

Stock Condition Policy

Version control

Avoid referring to printed versions of this document. Printed versions may be out of date.

Owner/responsibility for compliance		Head of Housing Technical Services	
Status (draft / approved and live)		Approved & Live	
Version no:	Date approved:	Approved by:	Summary of changes made to each version:
1.1		Cabinet	New policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy is to support Swindon Borough Council ('the Council') in its function as a landlord to provide safe and effective housing management.
- 1.2 This policy sets out how the Council will assess, monitor, and manage the condition of its council-owned housing stock through a planned Stock Condition Survey (SCS) programme. The policy ensures the Council maintains a clear, accurate, and up-to-date understanding of the condition of its homes, so we can:
 - Keep residents and their homes safe
 - Meet all statutory and regulatory requirements
 - Support effective asset management and investment planning
 - Demonstrate compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards.
- 1.3 The Council is committed to providing safe, warm, dry, and well-maintained homes. A robust, cyclical Stock Condition Survey programme is essential to understanding the condition and performance of our housing assets and to prioritise repairs, planned maintenance, improvement works, and longer-term investment strategies.
- 1.4 The Council will operate a proportionate, evidence-led Stock Condition Survey programme aligned to national standards and regulatory expectations, ensuring decisions are informed by reliable property-level data.
- 1.5 In developing this policy residents' and partnering agencies' views and feedback have been considered. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out and there are no adverse implications.
- 1.6 The results of the Equalities Impact Assessment have been considered and there are no adverse implications or if there were these have been considered and mitigated.

2. Equality and diversity statement

2.1 Swindon Borough Council is intent on ensuring people or communities do not face discrimination or social exclusion due to socio-economic deprivation or, any of the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Sex
- Marriage & civil partnership
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy & maternity

3. Legislation and guidance

3.1 The legislation and guidance applicable to this policy includes the following:

- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985.
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System introduced under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004.
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023.
- Awaab's Law.
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- The Building Regulations 2010.
- Construction, Design, and Management (CDM) Regulations 2015.
- Defective Premises Act 1972.
- Data Protection Act 2018.
- RIDDOR 2013.
- Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022.
- Gas Safety (Management) Regulations 1996.
- Equality Act 2010

4. Scope

4.1 This policy applies to all homes owned and managed by Swindon Borough Council's Housing department, otherwise known as our social housing stock.

4.2 The programme will include 100% physical surveys over a rolling five-year period, and this approach will ensure compliance with regulatory expectations and sufficient assurance of stock condition at individual property level.

5. Approach

- 5.1 Swindon Borough Council will undertake a rolling programme of internal and external stock condition surveys, which will be completed on a cycle not exceeding five years.
- 5.2 The Council will carry out stock condition surveys that will capture information on:
- Clear visibility of properties with a gas supply or other heating/hot water sources.
 - Building structure and external elements.
 - Internal components (kitchens, bathrooms, finishes).
 - Mechanical and electrical systems.
 - Fire, gas, electrical and water safety indicators.
 - Damp, mould, and disrepair risks.
 - Energy efficiency and sustainability indicators.
 - Component condition, remaining life, and replacement costs.
- 5.3 A rolling programme and targeted inspections will prevent data from becoming out of date. Additional risk factors to be considered include:
- Volume of repairs within a property.
 - Incidents of damp and mould in similar properties.
 - Higher than expected levels of investment required.

6. Measuring decency

- 6.1 The outputs of a stock condition survey enable the Council to report Decent Homes compliance against the four criterion and by property. The criteria are as follows:

Criterion A – A home must be free of the most dangerous hazards

- 6.2 To meet this criterion, properties must be free of 'category 1' hazards, as assessed under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). A category 1 Hazard is defined as any HHSRS hazard that poses a serious and immediate risk to health or safety.

Criterion B - A home must be in a reasonable state of repair

- 6.3 Homes will fail against this criterion if:
- One or more key building components are old and, because of their condition need replacing, or major repair, or
 - Two or more other building components are old and, because of their condition need replacing or major repair.

Criterion C - A home must provide core facilities and services

- 6.4 A dwelling is considered as not meeting this criterion if it lacks three or more of the following facilities:
- a kitchen which is 20 years old or less;
 - a kitchen with adequate space and layout;
 - a bathroom which is 30 years old or less;
 - an appropriately located bathroom and WC

- adequate external noise insulation
- adequate size and layout of common entrance areas for blocks of flats.

Criterion D - A home must provide thermal comfort

- 6.5 To meet this criterion, homes must provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.
- 6.6 Additionally, the SCS will report the investment needs of the portfolio, by component, over a 5-, 10-and 30-year period. The scope will include component renewals, cyclical and planned maintenance.
- 6.7 They shall report energy performance through RdSAP10 assessments which can be lodged as Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) as and when required.

7. Access arrangements

- 7.1 Residents will be given reasonable notice of stock condition survey appointments and clear information about:
- Why the survey is required
 - What the visit will involve
 - How long it may take.
- 7.2 The Council will take a supportive and proportionate approach to gaining access, recognising its statutory duty to inspect homes while being mindful of residents' circumstances.
- 7.3 For further information about how the Council acts, and escalation routes, where repeated access attempts are unsuccessful, see the Access Policy.

8. Reporting

- 8.1 An annual report will be prepared and published outlining our compliance with each of the Decent Homes criteria and overall performance.
- 8.2 In addition, further internal reporting on Decent Homes % compliance will be collated monthly to various internal management and resident scrutiny meetings as required.
- 8.3 An internal report of the future investment needs will be provided annually as part of the budget setting process to inform the HRA medium term financial plan.

9. Quality assurance

- 9.1 The Council will undertake a series of validation checks to maintain the integrity and accuracy of the dataset received from the stock condition surveys as detailed in the decent homes standard rectification strategy including reviewing every decent homes failure reported. The purpose of the audits will be to assess the quality of data used in reporting on decency and HHSRS failure rates.

10. Monitoring and review

- 10.1 This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if legislation or regulations change.