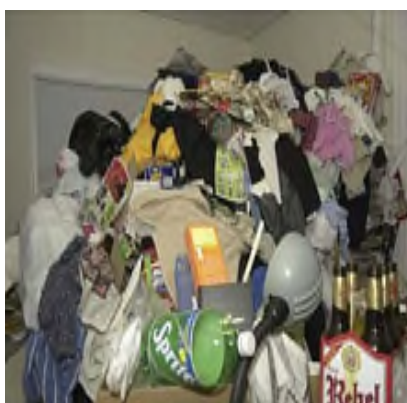


# Southend, Essex and Thurrock Multi-agency Hoarding Guidance



In partnership with Southend, Essex and Thurrock Safeguarding Children Boards

Updated November 2016

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**This guidance has been adapted from The London Borough of Merton Hoarding Protocol.**

## 1. Introduction

This guidance sets out an understanding of the issues of hoarding and details the path a practitioner should take to risk assess and safeguard the individual using an outcome focused, solution based model. This guidance should be read alongside the [SET adult safeguarding adult guidelines](#) and the [SET safeguarding children procedures](#).

## 2. Who does the guidance apply to?

This guidance applies to all those who may come across hoarding as part of their day to day duties. There is an expectation that everyone engages fully in partnership working to achieve the best outcome for the adult and any child(ren), while meeting the requirements and duties of individual agencies.

## 3. Aims of guidance

The aims of this guidance are to:

- Investigate and share information on the problems related to hoarding from different professional and community perspectives. Dealing with incidents in an evidence based, structured, systematic, co-ordinated and consistent way.
- Develop “informal” multi-agency solutions which maximise the use of existing services and resources and which may reduce the need for compulsory solutions.
- Ensure that when formal solutions are required, there is a process for planning solutions tailored to meet the needs of the adult(s) and/or any child(ren). Possible solutions include identifying and mobilising the support network, universal services, professional support and monitoring, property repairs and permanent and temporary re-housing.
- To establish best practice and improve knowledge of legislation that relates to hoarding behaviour.

## 4. Definition of hoarding

Hoarding is the excessive collection and retention of any material to the point that it impedes day to day functioning (Frost & Gross, 1993). Pathological or compulsive hoarding is a specific type of behaviour characterised by:

- Acquiring and failing to throw out a large number of items that would appear to hold little or no value and would be considered rubbish by other people;
- Severe “cluttering” of the adults home so that it is no longer able to function as a viable living space;
- Significant distress or impairment of work or social life (Kelly 2010).

## 5. General characteristics of hoarding

- **Fear and anxiety:** compulsive hoarding may have started as a learnt behaviour or following a significant event such as bereavement. The adult hoarding believes buying or saving things will relieve the anxiety and fear they

feel. The hoarding effectively becomes their comfort blanket. Any attempt to discard hoarded items can induce feelings varying from mild anxiety to a full panic attack with sweats and palpitations.

- **Long term behaviour pattern:** possibly developed over many years, or decades, of “buy and drop”. Collecting and saving, with an inability to throw away items without experiencing fear and anxiety.
- **Excessive attachment to possessions:** people who hoard may hold an inappropriate emotional attachment to items.
- **Indecisiveness:** people who hoard struggle with the decision to discard items that are no longer necessary, including rubbish.
- **Unrelenting standards:** people who hoard will often find faults with others, require others to perform to excellence while struggling to organise themselves and complete daily living tasks.
- **Socially isolated:** people who hoard will typically alienate family and friends and may be embarrassed to have visitors. They may refuse home visits from individuals including professionals, in favour of office based appointments or declining support / services.
- **Large number of pets:** people who hoard may have a large number of animals that can be a source of complaints by neighbours. They may be a self-confessed “rescuer of strays”.
- **Mentally competent:** people who hoard are typically able to make decisions that are not related to the hoarding.
- **Extreme clutter:** hoarding behaviour may prevent several or all the rooms of an adults’ property from being used for its intended purpose.
- **Churning:** hoarding behaviour can involve moving items from one part of an adult’s property to another, without ever discarding anything.
- **Self-care:** an adult who hoards may appear unkempt and dishevelled, due to lack of toileting or washing facilities in their home. However, some people who hoard will use public facilities, in order to maintain their personal hygiene and appearance.
- **Poor insight:** an adult who hoards will typically see nothing wrong with their behaviour and the impact it has on them and others.

## 6. What is hoarding disorder?

The Care Act (2014) statutory guidance includes self-neglect as a new type of abuse. Within this it states this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

The Royal College of Psychiatrists states that hoarding can be an illness in its own right, known as hoarding disorder. Hoarding can also be part of another health problem; Physical illness, dementia, depression, alcohol and drug misuse, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, learning disability or obsessive compulsive disorder

It is important to remember that not all hoarders have mental health issues and would not meet the criteria in an assessment. Hoarding disorder is distinct from the act of collecting, and is also different from people whose property is generally cluttered or messy. It is **not** simply a lifestyle choice. The main difference between a hoarder and a collector is that hoarders have strong emotional attachments to their objects which are well in excess of their real value.

Hoarding does not favour a particular gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, educational / occupational history or tenure type. Anything can be hoarded, in various areas including the adult's property, garden or communal areas. However, commonly hoarded items include but are not limited to:

- Clothes
- Newspapers, magazines or books
- Bills, receipts or letters
- Food and food containers
- Animals
- Medical equipment
- Collectibles such as toys, video, DVD, or CDs
- Items that others may consider rubbish

## 7. Types of hoarding

There are three types of hoarding:

- **Inanimate objects:** This is the most common. This could consist of one type of object or a collection of a mixture of objects such as old clothes, newspapers, food, containers or papers.
- **Animal hoarding:** Animal hoarding is on the increase. This is the obsessive collecting of animals, often with an inability to provide minimal standards of care. The hoarder is unable to recognise that the animals are or may be at risk because they feel they are saving them. In addition to an inability to care for the animals in the home, people who hoard animals are often unable to take care of themselves. The homes of animal hoarders are often eventually destroyed by the accumulation of animal faeces and infestation by insects.
- **Data hoarding:** This is a new phenomenon of hoarding. There is little research on this matter and it may not seem as significant as inanimate and animal hoarding, however people that do hoard data could still present with same issues that are symptomatic of hoarding. Data hoarding could present with the storage of data collection equipment such as computers, electronic storage devices or paper. A need to store copies of emails, and other information in an electronic format.

## 8. Information sharing

Practitioners must always seek the consent of the adult at the heart of the concern before taking action or sharing information. However there may be circumstances when consent cannot be obtained because the adult lacks the capacity to give it but the best interests of the individual or others at risk of harm demand action. In these cases Mental Capacity Act guidance should be followed.

In some cases, where an adult refuses consent, information can still lawfully be shared if it is in the public interest to do so. This may include protecting someone from serious harm or preventing crime and disorder. The key factors in deciding whether or not to share confidential information are:

- **Necessity** – sharing is likely to make an effective contribution to preventing the risk, and;
- **Proportionality** – the public interest in sharing outweighs the interest in maintaining confidentiality.

If there is any doubt about whether to share information, advice should be obtained from your organisations safeguarding lead. Things to consider are:

- Adequate recording if the consent of the adult was obtained and if not why not
- What information was shared and with whom and how the request was received and recorded, and how the decision was made to share the information
- If third party information is involved if consent was obtained and if not which exemptions applied
- All agencies involved must follow the appropriate statutes and guidance.

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, organisations have the responsibility to ensure that personal information is processed lawfully and fairly. All adults have a right to view any information held about them. Practitioners should consider this when they are recording information about the adult.

All agencies need to ensure that when it is decided it is appropriate to share information about hoarded properties with local fire brigades, and that this is being done on a need to know basis. All information should be transferred in a secure format.

Where the hoarding behaviour of the adult places a child at risk then this information should be shared with Children's Social Care in the area as appropriate (see paragraph 12 below).

## 9. Fire safety

Hoarding may pose a significant fire risk to both the people living in the hoarded property and those living nearby. Where a hoarded property is identified regardless

of the risk rating, adults need to be advised of the increased fire risk and identify a safe exit route. Appropriate professional fire safety advice must be sought. Information should be shared with appropriate emergency services by alerting them to hoarded properties. This will allow crews to respond appropriately. Once properties are cleared the information must be updated. A fire safety check undertaken by Essex County Fire and Rescue Service may be appropriate (see [link](#) for more information).

## **10. Legal powers and duties**

The Local Authorities (LA), including, where appropriate, the County Council, District Councils and Unitary Authorities will always try and work with an adult to identify a solution to a hoarded property, and professionals should contact the environmental waste services department of the local authority so they can be aware of the local authorities own procedures for waste collection and other local facilities available. However in cases where the adult is not willing to co-operate the LA can serve notice on the owner or occupier.

As mentioned above, an adult who is hoarding may be subject to the Care Act 2014, the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and/ or the Mental Health Act 1983. These are complex Acts but a selection of the key duties and powers are included below:

### **The Care Act 2014**

#### **Section 6: Co-operation**

Local authorities should co-operate in cases such as this. Specifically this will mean that the County Council and the District Council should work in tandem with each other where appropriate.

#### **Section 9: Assessing an adult's needs for care and support**

The offer of an assessment should be made to the adult because it will likely appear to the local authority that the adult may have care and support needs.

#### **Section 42: Safeguarding**

Hoarding may qualify as self-neglect and also pose a safeguarding risk to others, for example family or carers.

Please note that this Act does not provide a right of entry.

### **Mental Capacity Act 2005**

The principles have been set out above in section 8.

#### **Section 4: Best Interests**

If a hoarder has been assessed as lacking capacity regarding their hoarding then a best interests decision can be taken on their behalf. Depending on the situation, an application may be required to be made to the Court of Protection, please seek legal advice.

Please note that this Act does not provide a right of entry.

## **Mental Health Act 1983**

### **Section 2: Admission for Assessment**

This section would allow a hoarder to be admitted to hospital against their will if:

- They suffer from a mental disorder to the degree which warrants their detention in hospital for a limited period of time for the purposes of assessment; and
- They ought to be detained for their own protection or the protection of others

There is a strict legal procedure for this and it would only be applicable in extreme circumstances. Please note there is a power of entry by the police on grant of a warrant. The warrant is only granted if an Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) presents the Magistrate with the relevant information. It is at this point that the warrant can be issued and Police can enter with the AMHP.

The following legislation is available to Environmental Health Officers.

## **Public Health Act 1936**

### **Section 79: Power to require removal of noxious matter by occupier of premises**

This is seldom used as there is more appropriate legislation. If it is used it would generally be in respect of outdoor areas. Allows the cost to be recharged.

### **Section 83: Cleansing of filthy and/or verminous premises**

Where any premises is found to be;

- a) In such a filthy or unwholesome condition as to be prejudicial to health; or
- b) verminous (relating to rats, mice other pests including insects, their eggs and larvae)

Then the LA can serve a notice requiring clearance of materials and objects that are filthy, cleansing of surfaces, carpets etc. within a specified time period. This is generally a minimum of 21 days. If not complied with, Environmental Health (EH) can carry out works in default and recharge the costs. Appeal provisions are in place.

### **Section 84: Cleansing or destruction of filthy or verminous articles**

Any article that is so filthy as to need cleansing or destruction in order to prevent injury to persons in the premises or is verminous. The LA can serve notice requiring the identified article to be cleansed, purified, disinfected or destroyed at their expense. This section is also seldom used, if it were to be used it would be in conjunction with action taken under section 83.

## **Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949**

### **Section 4: Power of LA to require action to prevent or treat rats and mice**

Notice may be served on the owner or occupier of land/ premises where rats and/or mice are or may be present due to the conditions at the time. The notice served on the owner or occupier would specify a reasonable period of time in which to carry out reasonable steps to eradicate the rats/mice from the land/premises. This could entail



pest control treatment, requirement to remove materials that may feed or harbour them and carry out necessary structural works. The LA may carry out works in default if the Notice is not complied with and charge for this. However there is no power of entry available under this section, so if refused access to carry out works in default the LA are unable to enter.

### **Environmental Protection Act 1990**

#### **Section 79: Statutory nuisances and inspections therefor.**

Statutory Nuisances (SN) are defined in Section 79 of the Act and include the following:

- (a) any premises in such a state as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance
- (c) fumes or gases emitted from [private dwellings] premises so as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance
- (e) any accumulation or deposit which is prejudicial to health or a nuisance
- (f) any animal kept in such a place or manner as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance

It is the duty of every local authority to cause its area to be inspected from time to time to detect any statutory nuisances which ought to be dealt with under section 80 and, where a complaint of a statutory nuisance is made to it by a person living within its area, to take such steps as are reasonably practicable to investigate the complaint.

'Nuisance' means something which interferes with another's land (or more rarely the population at large).

#### **Section 80: Summary proceedings for statutory nuisances.**

Where a local authority is satisfied that a statutory nuisance exists, or is likely to occur or recur, in the area of the authority, the local authority shall serve a notice ("an abatement notice") imposing all or any of the following requirements—

- (a) requiring the abatement of the nuisance or prohibiting or restricting its occurrence or recurrence;
- (b) requiring the execution of such works, and the taking of such other steps, as may be necessary for any of those purposes;

and the notice shall specify the time or times within which the requirements of the notice are to be complied with. Appeal provisions are in place. Environmental Health (EH) can also carry out works in default and recharge the costs.

**Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act** - powers to control hoarding where it is likely to have a detrimental effect on the quality of life to others in the locality.

### **11. Mental capacity**

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 provides a statutory framework for people who lack capacity to make decisions for themselves. The Act has 5 statutory principles and these are the values which underpin the legal requirements of the Act. They are:

1. A person must be assumed to have capacity unless it is established that they lack capacity.
2. A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision unless all practical steps have been taken without success.
3. A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision merely because they make an unwise decision.
4. An act done or decision made, under this act for or on behalf of a person who lacks capacity must be done, or made in his or her best interests.
5. Before the act is done, or the decision is made, regard must be had to whether the purpose for which it is needed can be as effectively achieved in a way that is less restrictive of the person's rights and freedom of action.

To view the Mental Capacity Act Policy, Guidance and Form please click [here](#).

Should a capacity assessment be considered, this is an assessment of capacity for whether the client has capacity to access help for their hoarding – so, does the client understand they have a problem with hoarding?; is the client able to weigh up the alternative options? eg being able to move around their accommodation unhindered, being able to sleep in their bed, take a bath, cook in their kitchen, sit down on a chair/sofa? (this list is not exhaustive!); can the client retain the information given to them? (eg, if the accommodation is cleared, you would be able to move around your accommodation etc); can the client communicate their decision? It is essential that any capacity assessment is clearly documented on case records.

## **12. Hoarding Insight characteristics**

The following is a guide on whether the adult has insight into their hoarding behaviour.

Good or fair insight: The adult recognises that hoarding-related beliefs and behaviours (relating to difficulty discarding items, clutter or excessive acquisition) are problematic. The adult recognises these behaviours in themselves.

Poor insight: The adult is mostly convinced that hoarding-related beliefs and behaviours (relating to difficulty discarding items, clutter or excessive acquisition) are not problematic despite evidence to the contrary. The adult might recognise a storage problem but has little self-recognition or acceptance of their own hoarding behaviour.

Absent (delusional) insight: The adult is convinced that hoarding-related beliefs and behaviours (relating to difficulty discarding items, clutter or excessive acquisition) are not problematic despite evidence to the contrary. The adult is completely accepting of their living environment despite it being hoarded and possibly a risk to health.

Detached with assigned blame: The adult has been away from their property for an extended period. The adult has formed a detachment from the hoarded property and

is now convinced a 3<sup>rd</sup> party is to blame for the condition of the property. For example a burglary has taken place, squatters or other household members.

### **13. Early intervention work**

Early intervention means getting involved early or as soon as possible to tackle any emerging issues by providing the right support at the right time. In most cases, this is achieved by services working together and may take the form of a multi-agency meeting involving the individual.

### **14. The referral process (see flowchart)**

Hoarding is a complex condition and requires a multiagency response. Any professional working with an individual who may have or appear to have a hoarding condition should ensure they complete the [Practitioners Hoarding Assessment](#) and use the [clutter image rating](#) to inform decision making. Organisations should gather as much information as they can prior to making any referral.

#### **a) Safeguarding children**

Safeguarding children is everybody's business and refers to protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of their health or development and ensuring that they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care. Growing up in a hoarded property can put a child at risk by affecting their development and in some cases, leading to the neglect of a child, which is a safeguarding issue. Where a child is residing in a property with a parent/carer who hoards, the interests of the child are paramount; where there are concerns that the child is at risk of significant harm the child must be referred to Children's Social Care; and where it is identified that there are support needs a referral may be made to early help. GP's, Health Visitors and Teachers are a few examples of professionals who are most likely to come into contact with a child growing up in a hoarded house. The needs of the child at risk must come first and any actions we take reflect this. Please click [here](#) for the Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) Child Protection Procedures which provide guidance. The Local Safeguarding Children Boards in Southend, Essex and Thurrock also provide information regarding accessing Early Help and Intervention for children and young people (see appendix 8 for website details).

#### **b) Safeguarding adults**

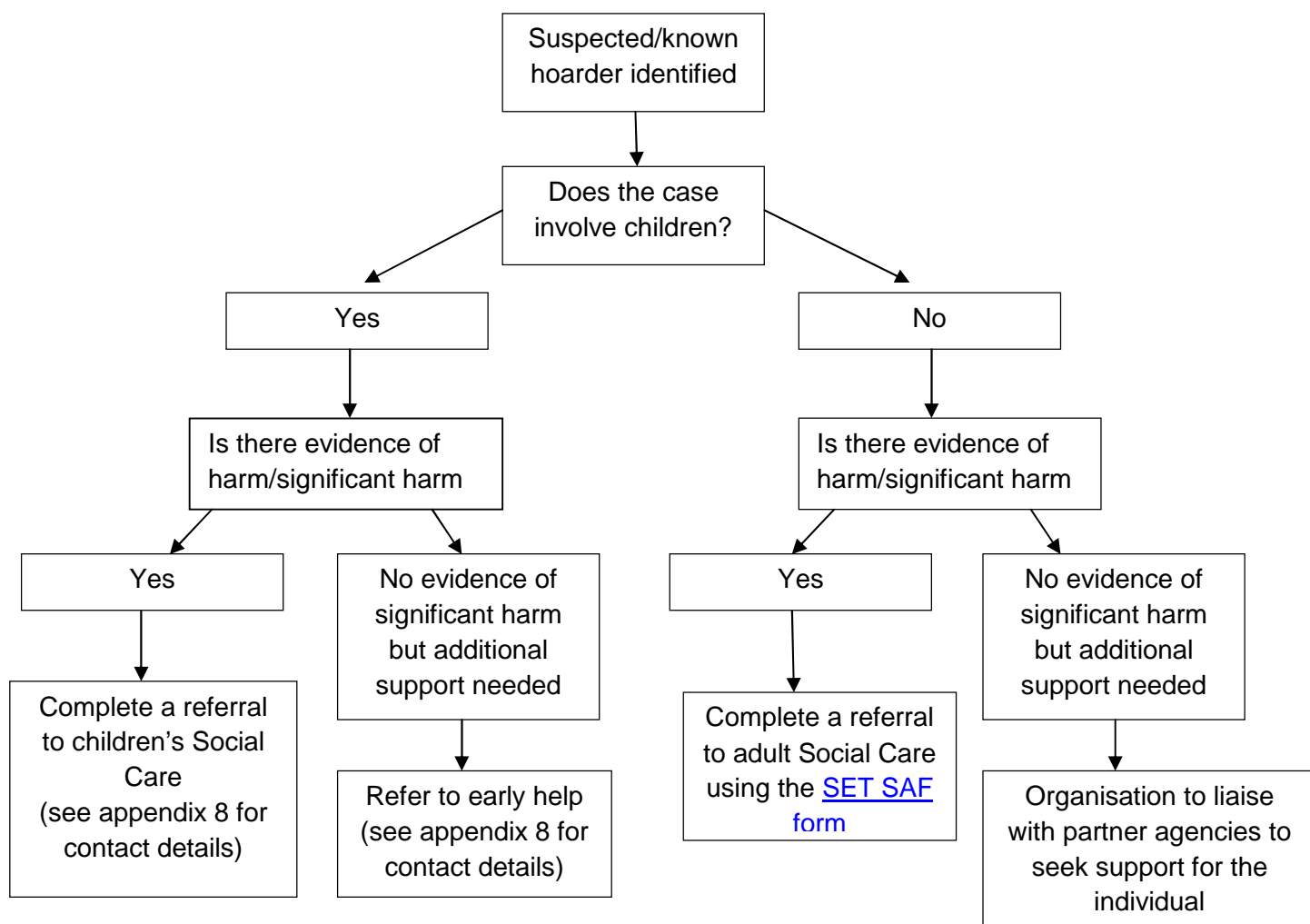
Incidents that are low risk may be managed outside of safeguarding adults formal procedures and could potentially be addressed through mechanisms such as engagement with the adult, i.e. supporting the person to address their concerns; engagement with community activities; coordinating a multi-agency meeting; or access to health care and counselling. It is recognised that not all individuals that hoard will have care and support needs and an assessment may result in a more appropriate pathway being followed to support the adult, instead of the safeguarding process. The initial intervention from Adult Social

Care might be to offer an individual an assessment of their care and support needs. Where the risk to the safety and wellbeing of an adult or others are becoming more critical, a more formal safeguarding adults approach will be required and a SET SAF1 should be raised (see Safeguarding Adult Guidelines 2015 for more information). The updated Care Act guidance 2016 identified that not all cases of self-neglect need to go to a S42 enquiry – perhaps the situation is not impacting on the person’s wellbeing, does not impact on others, or is not a result of abuse or neglect.

### c) Animals

Evidence of animal hoarding at any level should be reported to the RSPCA.

#### Referral process



## Appendix 1 - Practitioners hoarding assessment

Please note when entering a hoarder's house you need to understand the risks in which you may face. It is advised to wear thick, protective footwear as you may be exposed to many hazardous objects within the residence. Where possible two practitioners should conduct the assessment. This assessment should be used to help inform future work, see appendix four for support with actions following the completion of this assessment. It is essential that a multi-agency approach is taken.

Date of assessment			
Clients name			
Clients date of birth			
Address (incl. postcode)			
Contact details			
Type of dwelling Please give details of Landlord/housing association (if known)	Owner/ Council/ Housing Association/ Private Rental/ Other		
Household members	Name	Relationship	DOB & age
Pets & other animals and any concerns			
<p><b>Using the Clutter Image scale please</b> provide a description of the hoarding problem: Please consider hallways, stairs and landings, garage, outbuildings, front garden, back garden, side access as well as rooms in the house</p> <p>(presence of human or animal waste, rodents or insects, rotting food, are utilities operational, structural damage, human faeces, concerns over self neglect, problems with blocked exits, are there combustibles, is there a fire risk? etc.)</p>			

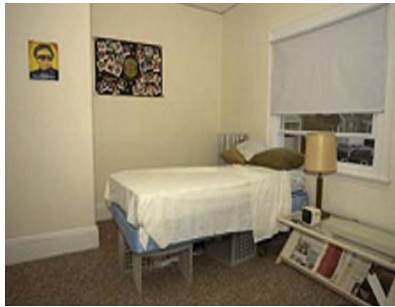
**Please refer to the Multi Agency Hoarding Guidance Tool, based on the information provided above, what level is your case graded?**

Level 1- Green	Level 2 - Orange	Level 3 - RED
Name of referrer		
Name of Organisation		
Contact details (Telephone and email address)		
Next action to be taken		
List agencies involved/ referred to with dates & contact names		
Adults views or attitude		
Concerned for children at the property (see section 13 of the guidance)		
Concerned for other adults at the property (see section 13 of the guidance)		
<b>Additional notes:</b>		

## Appendix 2 - Clutter image rating tool

### Clutter Image Rating Scale - Bedroom

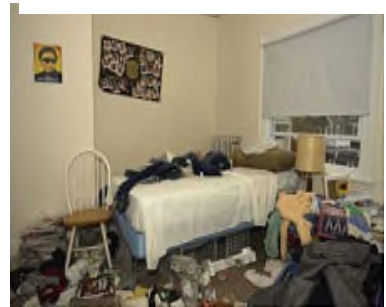
Please select the photo that most accurately reflects the amount of clutter in the room



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



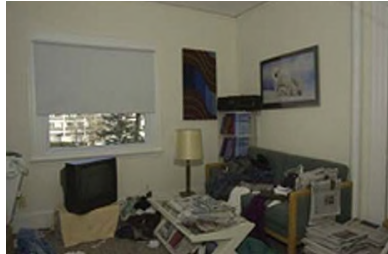
9

## Clutter Image Rating Scale - Lounge

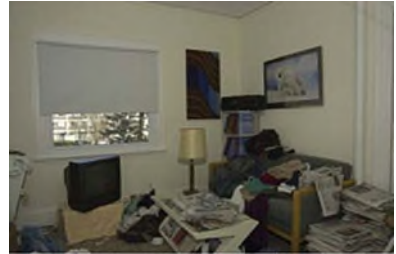
Please select the photo that most accurately reflects the amount of clutter in the room



1



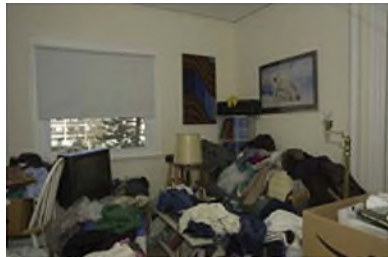
2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



## Clutter Image Rating Scale – Kitchen

Please select the photo that most accurately reflects the amount of clutter in the room



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9

### Appendix 3 - Questions for practitioners

Listed below are examples of questions to ask where you are concerned about someone's safety in their own home, where you suspect a risk of self-neglect and hoarding.

- How do you get in and out of your property, do you feel safe living here?
- Have you ever had an accident, slipped, tripped up or fallen? How did it happen?
- How do you move safely around your home (where the floor is uneven or covered, or there are exposed wires, damp, rot, or other hazards)?
- Has a fire ever started by accident?
- Do you have hot water, lighting, heating? How do you get hot water, lighting, heating in here? Do these services work properly? Have they ever been tested?
- Do you ever use candles or an open flame to heat and light here or cook with camping gas?
- How do you manage to keep yourself warm? Especially in winter?
- When did you last go out in your garden? Do you feel safe to go out there?
- Are you worried about other people getting in to your garden to try and break-in? Has this ever happened?
- Are you worried about mice, rats or foxes, or other pests? Do you leave food out for them?
- Have you ever seen mice or rats in your home? Have they eaten any of your food? Or got upstairs and be nesting anywhere?
- Can you prepare food, cook and wash up in your kitchen?
- Do you use your fridge? Can I have look in it? How do you keep things cold in the hot weather?
- How do you keep yourself clean? Can I see your bathroom? Are you able to use your bathroom and use the toilet ok? Have a wash, bath? Shower?
- Can you show me where you sleep and let me see your upstairs rooms? Are the stairs safe to walk up? (if there are any)
- What do you do with your dirty washing?
- Where do you sleep? Are you able to change your bed linen regularly? When did you last change them? Have you got extra covers to put on your bed if you are cold?
- Are there any broken windows in your home? Any repairs that need to be done?
- Because of the number of possessions you have, do you find it difficult to use some of your rooms? If so which ones?
- Do you struggle with discarding things or to what extent do you have difficulty discarding (or recycling, selling, giving away) ordinary things that other people would get rid of?

## Appendix 4 - Assessment tool guidelines

	Level 1 <i>Clutter image rating 1 - 3</i>	Level 2 <i>Clutter Image Rating 4 – 6</i>	Level 3 <i>Clutter image rating 7 - 9</i>
<b>1. Property structure, services &amp; garden area</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All entrances and exits, stairways, roof space and windows accessible.</li> <li>• Smoke alarms fitted and functional or referrals made to Essex Fire and Rescue service to visit and install.</li> <li>• All services functional and maintained in good working order.</li> <li>• Garden is accessible, tidy and maintained.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only major exit is blocked.</li> <li>• Only one of the services is not fully functional.</li> <li>• Concern that services are not well maintained.</li> <li>• Smoke alarms are not installed or not functioning.</li> <li>• Garden is not accessible due to clutter.</li> <li>• Evidence of indoor items stored outside.</li> <li>• Evidence of light structural damage including damp.</li> <li>• Interior doors missing or blocked open.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited access to the property due to extreme clutter.</li> <li>• Evidence may be seen of extreme clutter seen through windows.</li> <li>• Evidence may be seen of extreme clutter outside the property.</li> <li>• Garden not accessible and extensively overgrown.</li> <li>• Services not connected or not functioning properly.</li> <li>• Smoke alarms not fitted or not functioning.</li> <li>• Property lacks ventilation due to clutter.</li> <li>• Evidence of structural damage or outstanding repairs including damp.</li> <li>• Interior doors missing or blocked open.</li> <li>• Evidence of indoor items stored outside.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Household functions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No excessive clutter, all rooms can be safely used for their intended purpose.</li> <li>• No additional unused household appliances appear in unusual locations around the property.</li> <li>• Property is maintained within terms of any lease or tenancy agreements where appropriate.</li> <li>• Property is not at risk of action by environmental health.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clutter is causing congestion in the living spaces and is impacting on the use of the rooms for their intended purpose.</li> <li>• Clutter is causing congestion between the rooms and entrances.</li> <li>• Inconsistent levels of housekeeping throughout the property.</li> <li>• Some household appliances are not functioning properly and there may be additional units in unusual places.</li> <li>• Property is not maintained within terms of lease or tenancy agreement where applicable.</li> <li>• Evidence of outdoor items being stored inside.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clutter is obstructing the living spaces and is preventing the use of the rooms for their intended purpose.</li> <li>• Rooms not used for intended purposes or very limited.</li> <li>• Beds inaccessible or unusable due to clutter or infestation.</li> <li>• Entrances, hallways and stairs blocked or difficult to pass.</li> <li>• No gas, electric or water is working at the property.</li> <li>• Toilets, sinks not functioning or not in use.</li> <li>• Adult at risk due to living environment.</li> <li>• Household appliances are not functioning or inaccessible.</li> <li>• Adult has no safe cooking environment.</li> <li>• Adult is using candles.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of outdoor clutter being stored indoors.</li> <li>• No evidence of housekeeping being undertaken.</li> <li>• Broken household items not discarded e.g. broken glass or plates.</li> <li>• Concern for declining mental health.</li> <li>• Property is not maintained within terms of lease or tenancy agreement where applicable.</li> <li>• Property is at risk of notice being served by Environmental Health.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Health and safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Property is clean with no odours, (pet or other).</li> <li>• No rotting food.</li> <li>• No concerning use of candles.</li> <li>• No concern over flies.</li> <li>• Adult is managing personal care.</li> <li>• No writing on the walls.</li> <li>• Quantities of medication are within appropriate limits, in date and stored appropriately.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kitchen and bathroom are not kept clean.</li> <li>• Offensive odour in the property.</li> <li>• Adult is not maintaining safe cooking environment.</li> <li>• Some concern with the quantity of medication, or its storage or expiry dates.</li> <li>• No rotting food.</li> <li>• No concerning use of candles.</li> <li>• Adult trying to manage personal care but struggling.</li> <li>• No writing on the walls.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human urine and or excrement may be present.</li> <li>• Excessive odour in the property, may also be evident from the outside.</li> <li>• Rotting food may be present.</li> <li>• Evidence may be seen of unclean, unused and or buried plates &amp; dishes.</li> <li>• Broken household items not discarded e.g. broken glass or plates.</li> <li>• Inappropriate quantities or storage of medication.</li> <li>• Pungent odour can be smelt inside the property and possibly from outside.</li> <li>• Concern with the integrity of the electrics.</li> <li>• Inappropriate use of electrical extension cords or evidence of unqualified work to the electrics.</li> <li>• Concern for declining mental health.</li> </ul>
<b>4. Safeguarding children, adults &amp; family members</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No Concerns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hoarding on clutter scale 4 -7 doesn't automatically constitute a safeguarding alert.</li> <li>• Please note all additional concerns for householders.</li> <li>• Properties with children, young people or adult is with additional support needs may trigger a safeguarding alert under a different risk.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hoarding on clutter scale 7-9 constitutes a safeguarding alert regarding the adult and a Safeguarding Referral for children and young people where appropriate.</li> <li>• Please note all additional concerns for other family members.</li> </ul>
<b>5. Animals and</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any pets at the property are well cared for.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pets at the property are not well cared for.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Animals at the property at risk due the level of</li> </ul>

<p><b>pests</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● No pests or infestations at the property.</li> <li>● No concern for the amount of pets at the property</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Adult is not unable to control the animals.</li> <li>● Animal's living area is not maintained and smells.</li> <li>● Animals appear to be under nourished or over fed.</li> <li>● Any evidence of mice, rats at the property.</li> <li>● Spider webs in house.</li> <li>● Light insect infestation (bed bugs, lice, fleas, cockroaches, ants, etc).</li> <li>● Are animals cared for in preference to other household members?</li> </ul>	<p>clutter in the property.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Adult may not able to control the animals at the property.</li> <li>● Animal's living area is not maintained and smells.</li> <li>● Animals appear to be under nourished or over fed.</li> <li>● Hoarding of animals at the property.</li> <li>● Heavy insect infestation (bed bugs, lice, fleas, cockroaches, ants, silverfish, etc.).</li> <li>● Visible rodent infestation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Personal protective equipment (PPE)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● No PPE required.</li> <li>● No visit in pairs required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Latex gloves, boots or needle stick safe shoes, face mask, hand sanitizer, insect repellent.</li> <li>● PPE required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Latex gloves, boots or needle stick safe shoes, face mask, hand sanitizer, insect repellent.</li> <li>● Visit in pairs required.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 5 - Agency actions roles and responsibilities

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<b>Referring Agency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss concerns with adult.</li> <li>• Raise a request to the Fire Service to provide fire safety advice.</li> <li>• Refer for support assessment if appropriate.</li> <li>• Refer to GP if appropriate.</li> </ul>	<p>Possible referrals to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landlord if adult is a tenant.</li> <li>• Essex Fire and Rescue Service to provide fire prevention advice.</li> <li>• Garden services.</li> <li>• Support assessment.</li> <li>• GP.</li> <li>• Debt advice.</li> <li>• RSPCA/ animal welfare</li> <li>• Environmental health with details of adult, landlord (if relevant) referrer's details and overview of problems.</li> </ul> <p>Ensure information sharing with all agencies involved to ensure a collaborative approach and a sustainable resolution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact police and children's services to request a welfare check where children or adults are at risk of harm</li> <li>• Raise Safeguarding <b>Alert within 24 hours</b></li> <li>• Raise a request to Essex Fire and Rescue Service within 24 hours to provide fire prevention advice.</li> <li>• Attend safeguarding multi agency meetings on request</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No action.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At time of inspection, environmental health officer decides on appropriate course of action.</li> <li>• Consider serving notices under Environmental Protection Act 1990, Prevention of Damage By Pests Act 1949 or Housing Act 2004</li> <li>• Consider Works in Default if notices not complied by occupier.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At time of inspection, EHO decides on appropriate course of action.</li> <li>• Consider serving notices under Environmental Protection Act 1990, Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 or Housing Act 2004.</li> <li>• Consider works in Default if notices not complied by occupier.</li> <li>• Attend safeguarding multi agency meetings on request.</li> </ul>
<b>Social landlords</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide details on debt advice if appropriate to circumstances.</li> <li>• Refer to GP if appropriate.</li> <li>• Refer for support assessment if appropriate.</li> <li>• Provide details of support streams open to the adult via charities and self-help groups.</li> <li>• Provide details on debt advice if appropriate to circumstances.</li> <li>• Ensure adults are maintaining all tenancy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit adult to inspect the property &amp; assess support needs.</li> <li>• Referral to your local housing support assist in the restoration of services to the property where appropriate.</li> <li>• Ensure adults are maintaining all tenancy conditions.</li> <li>• Enforce tenancy conditions relating to adults responsibilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit adult to inspect the property &amp; assess support needs.</li> <li>• Attend multi agency Safeguarding meeting.</li> <li>• Enforce tenancy conditions relating to adults responsibilities.</li> <li>• If adult refuses to engage serve Notice of Seeking Possession under Ground 13 to Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1988.</li> </ul>

	conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure information sharing with all agencies involved to ensure a collaborative approach and a sustainable resolution.</li> </ul>	
<b>Emergency services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure information is shared with statutory agencies &amp; feedback is provided to referring agency on completion of home visits.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure information sharing with all agencies involved to ensure a collaborative approach and a sustainable resolution.</li> <li>• Provide feedback to referring agency on completion of home visits.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend safeguarding multi agency meetings on request.</li> <li>• Ensure information sharing with all agencies involved to ensure a collaborative approach and a sustainable resolution.</li> <li>• Provide feedback to referring agency on completion of home visits.</li> </ul>
<b>Safeguarding children and young people</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No action unless any other risk of harm is identified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider completion of a CAF or Early Help Assessment to access early help or intervention services (see appendix 8 for details of your local authority)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding referral should be made following the SET Child Protection Procedures (see appendix 8 for details of your local authority)</li> </ul>
<b>RSPCA/ Animal welfare</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No action unless advice requested.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit property to undertake a wellbeing check on animals at the property.</li> <li>• Educate adult regarding animal welfare if appropriate</li> <li>• Provide advice / assistance with re-homing animals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit property to undertake a wellbeing check on animals at the property.</li> <li>• Remove animals to a safe environment.</li> <li>• Educate adult regarding animal welfare if appropriate.</li> <li>• Take legal action for animal cruelty if appropriate.</li> <li>• Provide advice / assistance with re-homing animals.</li> <li>• Attend safeguarding multi agency meetings on request.</li> </ul>
<b>Safeguarding adults</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No action unless other concerns of abuse are noted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No action unless other concerns of abuse are noted.</li> <li>• If other concerns of abuse are of concern or have been reported, progression to safeguarding referral and investigation may be necessary (see appendix 8 for details of your local authority).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding alert should be made using the SETSAF form and following procedures set out in the SET Adult Safeguarding procedures (see appendix 8 for details of your local authority).</li> </ul>

**Appendix 6 – multi agency meeting agenda template  
FOR USE FOR LEVEL 3 (clutter ratings 7-9)**

<p><b>HOARDING</b></p> <p><b>Multi Agency Meeting</b></p>
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<p><b>Name:</b></p>  <p><b>Held at:</b></p>
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- 1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES**
  
- 2. THE PURPOSE OF THE MEETING**
  
- 3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION INCLUDING ISSUES / CONCERNS**
  
- 4. GENERAL DISCUSSION; WHAT HAS BEEN DONE ALREADY AND BY WHO**  
- Clutter Image and scale tool to be used and discussed
  
- 5. ACTION PLAN**
  
- 6. AOB**
  
- 7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING IF REQUIRED**



## Appendix 7 – Hoarding Risk Assessment and Management Plan

Name of adult	
LA/NHS number	

Where significant risk has been identified, this form should be attached to full assessments and care plans (in accordance with guidance on sharing of information and confidentiality). Because this form is likely to contain sensitive information or information from third parties it must not be shared with the adult without prior agreement of those third parties and the team manager unless it has been completed with the adult. For Mental Health service users, use the CPA/Risk Assessment documentation provided by the NHS Trust.

**Categories of Risk Identified:** *Please tick all appropriate categories*

Category	Yes/No	Category	Yes/No
Aggression / Violence		Self-harm	
Exploitation (of others)		Self-neglect	
Risk to children (refer to cross-division Child Protection Policy)		Adult (refer to Safeguarding Adults Policy)	
Carer breakdown		Homelessness	
Extreme social isolation		Other ( <i>please specify</i> )	

**If Yes to any of the above, continue Risk Assessment:**

<p>Current Factors which suggest there is apparent risk; On what is this assessment based (e.g. history; reports from others; report from adult, carer or other source); Severity of risk (low; medium, high, emergency); Consider - alcohol or drug misuse; Threats to harm self or others; Reports of actual harm towards self or others in the past; Possible symptoms of mental illness such as excessively suspicious or paranoid ideas; Unexplained anger or other emotional or behavioural disturbance; Criminal record or self-reported forensic history; Is there a history of unpredictable or impulsive acts?; If violence is indicated have weapons been used?; If aggression - is this verbal?; Has there been a damage to property?; Is there any evidence of racist abuse - is adult the perpetrator or a victim?</p>

Who is at risk - has any particular individual been identified or is the adult the only person at risk?
How immediate is the risk - is it part of an ongoing pattern / a "one off" past event / a current risk?
Are there any "early warning" signs or "triggers" to risk. Is there a predictable pattern or any factors that are known to increase / reduce risk - please provide details.

Are there any special safety factors that others working with the adult should be aware of (e.g. should they only be visited in pairs or not seen alone in the office or referred to another specialist service).

<b>Outcome</b>			
Risk Management Plan required?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Review Date _____
If "No" – Signature of Assessor	_____		Date _____
Agreed by Manager	_____		Date _____

**Risk Management** - To be completed in all situations where a significant risk has been identified.

Action plan to reduce/ minimise the risk and who will be responsible for maintaining the plan
Contingency Plan - what action should be taken if the Action Plan breaks down?
Emergency Plan- What action should be taken in a crisis situation, with particular reference to out-of-hours responses

Assessors Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Agreed by Manager: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Risk History - CONFIDENTIAL**

Record of incidents of risk behaviours including violence or aggression or episodes of self-harm or known criminal activity. State whether actual or threatened, in date order. New episodes must be recorded.

Date of Incident	Record of Incident - Give as full an account as is possible, including source of information, Whether this has been verified and outcome of incident.	Assessors Signature + date	Managers Signature + date

## Appendix 8 - Useful Contacts

<b>Essex – Adult Operations</b>	Tel - 0345 603 7630 Address - Essex House, 200 The Crescent, Colchester Business Park, Colchester, CO4 9YQ
<b>Essex – Family Operations Hub (children)</b>	Tel - 0345 603 7627 Email – <a href="mailto:FOH@essex.gcsx.gov.uk">FOH@essex.gcsx.gov.uk</a> Out of Hours: 0345 606 1212 or email <a href="mailto:Emergency.DutyTeamOutOfHours@essex.gov.uk">Emergency.DutyTeamOutOfHours@essex.gov.uk</a>
<b>Southend Safeguarding Service (adults and children)</b>	Tel - 01702 215008 Email - <a href="mailto:accessteam@southend.gov.uk">accessteam@southend.gov.uk</a> Address - Southend-on-Sea Borough Council, Civic Centre, Victoria Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex
<b>Thurrock Safeguarding Adults Team</b>	Tel - 01375 652868 Email - <a href="mailto:SafeguardingAdults@thurrock.gov.uk">SafeguardingAdults@thurrock.gov.uk</a> Address - Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, RM17 6SL
<b>Thurrock MASH (childrens)</b>	Tel - 01375 652808 Address - Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, RM17 6SL
<b>NEPT Mental Health Services – North Essex</b>	Tel: 01206 228669 Address - Safeguarding team, Birchwood, 2 Boxted Road, Colchester, CO4 5HG
<b>SEPT Mental Health Services – South Essex</b>	Tel: 0300 123 0808 Address - The Lodge, The Chase, Wickford, Essex, SS11 7XX
<b>Your Living Room</b> - <i>Providing a personal home organising and de-cluttering service for individual clients and support for organisations that have clients or residents that are affected by a hoarding disorder, which is impairing their quality of life within Essex.</i>	Website - <a href="http://yourlivingroomcic.co.uk">http://yourlivingroomcic.co.uk</a>
<b>The Association of Professional De-clutterers &amp; Organisers (UK)</b> - <i>Professional network of those in the de-cluttering and organising industry</i>	Website - <a href="http://www.apdo-uk.co.uk/about.php">http://www.apdo-uk.co.uk/about.php</a>
<b>Help for Hoarders</b> - <i>Provides information, support and advice for hoarders and their families, including online support forums</i>	Website - <a href="http://www.helpforhoarders.co.uk">www.helpforhoarders.co.uk</a>
<b>Hoarding UK</b> - <i>Provides information, support for hoarders and agencies, including local support groups</i>	Website - <a href="http://www.hoardinguk.org">www.hoardinguk.org</a>