SCDC will investigate promptly and take necessary safety actions.

6.5. **Contractor responsibilities:**

- All contractors must check the asbestos register before starting work in tenants' homes.
- Method Statements and Risk Assessments must include relevant asbestos information.
- Where no survey exists, ACMs must be presumed present.
- Contractors must clearly communicate any asbestos-related risks to tenants.
- All site operatives must have up-to-date asbestos awareness training.

7. **Asbestos Safety Controls**

7.1 SCDC will:

- Maintain a 100% survey strategy for relevant buildings
- Carry out management surveys to HSG 264 standards
- Commission intrusive refurbishment / demolition surveys before works
- Risk-assess each ACM using material + priority scoring
- Plan removals only where risk cannot be safely managed
- Only appoint UKAS-accredited analysts and Licensed Asbestos Removal Contractors (LARCs)

7.2 All safety controls will be documented and recorded for audit purposes.

8. **Monitoring, Audit and Assurance**

8.1 SCDC will:

- Conduct annual internal audits
- Carry out contractor performance checks
- Report compliance to the Housing Engagement Board, Leadership Team and Members quarterly
- Update the asbestos register within 14 days of any relevant updates

9. Accessibility and Inclusion

9.1 SCDC is committed to engaging with tenants and residents in line with the [Equality Act 2010](#). Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure services are accessible to all.

This may include:

- Contact preferences
- Offering home visits
- Use of advocates or interpreters
- Alternative communication formats, such as large print or translated materials
- Adjusting appointment times to accommodate mobility or health needs

10. About this Policy

10.1 This policy will be reviewed every five years. However, earlier reassessment may be required following tenant feedback, further guidance or where there are changes in operations and / or legislation.

10.2 This policy has been produced in consultation with tenant representatives. If a tenant is interested in getting involved in shaping the housing service, further information is available on the [website](#) or contact resident.involvement@scambs.gov.uk.



11. Service Requests and Complaints Process

11.1 A tenant should report initial service requests, such as repairs or safety concerns, through the designated channels

Repairs – Online via the Council's website

By phone – via the Repairs Hotline: 0800 085 1313

Through the **M&Me** Mobile App

General Queries – Telephone – 01954 713 000 or

Email – duty.housing@scambs.gov.uk

11.2 The [Communications Charter for tenants and leaseholders](#) sets out detailed guidance on how to contact the Council and the service standards that can be expected in relation to communication and responsiveness.

11.3 SCDC aims to provide excellent customer service but recognises that mistakes can happen. If a tenant is dissatisfied with the service received following a service request,



they can make a complaint in accordance with the Council's Complaints Policy. To make a complaint, visit our [website](#) or telephone 01954 713000 or e-mail housing.complaints@scambs.gov.uk.

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Ambitious

We are proactive and take a forward-thinking approach to addressing challenges.

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We foster a culture of teamwork and open communication.

We work with and involve stakeholders, to improve how the organisation works and serves the public.

Compassionate

We prioritise empathy and understanding in decision-making and service delivery.

We consider the wellbeing of people and communities in everything we do and we replicate this when we talk to our colleagues because we know that when we support each other, we all do better.

Accountable

We take responsibility for our actions and decisions.

We own up to mistakes and make sure we fulfil our commitments.

Ref.	Notes	Response Y / N / P / C	Place and Notes	Updated Reference
1.1	Insert – “...and maintain active records of known areas of risk and remedial action taken”if none exist when will they be certified as risk free?	C	This requirement is addressed in Section 3.1 of the policy. All records are maintained within the Asbestos Register, which is regularly updated. Following completion of the reinspection surveys, a floor plan will be provided identifying all known Asbestos containing materials (ACMs). It is not possible to certify a property as entirely free of risk unless it is fully refurbished or rebuilt.	N / A
2.3	Insert some clarification to the owners NOT under our Duty of care where they can seek further advice and guidance.	Y	This policy applies solely to those properties defined as in scope. It should not include further detail relating to properties that are out of scope. However, additional wording has been included at point 2.3 stating that where properties are out of scope <i>‘in such cases, leaseholders and shared owners are expected to seek their own independent specialist advice regarding asbestos management’</i> .	2.3 additional wording added
3.1	<p>Is there a record of known asbestos locations and who’s specific duty to record and update these problems and if actioned ...what action was taken?</p> <p>Undertake risk assessment – How often?</p> <p>Operate risk-based assessments – How often?</p> <p>Provide Training and awareness – How often and by whom?</p> <p>Respond – How often and by whom?</p> <p>Monitor – How often and by whom?</p>	C, P	<p>Section 5.1 of the policy provides information on responsibilities.</p> <p>Risk assessments and surveys cannot be given generic timeframes, as they are dependent on risk levels, material types, condition, location etc. For example, a guide on domestic dwellings is a full management survey every 10 years with a visual inspection annually; if risks are higher, then this may vary and if works are carried out to reduce the risk, the timeframes will extend or shorten, as appropriate.</p> <p>Training is tailored to the specific requirements of each role. All relevant staff receive mandatory asbestos awareness training, with additional levels of training provided as appropriate to their duties.</p> <p>The policy has been amended to state ‘Provide training and awareness for staff and contractors as appropriate’.</p>	3.1 wording amended relating to training

Ref.	Notes	Response Y / N / P / C	Place and Notes	Updated Reference
5.2	<p>Currently says – “Where contractors carry out works on SCDC’s behalf, they will be required to meet our health and safety standards and be appropriately qualified and accredited”</p> <p>Suggested change - “they will be required to provide proof of their Qualification's both of company and operatives and that they meet our health and safety standards and by appropriately qualified and accreted”.</p>	Y	<p>All proofs etc. are accounted for in the procurement process and annual contract reviews under procurement requirements.</p> <p>Wording amended to state: ‘Where contractors carry out works on SCDC’s behalf, they will be required to meet our health and safety standards and be appropriately qualified and accredited as confirmed through procurement processes and annual contract reviews’.</p>	5.2
6.1	And a record made of verbal briefings at tenancy sign up or inspections.	C	This information is incorporated into the tenancy sign-up process. It is formally documented within the sign-up pack, together with any relevant survey details. As a result, there is no requirement to record verbal comments separately.	N / A
7.1	SCDC will record by date all of the following criteria.	Y	Additional wording provided at 7.2 ‘ <i>All safety controls will be documented and recorded for audit purposes</i> ’.	7.2
8.1	SCDC will record by date all of the following criteria.	C	8.1 wording includes timescales, i.e. annual internal audits, Quarterly compliance reports and update register within 14 days.	N / A

4. Closing