

## Housing Audit Action Plan

Ref. No	Issue	Action req. quarterly	Action Implemented	Person/s Responsible	Target Date	Progress
1.1a	<b>Uncollected Rent In Advance (RIA)</b>	<b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare has agreed to ensure that there are procedures and resources in place to record and monitor all RIA payments through to recovery.</b>	<p>There has been a new procedure put in place to ensure that as soon as the RIA payment is made a sundry debtor is raised straight away to recover the monies.</p> <p>Resources have been put in place to ensure debtors are raised promptly. There are expenditure and income nominals for RIA and at the end of the month these should balance. The Admin and Finance Officer will do reconciliations on a monthly basis.</p>	Housing Advice Centre Manager	01/03/2007	Completed
1.1b		<b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare has agreed to arrange, as a priority, for the analysis of the backlog of any rents in advance due and ensure that adequate resource is allocated to recover.</b>	Resource put in place to review and collect the backlog of rent in advance payments due	Admin and Finance Officer	23/05/2007	<p>Admin and Finance Officer handling current cases.</p> <p>Temporary Housing and Finance Officer handling the 'backlog'</p>
1.1c		<b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare has agreed to allocate a senior officer whose role it is to ensure that the processing of procedures for collection of all monies is effective and adhered to.</b>	<p>This has been already addressed through the restructure and the Housing Advice Centre Manager will carry out the role.</p> <p>13.7.07 Checklist drawn up to ensure all details on file before QSP authorisation</p>	Housing Advice Centre Manager	01/03/2007	Completed

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2.1a	<b>Non-Returned Deposits</b>	<b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare has agreed to ensure that there are procedures and resources in place to record and monitor all deposit payments through to recovery.</b>	There is a new spreadsheet set up that lists all the outstanding deposits and these feed through to a mail merge letter. The letter is sent out to all landlords on a 6 monthly basis where a reply is required. On receipt of the letter the spreadsheet is amended and a sundry debtor raised if required. Again this is reconciled monthly to the expenditure code and the income code and the difference should be the balance on the outstanding deposits tab on the new spreadsheet.	Admin and Finance Officer	01/03/2007	Completed
2.1b		<b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare has also agreed to arrange, as a priority, for resource to be allocated to recovering the backlog of deposits due back.</b>	The Head of Finance has agreed with Management Board that resources should be identified for this.  Temporary Housing Finance Officer had phased start to new role – caused by staff shortage over holiday period, delay in backfilling, and training replacement staff.	Head of Housing and Welfare	Temporary Housing Finance Officer appointed on 25.06.07	THFO (NA) has been moved to more suitable office, and is now actively pursuing deposit backlog. Is meeting weekly with SB and JB to monitor progress and agree action plans on more complicated cases
2.1c		<b>The Head of Finance has agreed to report progress in terms of meeting the action plan to the Corporate Governance Group on a regular basis.</b>	The Corporate Governance Group reviews audits as part of its regular meetings – this will be kept on Agenda until they are satisfied issues have been adequately addressed.	Head of Finance	01/04/2007	IP providing fortnightly updates to Management Board on progress  This is now an update to David Stapleton wef mid November

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2.1d		<p><b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare has agreed to ensure that all landlords are aware of the importance of notifying the Homelessness Team when the tenant gives them notice.</b></p>	<p>The rent deposit agreement, which is signed by the landlord, states that the landlord must notify us of any changes in the tenant's circumstances.</p> <p>Two separate guides originally accompanied the agreement – one for the tenant and one for the landlord. The guides can be used to remind landlords and tenants of their responsibilities.</p> <p>The guides have been re-written to coincide with the introduction of the Tenancy Deposit Protection Scheme in April 2007.</p> <p>Printed booklets are now available for landlords and tenants.</p>	Head of Housing and Welfare	31/05/2007	Completed
3.1a	<b>Storage and Removals</b>	<p><b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare has agreed to ensure that there are more robust procedures and sufficient resources in place to recover all storage and removal costs due back in a timely manner.</b></p>	<p>Review and revise procedures.</p> <p>Split backlog from current cases</p> <p>Identify resources</p>	Housing Advice Centre Manager	30/06/2007	<p>To be addressed as part of the recovery of Rent in Advance and deposits task.</p> <p>Record of payments made brought up to date and being maintained.</p>

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3.2a		<b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare has agreed to ensure that Case Officers always complete orders, even if they are done retrospectively.</b>	SB to speak to Bob Brimley – likely we'll need to do via POP, although possible difficulty because don't know cost in advance  Delays in POP training due to staff shortage and CBL preparations, but admin team now trained	Senior Housing Options Officers	30/06/2007  Revised date 31/12/07	Outstanding
3.3a		<b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare will agree a process with Sparkford Storage for formally recording personal belongings that are taken into storage. This should have a formal sign-off by the applicant.</b>	Update as part of 3.1a  JB spoke to Sparkford Storage 10.9.07. Appears that they don't even do inventories for their 'private' customers. All belongings are kept in locked containers. Said that some firms spend lot of time doing inventories. Their insurance covers any loss or damage but cases involving SSDC are very rare – 1 or 2 cases in several years.	Housing Advice Centre Manager	30/06/2007	Completed
4.1a	<b>Legal Agreements</b>	<b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare has agreed to ensure that the procedures in place are sufficiently robust to ensure that the Agreements are always signed.</b>	Incorporated in the new procedures the original documents are required to be returned and signed before any payments are authorised	Head of Housing and Welfare	01/03/2007	Completed
4.1b		<b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare has agreed to meet with Legal Services to ensure that procedures satisfy legal requirements.</b>	JB to meet with legal – new issues around Tenancy Deposit Scheme, and wording of agreement.	Head of Housing and Welfare	11/05/2007	Completed

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			Meeting held on 12.11.07 with legal to discuss current agreements and procedure, especially in light of new issues arising from Tenancy Deposit Scheme			
5.1a	<b>Record Keeping</b>	<b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare has agreed to ensure that the spreadsheet records are accurate, complete and up-to-date as a matter of priority. Consideration could be given to using a database.</b>	<p>New spreadsheet set up with fields that are mandatory. The revised structure means that only one person requires access to amend the spreadsheet.</p> <p>The intention is to carry out monthly reconciliation (as per deposits and rent in advance).</p> <p>SB and KH have updated homeless prevention fund spreadsheet with new fields/tabs</p> <p>Determined that with Abris being implemented next year it would probably have a negative effect on the service to try to set up new databases for a short -term</p>	Admin and Finance Officer	30/04/2007	Completed
5.2a		<b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare has agreed to evaluate the benefits and costs of using a database to manage the Homelessness records.</b>	Homelessness records will be part of the new Abris housing system, by late 2008.	Head of Housing and Welfare	11/05/2007	Determined that with Abris being implemented next year it would probably have a negative effect on the service to try to set up new databases for a short -term

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5.3a		<b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare has agreed to ensure that the record keeping systems enable management information on performance, particularly BVPI information.</b>	Procedures for calculating BVPIs to be reviewed.	Housing Policy and Performance Officer	18/05/2007  Revised to 31/10/07	Procedures for collection of BV183b re-written and data for 2006/07 recalculated and signed off by Graham from the Audit Commission. Also made changes to data collection for HIP HSSA wef 01/04/08
6.1a	<b>Homeless Prevention Fund (Spend to Save)</b>	<b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare will liaise with the Head of Finance to determine how income coded to Spend to Save can be represented more fairly in the Accounts.</b>	Separate nominals to be set up for Spend to save expenditure, one for recoverable monies and one for non-recoverable monies.	Admin and Finance Officer	01/03/2007	Completed
6.1b		<b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare has agreed to produce a report that reviews and demonstrates that Homeless Prevention Fund (Spend to Save) offers VFM and seeks formal member approval for the continuation of the Scheme.</b>	Report to be discussed with Portfolio Holder by 27/04/07. Subject to Portfolio Holder amendments, to go through to Management Board for approval by DX end of June.  Internal audit to carry out review.  Checked spreadsheet – good history of payments, each estimated saving not shown. Officers reminded re importance of putting figure on the form in 1 <sup>st</sup> place, admin. warned to enter any new figures in the new column. JB to task MS to retrieve old figures	Head of Housing and Welfare	30/06/2007	Internal Audit review undertaken.  Report to go to members

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6.2a		<b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare has agreed to arrange for Finance to set-up a unique ledger nominal code for 'H/L Contribution to Trenchard Park cost'.</b>	There is a Nominal set up for B&B expenditure and one for Trenchard Park.	Senior Accounting Technician	05/04/2007	Completed
7.1a	<b>Staff and Customer Safety</b>	<b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare has agreed to ensure that the CCTV Code of Practice is followed through appropriate signs posted at the housing advice centre.</b>	Signs to be ordered from Alpha Signs	Housing Advice Centre Manager	30/04/2007	Completed
7.2a		<b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare has agreed to devise a clear protocol on what to do in the event of an emergency and ensure that all staff, including starters, are fully aware of it ongoing.</b>	Reception staff to receive training in the use of Yeovil Business Crime Radio Network (YBCRO)  Procedure to be put in place and staff made aware.  Web Editor to post on InSite.	Head of Housing and Welfare	30/04/2007	Posters distributed with emergency action. This was copied to InSite  Training on YBCRO done  All staff briefed on how to contact the Police in staff meeting 13/09/06. Procedure notes were circulated to Petters House staff on 28/11/06 and updated notes on 11/1/07.
7.2b		<b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare has agreed to devise a system of panic alert to staff in Petters House who can offer an immediate response, subject to the danger.</b>	Property Services required to complete wiring. Safety Advisor will be requested to attend team meeting in April 2007 and further advice will be obtained from Property Services.	Head of Housing and Welfare	30/03/2008	Blue lights in both ground floor offices have been tested and are in working order

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			Property Services chased 18.5.07 and 25.6.07 to check wiring to blue lights at top of stairs.			<p>Training in how to deal with difficult behaviour in July 07, attended by all admin and housing officers</p> <p>Weekly testing of panic alarms to be implemented October 2007</p> <p>Health and Safety adviser attended Admin Team Meeting (which included receptionists) and gave general advice</p>
<b>8.1a</b>	<b>Homelessness Budget</b>	<b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare and the Service Accountant have agreed to review the budget for H110 – Homelessness and ensure that the budget lines are set realistically.</b>	Some work has been done on this in terms of spend but we need to change the expected income figure. (IP @ 17.09.07)	Head of Housing and Welfare	30/04/2007	On-going
<b>9.1a</b>	<b>Data Protection</b>	<b>The Head of Housing &amp; Welfare has agreed to ensure that the holding and use of records complies with the Data Protection Act.</b>	Filing systems and culture to be reviewed	Principal Housing Strategy Officer	30/04/2007	On-going