

## HOME STANDARD

[HOME STANDARD](#)

| Required Outcomes   | Specific Expectations Paragraph   | 2024 CONTROLS/DESCRIPTION OF COMPLIANCE  | COMPLIANT | AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT<br>(see new consumer stds assessment) |
|---|---|--|-----------|---|
| <p>Quality of accommodation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure that tenants homes meet the Decent Homes Guidance and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard</li> <li>meet the standards of design and quality that applied when the home was built if higher than the DHS</li> <li>in agreeing a local offer, ensure that it is set at a level not less than these standards and have regard to section 6 of DHS</li> </ul> | <p>2.1.1 Registered providers may agree with the regulator a period of non-compliance with the Decent Homes Standard, where this is reasonable. Providers shall ensure their tenants are aware of the reasons for any period of non-compliance, their plan to achieve compliance and then report on progress delivering this plan.<br/>[new std 1.2.1, 2.1.1]</p>   | <p>Asset Management Strategy<br/>At the end of March 2023 all properties met with the requirements of the Decent Homes Standard as well as the SLH Home Standard. The Standard was reviewed and updated by Board March 2023. SLH Home Standard.docx</p> <p>In accordance with the SLH Home Standard we undertake Stock Condition Surveys to all our homes over a five-year period with 20% of homes being surveyed each year. All our homes have stock condition data with no cloning of major components. <a href="#">90% of our homes have received a survey over the last five years, with only non-access preventing a full dataset.</a></p> <p><a href="#">We have invested £6.28m of improvements into our homes during 2023/24 and have retained 100% compliance with the Decent Homes Standard. 39 homes are 'discounted' from the standard, in accordance with the legislation, due to Customer refusals.</a> These components are replanned into the Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) over the next five years and further attempts are made to complete the works periodically or at next void occurrence.</p> <p>Savills were commissioned to provide independent, expert advice and assurance about our Stock Condition Data, our costs, and our planning assumptions around component lifecycles. They undertook an assessment of the quality and suitability of our survey forms to ensure that the appropriate data is being captured to achieve legislative and regulatory compliance.</p> <p>Savills concluded that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our data was of a good standard and that we had applied best practice principles to our investment planning processes, utilising the data collected from the stock condition surveys.</li> <li>The costs applied to the LTFP plan are in line with benchmarks and advised that this is regularly monitored due to current building cost inflation pressures.</li> </ul> <p>We have developed an Improvement Programme over a 5-year period, with 30 year longer term Investment Assumptions in the Business Plan and are focussing this on our properties that we have been unable to access over recent years.</p> <p>SLH would inform the Regulator for Social Housing if it is not performing to the required standard. SLH would inform tenants about any non-compliance within its Annual Report to tenants.</p>   | COMPLIANT |   |
| <p>Repairs &amp; Maintenance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas that responds to the needs of and offers choices to tenants and has the objective of completing repairs and improvements right first time</li> <li>meet all the applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of occupants in their homes</li> </ul>                    | <p>2.2.1 Registered providers shall ensure a prudent, planned approach to repairs and maintenance of homes and communal areas. This should demonstrate an appropriate balance of planned and responsive repairs, and value for money. The approach should include: responsive and cyclical repairs, planned and capital work, work on empty properties, and adaptations.<br/>[partly links to new std 2.2.1, 2.1.2]</p> | <p>Asset Management Strategy approved by Board Feb 23. The AM Strategy sets out our approach to active asset management which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having up to date data about our stock to inform our investment decisions</li> <li>Understand the performance of our assets and how we can maximise these assets planning and procurement</li> <li>Ensuring effective programmes are in place for cyclical maintenance, repairs and safety checks</li> <li>Ensuring effective procedures are in place for responsive repairs and to maintain stock to at least the SLH Home Standard</li> <li>Meeting our sustainability targets</li> </ul> <p><b>Capital, Planned and Cyclical Maintenance and Repairs:</b><br/>A key part of our continuous improvement is the continual development and proactive use of our Asset Performance and Viability model (ASAP), through which we can assess the financial and social performance of stock to make informed decisions. This will include an assessment of Net Present Value (NPV). Originally the model provided us with an initial picture of asset performance, from which further investigation could be made. It has been refined over the last few years, particularly regarding financial metrics and inputs, but there is further work to do for it to give us real-time accurate performance analytics. The model will help inform the investment programmes and neighbourhood plans based on an active asset management approach where we will seek to make appropriate investment decisions. This will be in a way that strengthens the Long-Term Financial Plan and contributes to meeting our objectives.</p> <p>The evaluation tool identifies the stronger and weaker performing assets within the stock. Where analysis identifies groups of (or individual) properties which require major investment, these will be referred for option appraisals. The results of this work will inform where best to target interventions, such as disposals, redevelopment and master-planning the regeneration of estates, linking closely with the Development Strategy.</p> <p>The Keystone Asset Management system monitors dates for potential property failures based on Component lifecycles set by SLH and is updated when work is completed to maintain records. Stock Condition Surveys and validation checks to inform our programme. Programmes have been established to complete the required safety inspections which are monitored by the ARC.</p> <p><b>Responsive Repairs:</b><br/>Procedures are in place for responsive repairs. A Repairs handbook is available for customers which sets out the response times for emergency, appointable and planned repairs and how to report a repair.</p> <p>We balance responsive repairs with longer term investment programmes and explore opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop methods to identify, defer and batch non urgent repairs into Capital Improvement/Planned programmes.</li> <li>Embed actions to assess the viability of high-cost voids and responsive repairs.</li> <li>Collect and use repairs data to inform trends and underlying defects that would inform planned programmes of work.</li> <li>Void Standard and procedures are in place</li> <li>Expenditure in relation to assets is monitored by the Board on a quarterly basis</li> </ul> | COMPLIANT |   |

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|-------------------|---|--|------------------|---|
|                   | <p>2.2.2 Registered providers shall co-operate with relevant organisations to provide an adaptations service that meets tenants' needs.<br/>[new std 2.4.2]</p> | <p>SLH work with WMFC and SLDC on adaptations, supporting tenants to access OT assessments and DFG's as appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•SLH Adaptations Policy</li> <li>•Adaptations Policy.docx</li> <li>•6b. Adaptations Guidelines 2019.docx</li> </ul> <p>SLH carry out minor adaptations. We have an annual budget of c£60k. In 2023/24 - £114k spend was spent on adaptations. with a further £275k invested on replacement wetrooms. Both the internal and external processes are currently under review with SLDC and Westmorland and Furness Council to improve the utilisation of Disabled Grant Funds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•We may offer tenants alternative accommodation rather than adaptations, for example a move from a house to a flat.</li> <li>•We routinely install walk in showers in ground floor flats, sheltered housing and bungalows to ensure they are accessible.</li> <li>•Major adaptation requests that have been refused can be appealed through the SLH complaints procedure.</li> </ul> | <b>COMPLIANT</b> |   |

TENANT INVOLVEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT STANDARD

[Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Standard](#)

| Required Outcome   | Specific Expectation   | 2024 CONTROLS/DESCRIPTION OF COMPLIANCE  | COMPLIANT               | AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT<br>(see new consumer stds assessment) |
|--|--|--|-------------------------|---|
| <p>1. Customer service, choice and complaints Registered providers shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide choices, information and communication that is appropriate to the diverse needs of their tenants in the delivery of all standards</li> <li>• have an approach to complaints that is clear, simple and accessible that ensures that complaints are resolved promptly, politely and fairly</li> </ul> | <p>1. Registered providers shall provide tenants with accessible, relevant and timely information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a. how tenants can access services</li> <li>• b. the standards of housing services their tenants can expect</li> <li>• c. how they are performing against those standards</li> <li>• d. the service choices available to tenants, including any additional costs that are relevant to specific choices</li> <li>• e. progress of any repairs work</li> <li>• f. how tenants can communicate with them and provide feedback</li> <li>• g. the responsibilities of the tenant and provider</li> <li>• h. arrangements for tenant involvement and scrutiny.</li> </ul> <p>[new std 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.4.4]</p> | <p>a) Services can be accessed by telephone, online, live chat, reception (by appointment), social media and post. We also offer tenants home visits. Ways to contact SLH are published on line and new tenants are informed on sign up. <a href="#">My Account is now active with tenants able to sign up to access self-service services.</a></p> <p>b) Expectations are set out in the Repairs Handbook <a href="https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Handbook-Oct-22.pdf">https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Handbook-Oct-22.pdf</a> which is given at the point of sign up</p> <p>C) The Annual Report for Tenants is available on the SLH website this provides information on how tenants can get involved share feedback and how we are performing against standards.</p> <p>D) There is currently tenant choice for improvements works such as kitchen and bathroom layouts for example. Choice is also available for rent payments, direct debit options, complaints, allocations and frequency of independent living calls.</p> <p>e) Via SMS, tenants at the point of booking will receive confirmation of their appointment, a reminder the day before and an ‘on-route’ message. We recognise that improvements need to be made in keeping the tenant informed following inspections for repairs – this will be improved in 2022/23 by a new ‘Inspections’ workflow being undertaken as part of Business Transformation with a key focus on keeping the tenant informed. (Repairs Customer Experience Project)</p> <p>f) Tenants can provide feedback through any access route including phone, email, social media, live chat, website, complaints and surveys. Customer Insight Partner sends out surveys and will be providing feedback to service managers to improve services. The latest customer perception survey was completed in Jan 24 which was carried by an independent research company.</p> <p>g) The responsibilities of the tenant and landlord are set out within the tenancy agreement. Information on rights and responsibilities can also be found on our website here: <a href="https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/your-home/your-tenancy/#rights-and-responsibilities">https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/your-home/your-tenancy/#rights-and-responsibilities</a> and specific rights and responsibilities on repairs can be found in our Repair and Maintenance Handbook: <a href="https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Handbook.pdf">https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Handbook.pdf</a></p> <p>l) SLH Tenants Committee meetings are advertised on social media and on our website - we encourage participation and new members. The minutes from the meeting are shared via our website here: <a href="https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/get-involved/The-Board-approved-a-Resident-Engagement-Strategy">https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/get-involved/The-Board-approved-a-Resident-Engagement-Strategy</a>. Found here: <a href="https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Resident-Engagement-Strategy.pdf">https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Resident-Engagement-Strategy.pdf</a></p> <p>A wider review of customer voice in Governance has been completed where a Residents Forum has been established with a new membership from tenants, shared ownership and leaseholders. It has been agreed that this forum will provide customer scrutiny of SLH performance and has the ability to form task and finish groups to conduct deeper dives into a particular area as requested by the Forum or the Board.</p> | <p><b>COMPLIANT</b></p> |   |
|  | <p>2.1.2 Providers shall offer a range of ways for tenants to express a complaint and set out clear service standards for responding to complaints, including complaints about performance against the standards, and details of what to do if they are unhappy with the outcome of a complaint. Providers shall inform tenants how they use complaints to improve their services. Registered providers shall publish information about complaints each year, including their number and nature, and the outcome of the complaints. Providers shall accept complaints made by advocates authorised to act on a tenant's/tenants' behalf.</p> <p>[new std 2.5.1, 2.5.2]</p>   | <p>Advice on making a comment or complaint is available on the SLH website. See here: <a href="https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/feedback/">https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/feedback/</a></p> <p>The Complaints Policy was updated and approved by the Board in <b>March 2024</b> and is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. The policy was updated to reflect the changes in the Complaint Handling Code (April 2023). The policy sets out the service standards for responding to complaints.</p> <p>If tenants are unhappy with how a complaint has been dealt with advises that they can report complaints to the Housing Ombudsman. The policy can be viewed online here: <a href="https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Complaints-Policy-2024-.pdf">https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Complaints-Policy-2024-.pdf</a></p> <p>SLH's self-assessment is also available online: <a href="https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Self-Assessment-v-HOS-CHC.pdf">https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Self-Assessment-v-HOS-CHC.pdf</a></p> <p>Numbers of complaints received for each year is published in the Annual Report:</p> <p>In 2023/24 a project on complaints management was completed to continue to improve the service. Improvements implemented includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workflow within Cx to improve visibility and accountability</li> <li>• Reporting – in line with Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)</li> <li>• Introduction of transactional surveys</li> <li>• Improve communications: campaigns on how customers can complain and ‘you said, we did’ and increased awareness through notice boards and sheltered schemes around how customers can make a complaint</li> <li>• The Learning Loop – improving how we capture lessons learnt from complaints and ensure these actions are embedded.</li> <li>• Provide training to colleagues on effective complaint responses, complaint handling code, timescales and changes to complaints policy</li> <li>• Power BI report within TSM data reported to SMT monthly</li> </ul>  | <p><b>COMPLIANT</b></p> |   |

| Required Outcome  | Specific Expectation   | 2024 CONTROLS/DESCRIPTION OF COMPLIANCE   | COMPLIANT | AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT<br>(see new consumer stds assessment) |
|---|--|---|-----------|---|
| <p>2. Involvement and empowerment</p> <p>Registered providers shall ensure that tenants are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the formulation of their landlord's housing related policies and strategic priorities</li> <li>the making of decisions about how housing related services are delivered, including the setting of service standards</li> <li>the scrutiny of their landlord's performance and the making of recommendations to their landlord about how performance might be improved</li> <li>the management of their homes, where applicable</li> <li>the management of repair and maintenance services, such as commissioning and undertaking a range of repair tasks, as agreed with landlords, and the sharing in savings made, and</li> <li>agreeing local offers for service delivery</li> </ul> | <p>1. Registered providers shall support their tenants to develop and implement opportunities for involvement and empowerment, including by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. supporting their tenants to exercise their Right to Manage or otherwise exercise housing management functions, where appropriate [new std 2.2.4]</li> <li>b. supporting the formation and activities of tenant panels or equivalent groups and responding in a constructive and timely manner to them [new std 2.2.2]</li> <li>c. the provision of timely and relevant performance information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in a form which registered providers seek to agree with their tenants. Such provision must include the publication of an annual report which should include information on repair and maintenance budgets [new std 2.2.1]</li> <li>d. providing support to tenants to build their capacity to be more effectively involved.</li> </ul> <p>[new std 2.2.5]</p> | <p>SLH will work with any community groups wanting more engagement. This will not include Right to Manage for tenancies, but could include leasehold management.</p> <p>B) SLH organise a range of activities including coffee mornings and estate walkabouts. In 2023 six Community Engagement events ("Neighbourhood natters") were carried out across all localities of our stock which provided valuable insight. These events are published on social media. We hold an online repair customer focus group and support resident associations (Helm Close and Sandylands). Actions arising from these events/meetings are recorded by the Customer Engagement Partner.</p> <p>C) Scrutiny groups held frequently to review service areas. Scrutiny for 2023/24 includes ASB and Voids. Recommendations from the scrutiny panel will inform service standards and processes. Annual report published online here: <a href="https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/South-Lakes-Housing-Annual-Report-2021.pdf">https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/South-Lakes-Housing-Annual-Report-2021.pdf</a> we held a number of customers engagement opportunities through online consultation on policies and service improvements such as introduction of Good neighbourhood policy, Repairs policy, Complaints policy, Consumer Regulation consultation, HOS consultations and compensation policy</p> <p>D) Resident Engagement Strategy here: <a href="https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Resident-Engagement-Strategy.pdf">https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Resident-Engagement-Strategy.pdf</a></p> | COMPLIANT |   |
|   | <p>2.2.2 Registered providers shall consult with tenants on the scope of local offers for service delivery. This shall include how performance will be monitored, reported to and scrutinised by tenants and arrangements for reviewing these on a periodic basis.</p>   | <p>Local Offer and Neighbourhood Plans in place. They will provide service and local information, planned improvement programme and estate improvements and will be informed by resident feedback, aiming to address the specific issues identified in and around each neighbourhood. Where properties are not considered part of a 'neighbourhood' per se, a more generic service offer with service and local information and how to access different types of advice and support will be published.</p> <p>Residents can give their feedback through our neighbourhood planning questionnaire which can be accessed through our website and we will also gather residents views via Residents Associations and a number of local events.</p> <p>Link to questionnaire - <a href="https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/your-home/neighbourhood-plans/">https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/your-home/neighbourhood-plans/</a></p>  | COMPLIANT |   |
|   | <p>2.2.3 Where registered providers are proposing a change in landlord for one or more of their tenants or a significant change in their management arrangements, they shall consult with affected tenants in a fair, timely, appropriate and effective manner. Registered providers shall set out the proposals clearly and in an appropriate amount of detail and shall set out any actual or potential advantages and disadvantages (including costs) to tenants in the immediate and longer term. Registered providers must be able to demonstrate to affected tenants how they have taken the outcome of the consultation into account when reaching a decision.</p> <p>[new std 2.2.6]</p>   | <p>Not applicable, however if this situation were to arise SLH would ensure that we would carry out consultation in a fair, timely and appropriate manner and set out the disadvantages and advantages to tenants. SLH would consider the feedback from consultation and use this to inform the decision and communicate this within the outcome communication to tenants.</p>  | N/A       |   |
|   | <p>2.2.4 Registered providers shall consult tenants at least once every three years on the best way of involving tenants in the governance and scrutiny of the organisation's housing management service.</p> <p>New std [2.2.5 (in part)]</p>   | <p>In 2023/24 a fundamental review of how tenants are involved in the Governance structure was carried out. This included consultation with involved customers, and customers who had expressed an interest in being involved and the Board. This review resulted in the transition from a Tenants Committee to a Residents Forum. Customers agreed that the membership be extended to include shared ownership and leasehold customers and to try to broaden diversity of thought and lived experience. The Terms of Reference was developed and agreed in consultation with the then Tenants Committee which included the scope of scrutiny of performance of SLH and the role of a formal scrutiny panel. It was agreed that a task and finish group would be established to perform deep dives/scrutiny into specific areas as required. The new forum is currently undergoing a period of training and development prior to commencing the full scope and remit as most members are new to this type of role.</p>  | COMPLIANT |   |
| <p>3. Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants</p> <p>Registered providers shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>treat all tenants with fairness and respect</li> <li>demonstrate that they understand the different needs of their tenants, including in relation to the equality strands and tenants with additional support needs</li> </ul>   | <p>2.3.1 Registered providers shall demonstrate how they respond to tenants' needs in the way they provide services and communicate with tenants.</p>  | <p>Customer Insight project maps out demographics of customers this provides information to help shape services. Transactional surveys, perception surveys and complaints are being better analysed to make service improvements and shape services based on customer needs. Eg. improved management of ASB including updated policy and procedures, We now offer customers living in sheltered schemes drop-in sessions when we share rent increase communication and make customers aware of any financial support that they may be eligible for through Financial Inclusion Partner. This was implemented from February 2024</p> <p>Project to commence to improve the customer that we hold and to offer tailored services where possible.</p> <p>Case specific action plans for ASB management will take into consideration any specific needs a customer may have in relation to communication or access and these will be catered for wherever possible.</p> <p>Improved digital service. My Account relaunch due in Autumn 2022 with improved customer forms, repair scheduling, mobile first design.</p> <p>Independent Living increase font sizes for tenants.</p> <p>Opt in for bi-annual paper rent statements</p>  | COMPLIANT |   |

**NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY STD**

| Required Outcome  | Specific Expectation   | 2024 CONTROLS/DESCRIPTION OF COMPLIANCE   | COMPLIANT        | AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT<br>(see new consumer stds) |
|---|--|---|------------------|--|
| <p>1 Neighbourhood management: RP's shall keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with the homes that they own clean and safe. They shall work in partnership with their tenants and other providers and public bodies where it is effective to do so.</p> | <p>2.1 Registered providers shall consult with tenants in developing a published policy for maintaining and improving the neighbourhoods associated with their homes. This applies where the registered provider has a responsibility (either exclusively or in part) for the condition of that neighbourhood. The policy shall include any communal areas associated with the registered provider's homes.</p>  | <p>SLH ASB and Tenancy Management Policies, developed with tenants</p> <p><a href="https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Anti-Social-Behaviour-Domestic-Abuse.pdf">https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Anti-Social-Behaviour-Domestic-Abuse.pdf</a><br/> <a href="https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Tenancy-Management.pdf">https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Tenancy-Management.pdf</a></p> <p>Neighbourhood Plans are now live and events are being planned into the summer to push out to residents. <i>Consultation events have been held with customers.</i> Plans are bespoke to the needs of individual communities/localities across the south lakes area.</p> <p>Environmental improvements relating to communal spaces are planned across our stock over a 5 year period with consultation with residents taking place on each scheme, ensuring that the works are aimed at overcoming issues experienced by residents in the locality. <i>A number of improvements have been completed focussing on parking and best use of open spaces.</i></p>   | <b>COMPLIANT</b> |  |
| <p>2 Local area co-operation: RP's shall co-operate with relevant partners to help promote social, environmental and economic wellbeing in the areas where they own properties</p>  | <p>2.2 Registered providers, having taken account of their presence and impact within the areas where they own properties, shall:<br/>                     [new std 2.1.1]<br/>                     · (a) identify and publish the roles they are able to play within the areas where they have properties<br/>                     · (b) co-operate with local partnership arrangements and strategic housing functions of local authorities where they are able to assist them in achieving their objectives</p> | <p>SLH stock across south Lakeland with some larger estates where we can play a greater leadership role and work closely with WAFC.</p> <p>Various methods are used to publish our work such as social media, website, Annual Report and liaising with Residents Associations. Colleagues also attend multi-agency meetings and residents' meetings to discuss roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>Joint working is a key part of our day to day role and staff attend local partnership 'Hub' meetings alongside a number of different agencies working across South Lakeland. Depending on the issues being discussed at each meeting, representatives from various agencies will be in attendance, including but not limited to MIND (Mental Health Support), UNITY (Drug and Alcohol support), Age UK, Citizens Advice Bureau, Mental Health Team (Garburn House), Manna House, Barnardo's, Victim support, Neighbourhood Watch, Fire Service, Residents Associations, GPs/practice nurses, DWP, Christians Against Poverty, Kings Food Bank, Eden and South Lakes Credit Union, Royal British Legion, Alzheimer's Society.</p> <p>South Lakeland District Council, Westmorland and Furness Council, Town and Parish Councils are also regular partners when working with tenants.</p> <p>Neighbourhood plans clearly set out the role of SLH and links with partnerships in the local area.</p> | <b>COMPLIANT</b> |  |
| <p>3 Anti-social behaviour: RP's shall work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle asb in the neighbourhoods where they own</p>   | <p>2.3.1 Registered providers shall publish a policy on how they work with relevant partners to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) in areas where they own properties.<br/>                     New std 2.2.1]</p>   | <p>ASB Policy<br/>                     The SLH website also includes Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) reporting toolkit and a free Noise App download.</p> <p><a href="https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/services/report-asb/">https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/services/report-asb/</a><br/> <a href="https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/SLH-2023-ASB-Policy-.pdf">https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/SLH-2023-ASB-Policy-.pdf</a></p> <p>We work with agencies including Police, Social Services, ASB Action, Environmental Protection, Enforcement team, SLDC, MIND, Unity and Cumbria and Morecambe Bay Health Trust to tackle and resolve issues.</p> <p><i>Colleagues have recently attend joint partnership working event focussing on good practice when tackling crime and ASB in our neighbourhoods.</i></p>  | <b>COMPLIANT</b> |  |

| Required Outcome | Specific Expectation   | 2024 CONTROLS/DESCRIPTION OF COMPLIANCE  | COMPLIANT | AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT<br>(see new consumer stds) |
|------------------|--|--|-----------|--|
|                  | 2.3.2 In their work to prevent and address ASB, registered providers shall demonstrate:  |  |           |  |
|                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (a) that tenants are made aware of their responsibilities and rights in relation to ASB</li> </ul>  | <p>a) Tenancy Agreement, ASB Policy. All Tenants are issued with a copy of the Tenancy agreement, they can also access information on the web site called your tenancy that details, information on managing your tenancy, changes of tenancy, ending your tenancy and rights and responsibilities.<br/> <a href="https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/your-home/your-tenancy/#managing-your-tenancy">https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/your-home/your-tenancy/#managing-your-tenancy</a></p>   | COMPLIANT |  |
|                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (b) strong leadership, commitment and accountability on preventing and tackling ASB that reflects a shared understanding of responsibilities with other local agencies</li> </ul>   | <p>b) The ASB policy sets out SLH's commitment to dealing with nuisance and anti-social behaviour and to work with key stakeholders to deliver this commitment.</p>  | COMPLIANT |  |
|                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (c) a strong focus exists on preventative measures tailored towards the needs of tenants and their families</li> </ul>  | <p>c) &amp; d) Prevention, detection and early intervention are key to our successful management of cases alongside timely communication with other agencies. The policy includes the steps to be taken which includes preventative action such as diversionary work or changes to the environment. Also includes early intervention to minimise escalation and resolve issues before becoming significant. Action that can be taken includes legal action of serving Notice Seeking Possession, requesting an Injunction, seeking Criminal Behaviour Orders, seeking Community Protection Notices and seeking suspended or immediate Possession Orders.</p> <p>SLH also has a contract with a specialist external provider, ASB action and also utilises the support of a range of solicitors to support the progression of more serious cases. Legal Advice and support from these agencies is a key aspect of the way we progress more serious cases. Utilising all of the available powers, we will always focus on the safety of the victim when considering the most suitable action.</p> <p><b>Allocations Policy</b><br/> Before someone becomes a tenant, they are asked questions when registering with CCBL a number of questions regarding their tenancy history, which should identify if there are have been/ are any ASB issues. If they are coming from another Housing Association we ask for a Landlord reference. The landlord reference has specific questions, one of which relates to ASB.</p> <p><b>Starter Tenancies</b></p> | COMPLIANT |  |
|                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (d) prompt, appropriate and decisive action is taken to deal with ASB before it escalates, which focuses on resolving the problem having regard to the full range of tools and legal powers available [new std 2.2.4]</li> </ul>            | <p>See above</p>   | COMPLIANT |  |
|                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (e) all tenants and residents can easily report ASB, are kept informed about the status of their case where responsibility rests with the organisation and are appropriately signposted where it does not [new std 2.2.3, 2.2.5]</li> </ul> | <p>e) the website has a reporting tool. Incidences can also be reported by e-mail, by contacting SLH by phone or making an appointment to speak to a colleague, Noise app. Service standards are set out in the policy which includes the expected timeframes to respond to a report and to agree a timescale to keep the complainant informed of the progress of the case. Tenants (complainants) can access their open ASB case 'My account' and see if there is an open case if they are the complainant.</p>   | COMPLIANT |  |
|                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (f) provision of support to victims and witnesses [new std 2.2.5]</li> </ul>  | <p>f) The policy sets out the support that will be provided to complainants and perpetrators. Victims are able to provide anonymous witness statements which gives them more confidence to report an incident initially. Tenants are also able to access Victim Support if they require additional support and guidance. Referrals into other agencies for support also forms part of the tools we access to support victims. Target hardening of properties will also be a consideration on a case by case basis.</p>   | COMPLIANT |  |

TENANCY STANDARD

[Tenancy Standard](#)

| Required Outcome  | Specific Expectation   | 2024 CONTROLS/DESCRIPTION OF COMPLIANCE   | COMPLIANT        | AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT<br>(see new consumer stds assessment) |
|---|--|---|------------------|---|
| <p>Allocations and mutual exchange</p> <p>1. Registered providers shall let their homes in a fair, transparent and efficient way. They shall take into account the housing needs and aspirations of tenants and potential tenants. They shall demonstrate how their lettings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make the best use of available housing</li> <li>• are compatible with the purpose of the housing</li> <li>• contribute to local authorities' strategic housing function and sustainable communities</li> </ul> <p>There should be clear application, decision-making and appeals processes.</p> <p>1.2 Registered providers shall enable their tenants to gain access to opportunities to exchange their tenancy with that of another tenant, by way of internet-based mutual exchange services.</p> | <p><b>Allocations &amp; Lettings</b></p>   |   |                  |   |
|   | <p>1.1 Registered providers shall co-operate with local authorities' strategic housing function, and their duties to meet identified local housing needs. This includes assistance with local authorities' homelessness duties, and through meeting obligations in nominations agreements.</p> <p>[new std 2.1.1]</p>  | <p>SLH are members of Cumbria Choice Based Lettings (CCBL) scheme, a partnership of 6 LA's, including our key LA's – SLDC, BBC and EDC and key RP's. We have a shared Allocations Policy, providing a single point of access for applicants. We are active members of the Project Board and Operations Group.</p> <p><a href="https://www.cumbriachoice.org.uk/Data/Pub/PublicWebsite/imagelibrary/Allocations%20Policy%20Document.docx">https://www.cumbriachoice.org.uk/Data/Pub/PublicWebsite/imagelibrary/Allocations%20Policy%20Document.docx</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.cumbriachoice.org.uk/Data/Pub/PublicWebsite/imagelibrary/Banding%20Criteria.docx">https://www.cumbriachoice.org.uk/Data/Pub/PublicWebsite/imagelibrary/Banding%20Criteria.docx</a></p> <p>SLH attends Strategic Homelessness Group which provides updates about services and issues across the local area as well as a platform to identify trends and collaborate. We work with Westmorland and Furness Council on the Refugee Resettlement Scheme, rehousing 16 households since 2018, with WaFC and 3rd sector providing support.</p> | <p>COMPLIANT</p> |   |
|   | <p>1.2 Registered providers shall develop and deliver services to address under-occupation and overcrowding in their homes, within the resources available to them. These services should be focused on the needs of their tenants and will offer choices to them.</p> <p>[new std 2.1.2, 2.1.3]</p>   | <p>We offer advice and support for tenants looking to downsize or move to larger properties. CCBL Allocations Policy awards additional priority for under-occupation and overcrowding.</p> <p>Tenants are encouraged and supported to look on CCBL, given advice on Mutual Exchange and Downsizing Scheme is explained, which has a budget available to assist people to downsize and free up larger homes, making better use of our stock.</p> <p>The new CCBL also supports tenants to register for a Mutual Exchange and to search for others seeking a mutual exchange</p>  | <p>COMPLIANT</p> |   |
|   | <p>1.3 Registered providers' published policies shall include how they have made use of common housing registers, common allocations policies and local letting policies. Registered providers shall clearly set out, and be able to give reasons for, the criteria they use for excluding actual and potential tenants from consideration for allocations, mobility or mutual exchange schemes.</p> | <p>SLH are members of Cumbria Choice Based Lettings scheme, a partnership of 2 LA's, including Westmorland and Furness Council and key RP's. We have a shared Allocations Policy, providing a single point of access for applicants.</p> <p>Information can be found on the SLH website with a link to CCBL page where information is available on the Allocations Policy, S106 agreements, Local Lettings Plans and Mutual Exchanges.</p>  | <p>COMPLIANT</p> |   |
|   | <p>1.4 Registered providers shall develop and deliver allocations processes in a way which supports their effective use by the full range of actual and potential tenants, including those with support needs, those who do not speak English as a first language and others who have difficulties with written English.</p> <p>[partly linked to new std 2.1.2]</p>                                 | <p>SLH are members of Cumbria Choice Based Lettings scheme, a partnership of 2 LA's, including Westmorland and Furness Council and key RP's. We have a shared Allocations Policy, providing a single point of access for applicants.</p> <p>In our experience most people have family/ friends who can help with completing the forms for to apply for housing via the CCBL process.</p> <p>We also have access to language line and there are web programs that we can access to translate information.</p> <p>We work with Westmorland and Furness Council (WAFC) on the Refugee Resettlement Scheme, with WAFC arranging support, including translation if required.</p>   | <p>COMPLIANT</p> |   |
|   | <p>1.5 Registered providers shall minimise the time that properties are empty between each letting. When doing this, they shall take into account the circumstances of the tenants who have been offered the properties.</p>   | <p>We aim to relet properties as quickly as possible, with targets set annually for turnaround time and rent loss.</p> <p>Void Standard – provides a minimum standard for all properties being relet, including all health and safety/ compliance check requirements.</p> <p>SLH void standard sep 21 (2).docx</p> <p>We take into account the individual circumstances of people moving into our properties and are able to tailor our service and consider for example whether any minor adaptations may be required.</p> <p>CX voids and Connect are live</p>  | <p>COMPLIANT</p> |   |
|   | <p>1.6 Registered providers shall record all lettings and sales as required by the Continuous Recording of Lettings (CORE) system.</p> <p>[new std 2.1.6]</p>  | <p>The data is gathered from the Cumbria Choice system and input to CORE.</p> <p>Action - look into bulk upload of forms and CX automation to reduce data entry and reconciliation (Jul 23 update – on the list for completion but not a priority as needs process/culture change also)</p>   | <p>COMPLIANT</p> |   |
|   | <p>1.7 Registered providers shall provide tenants wishing to move with access to clear and relevant advice about their housing options.</p> <p>[new std 2.2.2]</p>   | <p>SLH are members of Cumbria Choice Based Lettings scheme, a partnership of 2 LA's, including Westmorland and Furness Council and key RP's. We have a shared Allocations Policy, providing a single point of access for advice for applicants.</p> <p><a href="https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/your-home/cumbria-choice/">https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/your-home/cumbria-choice/</a></p>  | <p>COMPLIANT</p> |   |

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|  | <p>1.8 Registered providers shall subscribe to an internet based mutual exchange service (or pay the subscriptions of individual tenants who wish to exchange), allowing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (a) a tenant to register an interest in arranging a mutual exchange through the mutual exchange service without payment of a fee</li> <li>• the tenant to enter their current property details and the tenant's requirements for the mutual exchange property they hope to obtain</li> <li>- the tenant to be provided with the property details of those properties where a match occurs</li> </ul> <p>[new std 2.4.1]</p>  | <p>Most applicants want to move locally.</p> <p>Although SLH do not have a membership with Homeswapper or a similar internet based service, if a customer asks about registration, we will pay the one off fee for them to allow them access to the wider database.</p> <p>Application for a Mutual Exchange can be made by online form via the SLH website. The application is received within 7 days and the applicant will be informed whether their application is successful or not.</p> <p>The refreshed CCBL Allocations Policy now includes a Mutual Exchange Scheme for people wishing to move between member landlords.</p> <p>There were 14 in 2022/23 mutual exchanges in 2021/22 (compared to 30 mutual exchanges in 2021/22, 23 in 2020/21, 27 in 2019/20, 25 in 2018/19, 22 in 2017/18 and 18 in 2016/17).</p> <p>There has been a gradual increase in mutual exchanges since 2013, which demonstrates the process is working.</p>  | <b>COMPLIANT</b> |  |
|  | <p>1.9 Registered providers shall ensure the provider of the internet based mutual exchange service to which they subscribe is a signatory to an agreement, such as HomeSwap Direct, under which tenants can access matches across all (or the greatest practicable number of) internet based mutual exchange services.</p>   | <p>SLH do not have a membership with Homeswapper or a similar internet based service, if a customer asks about registration, we will ensure the provider is an appropriate organisation and provides wide access. We will pay the one-off fee for a tenant to allow them access such a scheme.</p> <p>The rationale for taking this approach is that most applicants want to move locally and find their own exchanges via free local services, such as social media and local adverts.</p>  | <b>COMPLIANT</b> |  |
|  | <p>1.10 Registered providers shall take reasonable steps to publicise the availability of any mutual exchange service(s) to which it subscribes to its tenants.</p> <p>[new std 2.4.2]</p>  | <p>SLH website has a link to apply for a mutual exchange <a href="https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/services/mutual-exchange/">https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/services/mutual-exchange/</a></p> <p>The CCBL Allocations Policy now includes a Mutual Exchange Scheme for people wishing to move between member landlords.</p>   | <b>COMPLIANT</b> |  |
|  | <p>1.11 Registered providers shall provide reasonable support in using the service to tenants who do not have access to the internet.</p> <p>[new std 2.4.3]</p>  | <p>SLH Customer Hub can provide support and advice for tenants who do not have access to the internet in applying on line.</p> <p>Applicants now need an email address to apply and there is guidance on the Cumbria Choice Website on how to arrange an email address</p> <p>We will also signpost to other support, such as Age UK and the CAB, who were consulted over the new policy, as appropriate.</p> <p>For tenants without access to the internet who have registered, we can still offer an autobid process.</p>  | <b>COMPLIANT</b> |  |
| <p>2 Tenure</p> <p>1. Registered providers shall offer tenancies or terms of occupation which are compatible with the purpose of the accommodation, the needs of individual households, the sustainability of the community, and the efficient use of their housing stock.</p> <p>2. They shall meet all applicable statutory and legal requirements in relation to the form and use of tenancy agreements or terms of occupation.</p> | <p>1. Registered providers shall publish clear and accessible policies which outline their approach to tenancy management, including interventions to sustain tenancies and prevent unnecessary evictions, and tackling tenancy fraud, and set out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (a) The type of tenancies they will grant.</li> <li>- (b) Where they grant tenancies for a fixed term, the length of those terms.</li> <li>- (c) The circumstances in which they will grant tenancies of a particular type.</li> <li>- (d) Any exceptional circumstances in which they will grant fixed term tenancies for a term of less than five years in general needs housing following any probationary period.</li> <li>- (e) The circumstances in which they may or may not grant another tenancy on the expiry of the fixed term, in the same property or in a different property.</li> <li>- (f) The way in which a tenant or prospective tenant may appeal against or complain about the length of fixed term tenancy offered and the type of tenancy offered, and against a decision not to grant another tenancy on the expiry of the fixed term. [new std 2.1.5]</li> <li>- (g) Their policy on taking into account the needs of those households who are vulnerable by reason of age, disability or illness, and households with children, including through the provision of tenancies which provide a reasonable degree of stability.</li> <li>- (h) The advice and assistance they will give to tenants on finding alternative accommodation in the event that they decide not to grant another tenancy.</li> <li>- (i) Their policy on granting discretionary succession rights, taking account of the needs of vulnerable household members.</li> </ul> <p>[new std 2.1.4, 2.2.1, 2.3.1]</p> | <p>Tenancy Management Policy which sets out all of the tenancies offered, eligibility for tenancies by SLH :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Starter Tenancies</li> <li>• Assured Shorthold,</li> <li>• Assured and</li> <li>• Assured with Protected Rights.</li> </ul> <p>Fixed Term tenancies would only be granted by exception, on a case by case basis, for a minimum of 2 years.</p> <p>The appeals process is set out in the policy</p> <p>Tenancy Management Amalgamated Policy May 2020.docx</p> <p>Tenancy Agreement - All tenants are provided with a copy of their Tenancy Agreement when they sign for their home. Copies can also be requested (free of charge).</p> <p>Information regarding Tenancies is available on the website – <a href="https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/your-home/your-tenancy/">https://www.southlakeshousing.co.uk/your-home/your-tenancy/</a></p> <p>SLH operate Statutory Succession rights as laid out in legislation. When a joint tenant dies there is an automatic succession. When the partner of a tenant dies the law allows for succession. If there are other family members in the household, we have to look at each case individually to see if there is a right of succession. We also consider the size of the property to ensure it is not under occupied as a result of the succession.</p> | <b>COMPLIANT</b> |  |
|  | <p>2.2 Registered providers must grant general needs tenants a periodic secure or assured (excluding periodic assured shorthold) tenancy, or a tenancy for a minimum fixed term of five years, or exceptionally, a tenancy for a minimum fixed term of no less than two years, in addition to any probationary tenancy period.</p> <p>[new std 2.3.2]</p>   | <p>Currently we offer three standard types of tenancies; Assured Shorthold, Assured and Assured with Protected Rights. The type of tenancy issued depends on whether they are transferring tenant or not, and what rights the tenant held previously.</p> <p>Fixed Term tenancies would only be granted by exception, on a case by case basis, for a one year probationary period with the conversion to a 5 year fixed term tenancy on successful completion of the probationary period.</p> <p>Adaptations process workshop to be completed July 2023</p>  | <b>COMPLIANT</b> |  |
|  | <p>2.3 Before a fixed term tenancy ends, registered providers shall provide notice in writing to the tenant stating either that they propose to grant another tenancy on the expiry of the existing fixed term or that they propose to end the tenancy.</p> <p>[new std 2.3.3]</p>  | <p>Profile and advert to be signed off by Ian and Steve by 17th June</p>   | <b>COMPLIANT</b> |  |



|  |   |                         |  |
|--|---|-------------------------|--|
| <p>2.4 Where registered providers use probationary tenancies, these shall be for a maximum of 12 months, or a maximum of 18 months where reasons for extending the probationary period have been given and where the tenant has the opportunity to request a review.<br/>[new std 2.3.4]</p>   | <p>Probationary Tenancies via Assured Shorthold Tenancies for 12 months<br/>Tenancy Management Amalgamated Policy May 2020.docx</p>   | <p><b>COMPLIANT</b></p> |  |
| <p>2.5 Where registered providers choose to let homes on fixed term tenancies (including under Affordable Rent terms), they shall offer reasonable advice and assistance to those tenants where that tenancy ends.</p>   | <p>Fixed Term tenancies would only be granted by exception, on a case by case basis, for a minimum of 2 years.<br/><br/>The review process is contained within Tenancy Management Amalgamated Policy May 2020.docx</p>  | <p><b>COMPLIANT</b></p> |  |
| <p>2.6 Registered providers shall make sure that the home continues to be occupied by the tenant they let the home to in accordance with the requirements of the relevant tenancy agreement, for the duration of the tenancy, allowing for regulatory requirements about participation in mutual exchange schemes.</p>   | <p>Tenancy Agreement<br/>At sign up, tenants are advised we will carry out home visits to ensure the tenant has settled in, continue to occupy and can sustain their tenancy.<br/>Post sign up visits (8-12 weeks after sign up) and Pre conversion visits before the AST becomes an Assured Tenancy (9 months after the start of the tenancy) are a minimum expectation.<br/>Upon receipt of information suggesting that a tenant may have abandoned their property, investigations are made alongside other agencies to ensure the tenant is in occupation and if they have left, action will be taken to recover possession (Tenancy Fraud Policy Tenancy Fraud Policy .docx).</p> | <p><b>COMPLIANT</b></p> |  |
| <p>2.7 Registered providers shall develop and provide services that will support tenants to maintain their tenancy and prevent unnecessary evictions.<br/>[new std 2.2.1]</p>  | <p>Income Management Policy<br/>Financial Inclusion Service – offering welfare benefits and debt reduction advice<br/><br/>Tenancy Management Team – Neighbourhood Partners<br/>Work Statutory and 3rd sector - doctors, mental health team, CADAS and Westmorland and Furness Council Adult Social Care<br/><br/>Evictions are always the last resort and only after offers of support, attempts to reach repayment agreements and financial inclusion advice have been refused or failed.</p>   | <p><b>COMPLIANT</b></p> |  |
| <p>2.8 Registered providers shall grant those who were social housing tenants on the day on which section 154 of the Localism Act 2011 comes into force, and have remained social housing tenants since that date, a tenancy with no less security where they choose to move to another social rented home, whether with the same or another landlord. (This requirement does not apply where tenants choose to move to accommodation let on Affordable Rent terms).<br/>[new std 2.3.5]</p> | <p>Tenants of SLH who our tenants at the date the Localism Act came into force 15th November 2011 continue to hold an Assured Protected Rights tenancy agreement will retain these rights if they transfer.</p>   | <p><b>COMPLIANT</b></p> |  |
| <p>2.9 Registered providers shall grant tenants who have been moved into alternative accommodation during any redevelopment or other works a tenancy with no less security of tenure on their return to settled accommodation.<br/>[new std 2.3.6]</p>   | <p>Decant Policy<br/>Any tenants required to move to alternative accommodation retain the identical type of tenancy with no reduced security.</p>   | <p><b>COMPLIANT</b></p> |  |