

NCCHSP169

Housing Services Access Policy

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Contents

1.0 Introduction 3

2.0 Scope 3

3.0 Corporate Context 5

4.0 Legislative Basis..... 5

5.0 Definitions / Glossary 5

6.0 Policy..... 7

7.0 Responsibilities 12

8.0 Engagement and Feedback 14

9.0 Procedures 14

10.0 Monitoring and Review 15

11.0 Appendices 17

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This is Nottingham City Council's Housing Services Access Policy. It sets out under what circumstances all tenants, living in properties owned or managed by Nottingham City Council Housing Services, will be required to grant access to their home to Nottingham City Council, or contractors representatives working on our behalf. For leaseholders, we will follow conditions set out in the lease agreement, however, future legislation changes may extend this policy to owneroccupied leasehold properties within social housing blocks and will form part of a separate government response in due course.
- 1.2 This policy works in conjunction with other documents, including our suite of health and safety policies and procedures such as the Vulnerable Persons Policy. It also makes clear our approach to gaining access to council properties where this is not granted, in line with specific responsibilities in the Tenancy Agreement, statutory and regulatory obligations, the Housing Act 1985 and considerations under the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998. It aims to balance the need for access for legislative compliance obligations, whilst also respecting tenant vulnerability.
- 1.3 The policy clarifies the role and responsibilities of Access and Resolution Officers. Their focus is to secure access for compliance relating to the "big six" legislative areas (Gas servicing, Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR), Lift servicing, Asbestos, Water hygiene, Fire Safety and relevant Awaab's Law emergency repairs or inspections) via legal routes, in accordance with statutory requirements and the Tenancy Agreement in relation to access for compliance safety inspections and associated repairs.
- 1.4 Where existing policies and managed processes are in place, such as for safeguarding and hoarding, the Access and Resolution Officer will signpost and support the resident and assist the Housing Office in their duties, ensuring that swift follow-up action is taken by the relevant Housing Patch Manager.
- 1.5 Any reference in this policy to 'the Council', 'organisation', 'we', 'our' and 'us' refers to Nottingham City Council, unless otherwise stated.
- 1.6 This Housing Services Access Policy applies to Nottingham City Council. We operate from our head office at Loxley House, Nottingham, as well as other premises across Nottingham. Multiple teams may require access to a property for a variety of reasons as laid out in this document, however this policy is owned by the Strategic Director of Housing.
- 1.7 Housing Services sits within the Growth and City Development directorate of Nottingham City Council, following the in-housing of Nottingham's social housing function. Part of the role of Housing Services includes managing and maintaining tenanted and leasehold homes and carrying out other work both as a contractor and on our own behalf, including the maintenance of existing buildings and the construction and management of new homes. In addition, we also manage and maintain empty homes for other organisations, where these are located within the Nottingham area.
- 1.8 This document is a statement of how Nottingham City Council intends to meet its legal obligations with regards to the circumstances in which we will require access to council properties, the general arrangements and key objectives for the period covered by this policy.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 There are several reasons why we may require access to a property, including but not limited to:

- 2.1.1 Addressing any immediate or suspected safety concerns
- 2.1.2 Enabling us to carry out a statutory or contractual duty
- 2.1.3 Undertaking repair, service, maintenance, or improvement work
- 2.1.4 Carrying out an inspection or survey of past or planned work
- 2.1.5 Investigating or monitoring the cause of an issue requiring repair or treatment
- 2.1.6 Preventing or reducing damage in an emergency
- 2.1.7 Addressing significant concern about a tenant or vulnerable member of a household, including children
- 2.1.8 Ensuring the property is being maintained to a standard as set out within the Tenancy Agreement with regard to repairs and maintenance, hoarding, decoration and cleanliness
- 2.1.9 Portable appliance testing (PAT) of white goods supplied by NCCHS.

2.2 This Housing Services Access Policy applies in conjunction with the following NCC documents:

- 2.2.1 Allocations Policy
- 2.2.2 Lettings Policy
- 2.2.3 Tenancy Agreement
- 2.2.4 Health and Safety Policy and associated procedures
- 2.2.5 Building Safety Policy and associated procedures
- 2.2.6 Repairs Policy and associated procedures
- 2.2.7 Recharge Policy
- 2.2.8 Awaab's Law Policy
- 2.2.9 Vulnerable Person's Policy
- 2.2.10 Hoarding Procedure

2.3 This policy is developed alongside other Council policies and strategies, and is aligned with the Council Plan, the Housing Services Divisional Business Plan, and the Medium-Term Financial Plan. The policy will be subject to refresh in 2028, or sooner if any changes in legislation or financial arrangements make earlier review necessary.

2.4 This policy sets out:

- 2.4.1 Under what circumstances we might require access to a property.
- 2.4.2 How we will seek to gain access through contact with the tenant.
- 2.4.3 Steps we will take to gain access where we have been unable to make arrangements with the tenant; these will be contained within the relevant procedures.

2.5 NCC Housing Services is committed to ensuring that all tenants comply with access requirements while respecting their vulnerabilities and rights. This policy outlines a balanced and proportionate approach that combines supportive interventions and, where necessary, legal enforcement to achieve compliance effectively and fairly. This policy is designed to ensure the safety and security of our tenants.

3.0 Corporate Context

- 3.1** Nottingham City Council has a responsibility to offer housing provision which is responsive to a variety of complex needs. Over a quarter of the city's houses across all tenures are older than 100 years old and over half of them are more than 50 years old and have issues relating to their age. The city has high levels of deprivation compared to the national average, which can impact people's ability to maintain the standard of their home, including reducing ventilation in an attempt to keep their house warm amid rising energy costs.
- 3.2** The Council's Housing Strategy (2024 – 2028) includes a commitment to ensure “that our council homes and the neighbourhoods in which they are located are invested in, keeping them compliant, safe and well maintained”.
- 3.3** The Housing Strategy also notes that the Council has “renewed its commitment to improving core functions; keeping homes safe, warm and dry and well maintained, with quality management and maintenance that delivers tenant priorities”. To meet this commitment, timely access to the houses we manage is key.

4.0 Legislative Basis

- 4.1** The Housing Services Access Policy is designed to align with key pieces of legislation relating to social housing and the health and safety of these homes.
- 4.2** The Regulator of Social Housing's new Consumer Standards include a standard on 'Safety and Quality', which “Makes sure that tenants' homes are safe and of good quality. This includes outcomes related to the safety and quality of tenants' homes”.
- 4.3** In line with legislation, it is our duty as a landlord to gain access for certain activities such as an annual gas safety check or Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) safety testing. More information on these can be obtained in the relevant policies or procedures detailed in section 11 of this policy.

5.0 Definitions / Glossary

- **Asbestos:** A hazardous material when disturbed, which was used before 1999 as a fireproof building material.
- **Capping of an appliance:** Disconnecting the gas supply to an appliance, this may only be considered under strict conditions such as an emergency, if a faulty appliance has been discovered or at the request of the resident if they choose not to have a gas supply.

Note: Capping the gas supply at the residents' request must only be done once it has been verified how the resident is going to heat their home. It is not sufficient for the gas supply to be disconnected if temporary and/or portable electric heating is to be used, as this could pose a fire hazard and/or overload the electrical supply.

- **EIA – Equality Impact Assessment:** A process used to help NCCHS (or any organisation) identify and evaluate how its policies, practices, or services may affect individuals who are protected under equality law. It ensures that reasonable adjustments are made to prevent discrimination and promote fairness, particularly for people with protected characteristics such as age, sex, disability,

race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, and marriage or civil partnership.

- **EICR:** An Electrical Installation Condition Report is an electrical safety test and inspection of the fixed wiring within a property, such as the light fittings and sockets.
- **Emergency:** In relation to this policy, an emergency is an unexpected event that presents immediate danger to health and safety resulting in serious injury* or death or where a failure to act could cause extensive damage to NCC assets.
- **Emergency entry vs. court authorised entry:**
 1. **Emergency entry:** In a genuine emergency as described above (e.g., a verified gas leak, active excessive escape of water, immediate fire/electrical danger, unsecure property), the Council may enter without notice to protect life and property and will resecure the home afterwards.
 2. **Court authorised entry:** In nonemergency scenarios where access is still refused after all reasonable steps and support offers; the Council will seek an injunction order. If the injunction order explicitly permits managed access, representatives from the access and compliance teams and representative from the housing Office, when necessary, will attend with a locksmith. If deemed appropriate ASB or police officers will also attend.
 3. **Note: "Abandonment"** is a separate process and does not by itself authorise non-emergency managed access for compliance checks.
- **Fire Hazard:** A fire hazard refers to any condition that increases the likelihood of fire, including faulty or untested electrical systems. In the context of hoarding, fire hazards are significantly elevated due to obstructed exits, flammable materials, and restricted access for emergency services. In high-rise buildings, the combination of hoarding and unchecked electrics poses a severe risk to life and property. Managed access may be justified under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 to mitigate these risks.
- **Fire Safety:** General fire safety requirements within all buildings that are designed to prevent fire hazards and legislated under UK Law.
- **Managed access** (See 6.13.4.2): Managed access refers to the act of entering a property without tenant consent, typically under legal authority. It is considered a last resort and may be considered when all engagement efforts have failed or there is a confirmed or presumed risk to life, health, or property. All Conditions for managed access must be met which includes a legal injunction, completed vulnerability checks and EIA, documented risk assessment, and approval from the Access Decision Panel, unless in a situation deemed to be an emergency.
- **Fuel Poverty Payment Fund:** A discretionary fund available to support gas and electrical compliance testing where residents do not have credit on their energy meters for NCCHS to complete compliance checks.
- **Gas safety check:** Involves safety checks of all gas burning equipment including the gas meter, boiler, gas cookers and fires.
- **HPM: (Housing Patch Manager):** Responsible for managing a designated local patch, providing advice and support to sustain tenancies, and taking enforcement action when necessary. HPMS are accountable for the overall standard and appearance of estates and work closely with residents and stakeholders to maintain high standards. The role involves daily estate visits and independent management of priorities.
- **Legionella:** A spore of bacteria found in stored stagnant water and is hazardous to health if tanks and pipes are not maintained.
- **Letter before action (LBA):** An LBA is the final letter that the legal team will send before court action can be considered.
- **Loler:** Legislation regarding passenger lifts within blocks and human lifting equipment within homes such as hoists and stair lifts.
- **NEC:** Housing stock digital tool to track and monitor property compliance and tenancy related data.
- **PAT:** Portable appliance testing of white goods supplied by NCCHS, including washing machine, cooker, fridge/freezer.
- **Property Clearance Fund:** A discretionary fund available to support property clearance where conditions prevent safe access for staff or contractors. This includes biohazards such as pests,

needles, general rubbish and faeces. The fund ensures that essential compliance checks and repairs can proceed without delay. This does not include cases of extreme hoarding where referral to the hoarding panel will be required.

- ***Serious Injury** - Serious injuries, often referred to as catastrophic injuries are those that have a significant and long-term impact on the life of the injured person and their family. Such injuries can include brain and spinal cord injuries, as well as amputations, serious burns, serious medical injuries and fatal accidents
- **TEM:** Tenancy Estate Management, a team within Housing Services which supports tenants, manages the condition of council estates through maintenance and groundskeeping, and addresses issues like anti-social behaviour and property disrepair to ensure properties are safe and well-maintained.
- **TSOs / Tenancy Sustainment Team:** TSOs are Tenancy Sustainment Officers working within the Tenancy Sustainment Team within Housing Services. The team supports tenants to successfully maintain their tenancy, including offering advice and support with managing rent payments.
- **Total Mobile:** Housing stock digital tool to track and monitor property compliance and tenancy related data.

6.0 Policy

- 6.1** Each tenant signs a Tenancy Agreement outlining their own rights and responsibilities, as well as those of the landlord. These contracts specifically include access provisions.
- 6.2** Failure to allow access to discharge any of our landlord responsibilities will mean a breach of the Tenancy Agreement and could put the tenancy at risk. If access is not given in line with the Tenancy Agreement, Nottingham City Council reserves the right to use any available remedy, up to and including taking legal action against the tenant or capping of an appliance.
- 6.3** Where a specific appliance is unsafe, we may isolate or cap that appliance in line with safety regulations and manufacturer instructions. We do not disconnect the overall electrical supply for non-access; instead, we escalate through supportive measures and legal routes where necessary.
- 6.4** Responsibilities under the Tenancy Agreement
- 6.4.1 The Tenancy Agreement sets out the circumstances in which we require access to a property, including in an emergency, and how this will be done.
- 6.4.2 Tenancy Agreement clause reference
- 6.4.2.1 *Communications and engagement on access issues will reference the Tenancy Agreement **access clause (e.g., 3.6)** in plain language so tenants understand why access is required and the consequences of persistent refusal.*
- 6.4.3 Landlord responsibilities:
- 6.4.3.1 *In all circumstances, except in an emergency, we will give reasonable notice of our requirement for access.*
- 6.4.3.2 *Reasonable notice will be a minimum of 24 hours. This notice can be through a range of media detailed in paragraph 6.6.*
- 6.4.3.3 *NCC will ensure emergency repairs are addressed promptly to maintain safety and habitability.*

- 6.4.4 The Council reserves the right, in cases of non-emergency, to force access into its properties. Residents must allow Nottingham City Council's staff, agents or contractors access to their home. This includes where the Council wishes to inspect the property or any installations or carry out safety checks. Failure to allow access in such cases may mean that notice will not be given and the property may be entered. In such cases, the Council will re-secure the property and rectify any damage caused in obtaining access.

6.5 Approach to reducing 'no access' incidence

- 6.5.1 Each circumstance where access is required will be covered in a policy. We will make every attempt to contact tenants to gain access to the property in line with the access procedure for each department which would usually consist of three documented appointments, followed by referral to the Access Team who will conduct additional access attempts and legal escalation where appropriate, in line with the process map and procedure document for the Compliance Access Team.
- 6.5.2 Each compliance team must ensure that appropriate vulnerability checks and communication methods are completed before escalating a case to the Access Team.
- 6.5.3 Where other concerns such as hoarding, decanted properties, tenant DIY, energy theft or suspected abandonment are identified and are preventing compliance teams from carrying out their duties, the relevant Housing Patch Manager (HPM) will be notified via Eyes Wide Open (EWO) or other appropriate channels and a note will be added to NEC or Total Mobile. The HPM should then follow the correct policy for the issue.
- 6.5.4 The Access Team will provide support to both the HPM and the resident where vulnerabilities have been identified and will monitor KPIs related to access referrals to help drive timely resolutions. Responsibility and accountability for any follow-up actions or legal proceedings related any vulnerabilities will remain with TEM in-line with existing policies and procedures.
- 6.5.5 Each department requiring access will allow one re-arrangement where at least 24 hours' notice has been provided. Any subsequent rearrangements will be carded and treated as no access unless an emergency urgent medical need has arisen.

6.6 Enhanced communication

- 6.6.1 We will provide clear, consistent communication to tenants about the importance of access and the consequences of non-access for them as a household, including potential deterioration of the condition of the home.
- 6.6.2 Multiple contact attempts will be made through various channels and media, including but not limited to text message, voice mail, email, social media notification, letter, and notifications left at the property when access attempts were made. If a tenant has notified us of their preferred media, we will use this.

6.7 Support

- 6.7.1 Where needed, tenants will be given support to facilitate access to their property in line with the EIA for the Compliance Access Team and the Vulnerable Persons Policy.
- 6.7.2 We will always look to resolve any access issues informally in the first instance.
- 6.7.3 Where we feel it would be beneficial, or where the tenant agrees, we will seek referral to partner agencies to support the tenant to meet the terms of their Tenancy Agreement.
- 6.7.4 Pre-paid top-ups for gas/electric cards will be available and form part of the Fuel Poverty Fund and are issued via the Tenancy Sustainment Team. They will be available to support gas and

electrical compliance testing where residents do not have credit on their energy meters, allowing NCCHS to complete mandatory compliance checks.

6.7.5 Consider any issues or barriers to allowing access and working with the tenant to overcome them, including enabling a representative of the tenant such as a family member, friend or support worker to be present during a visit;

6.7.6 Reasonable adjustments and accessible communication:

6.7.6.1 **Translation and interpreting:** *We will provide translated letters and access to interpreters where language needs are identified.*

6.7.6.2 **Accessible formats:** *We will offer large print/Braille/audio on request; we will record preferences in **NEC**, so all teams use the same settings.*

6.7.6.3 **Pregnancy/maternity flexibility:** *We will permit short notice rearrangements where medical or caring needs arise and provide longer notice periods wherever feasible.*

6.7.6.4 **“Helping Hands” support:** *Where mobility or health needs make preparation difficult, we will arrange **Helping Hands** support (e.g. moving heavy furniture safely) so checks can proceed.*

6.7.6.5 **Call ahead and extended door waits:** *For tenants flagged with mobility/disability needs, we will **call ahead** and allow **extended time** at the door before recording a “no access.”*

6.7.6.6 **Safety and safeguarding:** *Where “two to attend” or safety alerts exist, we will coordinate joint visits with TEM/TSO/Compliance Officers, social care or mental health teams.*

6.7.6.7 *Working with the tenant to arrange a suitable time to visit the property, offering a range of timeslots and considering the tenants’ needs (e.g. their working pattern, any accessibility requirements, or adjustments)*

6.7.6.8 *Making multiple attempts at various times of the day to contact tenants and using different routes if one fails (e.g. phone calls, emails or letters)*

6.7.6.9 *These measures implement the mitigations set out in the **EIA** and Vulnerable Persons Policy and should be applied universally across all teams requiring access into residents’ properties.*

6.8 Vulnerability considerations

6.8.1 We will make any reasonable adjustments as outlined in our Vulnerable Persons Policy.

6.8.2 A discretionary Property Clearance Fund will be available to assist compliance checks where the property is deemed unfit for human habitation due to cleanliness and hygiene concerns and where the tenant is unable to initiate a deep clean on their own.

6.8.3 Vulnerability Dashboard - NCC is developing a Vulnerability Dashboard to proactively identify tenants with known disabilities, financial hardship, or safeguarding concerns. This tool will support early intervention and tailored access strategies. The Vulnerability Dashboard will adopt Privacy by Design, with clear **lawful basis**, data minimisation, role-based access controls, and Data Privacy Impact Assessment (DPIA) where required. Tenants' preferences and adjustments will be **recorded in NEC** and used only for delivering services and safety compliance.

6.8.4 Out-of-hours appointments will be considered for tenants with work or caring responsibilities to reduce missed visits and improve access compliance.

6.8.5 Joint visits with partner agencies - Where appropriate, joint visits will be arranged with social workers, mental health teams, or TSOs to support tenants who repeatedly refuse access due to suspected vulnerabilities.

6.9 Use of Compliance Warning Flags

6.9.1 To mitigate health and safety risks and ensure timely compliance, NCCHS has implemented a system of warning flags within NEC. These flags alert staff when a property is approaching or has exceeded its compliance deadline.

*6.9.1.1 **Flag 1** is triggered 6 weeks before the relevant compliance due date and prompts staff to advise tenants and coordinate access.*

*6.9.1.2 **Flag 2** is triggered once the property is out of compliance and restricts non-emergency repairs until the out of compliance is completed.*

6.9.2 This process ensures that repairs are not carried out in potentially unsafe environments and that all colleagues are aware of compliance risks before attending a property.

6.9.3 In addition a warning **Flag 3** will be issued on a property once the property has been referred to the access team and will remain in place until all required compliance checks have been completed. A process will be detailed within the electrical management plan that prevents non-urgent repairs being carried out whilst the flag is in place

6.10 Intervention for persistent access issues at a property

6.10.1 Research and best practice

6.10.2 We will periodically review best practice on how best to gain access to properties, particularly where there is non-compliance with the Tenancy Agreement or where tenant vulnerabilities are a factor, to ensure we provide reasonable support.

6.10.3 We will regularly update policies and procedures according to best practice and changes to legislation.

6.11 Case management – monthly Compliance Access Panel meeting

6.11.1 We will undertake individual case reviews where access is frequently denied or resisted.

6.11.2 We will initiate tailored interventions, considering the tenant's circumstances and any vulnerabilities.

6.11.3 **Supportive Access Plans** - Tailored Access Plans will be developed for tenants with repeated missed appointments. These plans will address practical or emotional barriers to engagement and promote sustained access compliance.

6.11.4 **Compliance Flag Escalation** - Properties that fall out of compliance will be flagged in NEC and monitored by the relevant compliance team. These flags form part of the graduated response and ensure that access issues are escalated appropriately, with repairs deferred until compliance is achieved as detailed in 6.9.

6.12 Graduated response

6.12.1 We will make initial informal communication with tenants and offer support with facilitating access to a property.

6.12.2 If offers of support do not resolve access issues, we will issue formal notices and warnings.

6.12.3 If formal notices and warnings do not resolve the issue, in line with the Tenancy Agreement we will take legal action as a last resort to ensure we can gain access to the property, as detailed in section 6.13.

6.12.4 We will implement an Access Decision Panel which will meet once a month to discuss escalation of non-compliant residents. The panel will consist of key stakeholders from across Housing Services including representatives from Tenancy and Estate Management and representatives from all six major compliance areas (Gas, Electrical, Asbestos, Fire Safety, Loler and Legionella) and building safety.

6.12.5 The Access Decision Panel will decide the best course of action, whether providing additional support, taking further legal action or a managed access approach.

6.13 Enforcement options

6.13.1 Nottingham City Council employs several enforcement and intervention options to ensure compliance with access requirements:

6.13.2 Access injunctions – these can be used to compel tenants to grant access for essential inspections and repairs.

6.13.3 Demoted Tenancy – this will be applied as a corrective measure for persistent noncompliance with tenancy conditions, including access refusal.

6.13.4 Possession proceedings – this will be initiated as a last resort for serious or persistent breaches of the Tenancy Agreement, including failure to provide access.

6.13.4.1 *Notice of Seeking Possession (NOSP) – considered for persistent non-compliance or in conjunction with other tenancy breaches, subject to proportionality and EIA screening.*

6.13.4.2 **Managed access** – *this will only be applied where there is an emergency or as a **last resort** after all reasonable attempts to engage the tenant have failed. **All** the following conditions must be met:*

- A valid legal injunction has been obtained (unless deemed an emergency).
- All vulnerability checks and support referrals have been exhausted.
- The property presents a confirmed and significant risk that makes inaction disproportionate, such as a gas or electrical safety breach or hazard, fire risk, or safeguarding concern.
- Approval from the Access Decision Panel including legal consultation is secured (unless deemed an emergency).
- Ensure all applications for forced access demonstrate proportionality under Article 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998. Applications will demonstrate that all reasonable steps were taken, including engagement, support offers, and vulnerability checks, before legal escalation.

6.14 These actions support the Council's Target Operating Model by promoting tenant-centred services, data-driven decision-making, and efficient resource use.

6.15 Documentation and safeguards for managed access:

- 6.15.1 Every emergency entry must be justified and recorded (risk, indicators/evidence, attending officers, action taken, and re-securing).
- 6.15.2 Where time permits (non-emergency), an EIA screening and vulnerability checks must be completed before legal escalation.
- 6.15.3 After any emergency entry, officers will follow up on vulnerabilities, safeguarding, and repairs, and provide residents with information about what was done and why.
- 6.15.4 Suspected abandonment alone is not an emergency and must be managed under the abandonment/tenancy-status procedure.

6.16 For the avoidance of doubt, in non-emergency cases the Council will not force entry without a court order expressly authorising entry, and only once approval has been sought via the Access Decision Panel, except where another statutory power applies (e.g. gas transporter emergency powers, Gas Safety (Rights of Entry) Regulations 1996).

6.17 After any managed access, the Council will:

- Reseal and secure the property immediately
- Leave written notice detailing location of keys, actions taken and reasons
- Leave copies of new keys at the 24-hour security office for resident collection
- Follow up with tenant and support agencies within 24 hours
- Record all actions in NEC for audit and regulatory compliance

6.18 Managed access will remain an option, not a guarantee. Applications will be made where justified, supported by evidence of statutory duties and tenancy obligations. The court will decide whether to grant authority. Outcomes will be monitored, and the policy reviewed following legislative changes.

7.0 Responsibilities

7.1 Tenants have responsibility for allowing and enabling access to properties for safety checks, inspections and improvements, as laid out in their Tenancy Agreement.

- 7.2** It is the responsibility of the relevant NCCHS officer to ensure that contractors who are engaged on work where access is critical are aware of this policy and accompanying procedures, and maintain the standards contained within the relevant documents.
- 7.3** It is the responsibility of the relevant NCCHS officer to ensure that all subcontractors and employees are aware of the procedures.
- 7.4** Any variations to this policy must be agreed by the Strategic Director of Housing.
- 7.5** Any variation to the associated procedures must be documented and signed off by the owner of each procedure.

7.6 Staff training

7.6.1 NCCHS will deliver annual training and refreshers on:

7.6.1.1 Equality, diversity and inclusion (inc. accessible communication and cultural competence).

7.6.1.2 Vulnerability identification and reasonable adjustments.

7.6.1.3 Safe evidence gathering and witness statements.

*7.6.1.4 Using **NEC** flags, notepad alerts and recording preferences*

7.6.2 Key Performance Indicators for this commitment will include gathering information on the percentage of front-line staff trained and percentage of cases with EIA screening before legal action.

8.0 Engagement and Feedback

8.1 Will include:

- 8.1.1 Adults' Social Care / Children's Social Care
- 8.1.2 Housing Assurance Board
- 8.1.3 Legal
- 8.1.4 Executive Member

8.2 At this stage, direct engagement with tenants regarding the development of this policy has not been undertaken. This is due to the urgent need to implement a robust and legally compliant access framework in response to:

- 8.2.1 **Statutory changes**, including Awaab's Law and the Electrical Safety Regulations for social housing, effective October and November 2025, respectively.
- 8.2.2 **Escalating service pressures**, such as increased non-access rates and the need to meet compliance deadlines across multiple safety domains.
- 8.2.3 **Risk mitigation requirements**, particularly in high-risk environments like high-rise buildings and properties with hoarding or safeguarding concerns.

8.3 The policy has been developed using internal data, legal guidance, and best practice from housing compliance and enforcement teams. It prioritises tenant safety, legal obligations, and operational efficiency.

8.4 Future engagement will be embedded into the **ongoing oversight and review process**, including:

- 8.4.1 Tenant feedback via workshops and surveys.
- 8.4.2 Collaboration with tenant panels and advocacy groups.
- 8.4.3 Monitoring of outcomes and service impact through the Equality Impact Assessment and SMART actions.

8.5 Tenant Communication Campaign

A targeted communication campaign will be launched to educate tenants on compliance legislation for social landlords and inform them of their legal responsibilities under Section 3.6 of the Tenancy Agreement. This will include quarterly workshops, distribution of compliance leaflets, and SMS reminders to all tenants. The campaign will be delivered in partnership with the Communications Team and Tenant Engagement Officers and will include clear messaging on:

- Their Legal obligations under Tenancy Agreement Clause 3.6
- Landlord 'big six' Statutory safety requirements
- Consequences of non-access, including potential legal action incurring cost and managed access as a last resort.

9.0 Procedures

- 9.1** This policy should be considered in conjunction with the suite of health and safety policies and procedures, which detail when access is required and how this will be obtained. These are listed in section 11.
- 9.2** EIA screening requirement - an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening must be completed and reviewed before sending a LBA and again prior to injunction/possession referrals. Screening must confirm vulnerabilities, reasonable adjustments, accessible communication, and that support referrals have been considered and actioned. The signed screening outcome will be included in the legal pack.
- 9.3** Letters and evidence handling
- 9.3.1 Hand delivery: Access Team referral letters, LBA letters, missed LBA escalation letters, and injunction missed appointment letters are hand delivered as set out in the process map.
- 9.3.2 Witness statements: After missed LBA or injunction breach, Access Officers will draft witness statements collate and verify date/time-stamped evidence (letters, calling cards, photos, relevant information) for management and legal pack submission.
- 9.3.3 Records: All dates, times and addresses will be verified to ensure they match across letters/cards before referral.
- 9.3.4 Property compliance system Total Mobile and NEC will be updated.

10.0 Monitoring and Review

- 10.1** This policy will be reviewed to comply with any changes to legislation or good practice which are relevant, and no less than every three years.
- 10.2** We will review the impact this policy has on compliance with access requests, to ascertain whether the interventions have been successful and to use this intelligence to inform future practice.
- 10.3** Access Monitoring System - a digital Access Monitoring System will be implemented and integrated with the repairs management platform (e.g., Total Mobile or NEC). This system will track access attempts, tenant responses, and outcomes in real-time, providing a clear audit trail for regulators and supporting data-driven decision-making.
- 10.4** SMART KPI Tracking – key performance indicators (KPIs) from the Access Improvement Plan will be monitored monthly and reported quarterly. These include:
- 10.4.1 Reduction in no-access rates
- 10.4.2 Percentage of vulnerable tenants receiving tailored support
- 10.4.3 Percentage of successful out-of-hours appointments (4pm – 6pm and weekends)
- 10.4.4 Percentage of cases resolved without legal action.
- 10.5** Flag Monitoring - the performance and effectiveness of the NEC flag system will be reviewed quarterly. Metrics will include:
- 10.5.1 Number of flagged properties resolved

10.5.2 Time to compliance after flag activation

10.5.3 Missed opportunities identified and addressed

10.5.4 Repairs raised without following the NEC Flag process

11.0 Appendices

11.1 Appendix A: RACI Matrix

- **A (Accountable):** Owns the outcome.
- **C (Consulted):** Provides input.
- **I (Informed):** Kept updated.

How to Use This Table

- **R (Responsible):** Does the work.

Activity	Compliance Teams	TEM (HPM)	Access Team	Legal	Access Team Manager
1. Arrange first 3 appointments (except gas team who follow process map - PS-GAS-02)	R & A – Book and attend; confirm language & comms preferences	A – if safeguarding / hoarding / DIY concerns arise	I	N/A	I
2. Identify initial vulnerabilities (before or during appointment attempts)	R & A – Check NEC alerts/notepad flags; disabilities, vulnerabilities, H&S risks etc	C – Advise / action known safeguarding/hoarding risks and existing support	I	N/A	I
3. Mitigate vulnerabilities before referral	R & A – EIA - Adjust approach (e.g., interpreter, call ahead, extra time at door) and proceed with 3 appointments	A – Support with welfare or safeguarding	C	N/A	I
4. Collate evidence for referral (letters, calling cards, appointment logs)	R – Compile and sign complete pack and chronology	C – Add tenancy/safeguarding/rent arrears notes where relevant	C	N/A	I
5. Access Team referral	A – Send prepared Access Team referral pack to Access Team	C	R – Data Admin checks evidence and verifies data, dates & times - returns to compliance team if in-correct. R – Issue referral letter; manage contact if correct	I	A
6. EIA screening at legal trigger(s)	C	C	R – Complete EIA screening before LBA and before injunction referrals	C	A
7. LBA preparation & delivery	I	C	R – submit LBA referral and hand-deliver LBA;	R – Verify evidence and create LBA	A
8. Legal pack & injunction application	I	C	C – Provide verified evidence, exhibits and witness statements	R – Prepare and submit legal bundle; advise on order terms	A
9. Court attendance	I	C	C – attend court when needed	R	A
10. Support referrals & followup (parallel to legal where appropriate)	R - Helping Hands; out-of-hours appointments;	R & A – Hoarding/safeguarding/mental health referrals; monitor engagement	C – Fuel poverty vouchers - via sustainment teams; R - Monitor TEM vulnerability engagement.	I	A
11. Final outcome – Monthly decision panel (NOSP, demotion, forced access where lawful, or further support)	C	A	C	C	R – Decision panel consulted; actions agreed with key stakeholders

- 11.2** Appendix B: An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed [Corporate Filing System - Equality Impact Assessment Housing Services Access Policy Reviewed JLM - 3.2.26 \(003\).pdf - All Documents](#)
- 11.3** This policy aligns with safety and compliance policies, processes and associated documents, including:
- 11.3.1 COMP-ACC-01 Compliance Access Team process map (Version 1.0, 17/06/2025)
 - 11.3.2 Health and Safety Policy and associated procedures
 - 11.3.3 NCC Electrical Safety Operational Policy
 - 11.3.4 [Housing Persons Vulnerable Person's Policy.docx](#)
 - 11.3.5 Hoarding Procedure NCHP053 (link)
 - 11.3.6 Multi-Agency Hoarding Framework - [nottinghamnottinghamshirehoardingframework.pdf](#)
 - 11.3.7 [Corporate Filing System - Policies, Procedures and Strategies - Safeguarding - All Documents](#)
 - 11.3.8 Decant policy
 - 11.3.9 [Corporate Filing System - Policies, Procedures and Strategies - Gas - All Documents](#)
 - 11.3.10 [Corporate Filing System - Policies, Procedures and Strategies - Electric - All Documents](#)
 - 11.3.11 [Corporate Filing System - Policies, Procedures and Strategies](#) – Asbestos
 - 11.3.12 Water Hygiene Management Procedure NCCHSP091 (link)
 - 11.3.13 Lift Management Procedure NCCHSP097 (link) –
 - 11.3.14 [Corporate Filing System - Policies, Procedures and Strategies - Building Safety - All Documents](#)
 - 11.3.15 [Corporate Filing System - Policies, Procedures and Strategies - Damp & Mould - All Documents](#)
 - 11.3.16 Awaab's Law Policy
 - 11.3.17 [Corporate Filing System - Policies, Procedures and Strategies - Fire Risk Management - All Documents](#)
 - 11.3.18 Communal Areas Policy
 - 11.3.19 Detailed role allocation for key activities is provided in Appendix X (RACI Matrix), see page 16
 - 11.3.20 NCC Tenancy agreement - [nottinghamcc.sharepoint.com/sites/NCH_CFS/Policies Procedures and Strategies/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FNCH_CFS%2FPolicies Procedures and Strategies%2FHousing%2FHousing Options%2FRegistration %26 Allocations%2FMutual Exchange%2FTenancy Agreement%2FNCC Tenancy agreement Mar 2023%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2FNCH_CFS%2FPolicies Procedures and Strategies%2FHousing%2FHousing Options%2FRegistration %26 Allocations%2FMutual Exchange%2FTenancy Agreement](#)
 - 11.3.21 Responsive Repairs Policies (links) - [nottinghamcc.sharepoint.com/sites/NCH_CFS/Policies Procedures and Strategies/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FNCH_CFS%2FPolicies Procedures and Strategies%2FTEM Services%2FTenancy Services%2FRecharges%2FNCHP145 Responsive Repairs Procedure V3 April 2022 %283%29%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2FNCH_CFS%2FPolicies Procedures and Strategies%2FTEM Services%2FTenancy Services%2FRecharges](#)

