



West Highland Housing Association

STOCK CONDITION SURVEY POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 West Highland Housing Association is a Registered Social Landlord and it builds, owns and manages property. It is an asset based business and therefore it is extremely important that it holds good information on its property assets. In addition the Scottish Housing Quality Standard required Associations to record and report on specific data. The Association now require to have sufficient information about their stock to assess what needs to be done to ensure that each and every house meets the Standard. That means that the Association now need to hold information about the current position of each house relative to the standard, to be able to project whether any houses are likely to fall below the Standard if it is amended, and they need to be able to plan for the investment they will have to make in the stock to achieve that position.

The new requirement of the EESH and indeed West Highland wanting a defined standard for their own stock means that there is a need to constantly update and refresh through stock condition surveys every 3 – 5 years.

2. STOCK CONDITION SURVEY INFORMATION

2.1 The Association hold information on their stock in a variety of ways and for different purposes. The reason why the type of stock condition information held varies because the origins of the housing stock are so different, and because they are so different in scale. The Association have:

- new build stock - or stock built over the last 20 years or so;
- former local authority or Scottish Homes Stock acquired through stock transfer;
- predominantly nineteenth century tenement stock
- school houses – stone built in remote locations

2.2 Outlined below are the primary reasons why a fully comprehensive stock condition survey database is required and which the Association are committed to maintain:

- The need to maintain our housing stock in a reasonable and lettable condition, achieved by identifying, planning and making adequate financial provision for maintenance and improvement works.
- Know the condition of the housing for which we have repairing obligations, including its energy efficiency, by using appropriate survey or inspection methods.
- Have costed plans for future maintenance and improvement of our housing which will keep it in reasonable and lettable condition appropriate to likely future needs.
- Through our planned work help to meet our obligations under the Scottish Governments Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing
- Be able to demonstrate that we are making adequate financial provision for planned maintenance and improvement works;
- Have reliable arrangements for identifying, recording and analysing the physical condition of our property and its energy efficiency (for example

through Stock Condition Surveys), which are adequate for preparing costed plans for future maintenance;

- Use the information on stock condition to develop and maintain a medium/long term strategy to keep our stock in reasonable and lettable condition, which will form part of the agreed business plan;
- In many cases there is a direct correlation between the condition of a property and the demand for that property by prospective tenants. Ensuring that properties are well maintained help to reduce void costs.

3. ON-SITE SURVEYS

- 3.1 Survey work has been carried out over the first six months of 2017 by trained in-house staff to achieve a full dataset for all of the Associations properties whether visited or cloned. Currently, the surveys are paper based and transferred to spreadsheets but the Association are considering the suitability of computer tablet capture on site.
- 3.2 The Association will re-survey properties on a four year cycle (approximately 200 properties per year) to enable the Business Plan to be updated and modified to suit circumstances.
- 3.3 The surveys will be carried out by in-house personnel or by an external source depending on resources and timescales.
- 3.4 The stock condition information will be updated on completion of all planned and improvement work, as well as on completion of new developments.

4. TENANT CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY

- 4.1 The Association is committed to providing tenants with sufficient information regarding the purpose and extent of surveys and the reason for having them done.
- 4.2 The views and opinions of tenants will be sought in relation to repair and planned replacements to be undertaken.

5. OUTSIDE AGENCIES

- 5.1 The Association benefits from full stock condition information through increased confidence when Funders and Banks assess viability for grants and loans.
- 5.2 Insurance companies are requesting more information on stock condition to determine policy conditions and rates. We will ensure that this information is available.

6. BUSINESS PLAN AND PLANNED WORK

- 6.1 The full stock condition survey forms the basis for the calculation of the Association's 30 Year Business Plan which will be updated on a five year cycle.
- 6.2 Planned improvement and component replacement work, which is programmed from the Business Plan, will be re-assessed prior to the contracts being placed based on updated stock condition surveys.

7. SDM HOUSING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

- 7.1 The Association are carrying out an options appraisal for the integration of all of the stock condition data (or key elements of the survey) within SDM. The purpose of this exercise would be to transfer information to a system which is available to all Staff and Auditors.
- 7.2 The timescale for integration is unknown at present but the conditions described above will be incorporated in the new system.

8. ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

- 8.1 The Stock Condition Survey Policy is an integral part of the Associations Asset Management Strategy which underpins the Business Plan.

9. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 9.1 The Stock Condition Survey Policy will be reviewed by the Management Board every three years and at any significant change in the Business Plan

Date policy approved	Review Due	Reviewed by	Approved by
December 2021	December 2024	Asset Management Officer	WHA Board