

# DASH Landlord Accreditation

## Complex Cases Policy

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### **1. Policy statement**

Accreditation contributes to the DASH objective to increase the supply of good quality well managed accommodation within the private rented sector.

This policy sets out how DASH will work with landlords to best ensure properties meet the Scheme standards in complex cases, where identifying or implementing remedial action is not straightforward, and / or where DASH and the landlord are unable to agree to a course of action.

The publication and adherence to this policy fulfils DASH's commitment to a fair, consistent and transparent Accreditation service, and to use its resources in an efficient and effective manner.

In exercising this policy tenant safety remains the primary consideration for DASH and landlord decisions.

### **2. Scope**

This policy applies when a landlord seeks Accreditation for the first time or upon renewal.

The policy applies when the inspection of a landlord's property and / or associated information identifies a reason why, in DASH's opinion, the property does not meet the Scheme standards.

These standards are as set out in the Scheme Manual Code of Conduct, comprising both Housing Management Standards and Property Standards.

The purpose of the inspection and subsequent recommendations are limited to those set out in the Scheme Manual, i.e.:

- a landlord cannot be asked to go beyond Scheme standards to secure Accreditation
- DASH is not responsible for ensuring a property meets all of their statutory responsibilities including licensing standards.

### **3. Rights & responsibilities**

#### ***Landlords:***

- Agree to meet the DASH Scheme standards (as set out in the Scheme Manual) at the point of application or re-application and throughout the term of membership
- Are expected to engage with the Inspection process in a timely manner, responding to DASH requests for information and access to properties
- Retain full responsibility for addressing any remedial works immediately to maintain tenant safety – DASH timelines, specified in their report, are for the receipt of confirmation that the work has been completed
- Have a right to raise queries regarding DASH recommendations for remedial action, and receive a clarifying response within a month
- Have the right to cancel, if they do not want to make the recommended remedial measures, but with a loss of fees and a potential impact on licensing discounts
- May appeal a cancellation decision made by DASH to the Accreditation and Appeals Panel (AAP).
- May reapply at any time when in a position to meet the Scheme requirements, without prejudice

#### ***DASH:***

- Are responsible for clearly communicating what is expected of landlords to complete Accreditation, in the Scheme Manual
- Will maintain a policy (herein) setting out what constitutes measures to redress complex cases
- Will explain, clearly, why they consider a property has not met Scheme standards and how this should be addressed
- Will consider alternative remedial actions proposed by landlords
- Will seek advice from an Accreditation Review Group (ARG) to ensure a fair and consistent approach
- Has the right to cancel an application where they believe standards have not been met within agreed timescales and other avenues have been exhausted
- Will respect the landlord's right to cancel
- Has the right to retain any fees paid, following application, when an application is cancelled by either party
- Will ensure landlords have a fair option to appeal
- Will communicate cancellations to the relevant local authority or authorities, and any additional information which may impact a licensing decision, subject to relevant data sharing regulations

***Accreditation Review Group (ARG):***

- Will provide objective advice to DASH regarding complex cases, including on alternative measures and reasonable timescales
- Will comprise a number of DASH inspectors, DASH case officers, the DASH Manager and an independent Derby City Council employee with relevant housing experience

***Accreditation and Appeals Panel (AAP):***

- Will provide an independent mechanism for landlords to challenge DASH decisions on the cancellation
- Will assess cases objectively, in accordance with DASH policies and procedures
- Has the final decision

## **4. Procedures**

***Communication of remedial works***

- The DASH report will outline the recommendations for remedial works and management issues to meet the DASH scheme manual requirements, and will be sent to the landlord within two weeks of an inspection
- The DASH report will clearly set out when landlords need to report progress with these recommendations

***In the event of disagreement***

- A DASH case officer will consider potential alternative solutions proposed by the landlord in liaison with the original inspector wherever possible
- Where a landlord believes there are no acceptable alternatives or the DASH case officer does not consider an alternative is acceptable, DASH will seek advice from the ARG within six weeks.
- This advice will comprise:
  - > Whether they consider that remedial action is required to meet the Scheme standards
  - > Whether they consider the landlord's alternatives are acceptable
  - > A reasonable timescale to receive information or conduct a re-inspection to confirm completion
- Advice may be provided in person, virtually or via email
- The DASH manager will make a decision having heard the ARG's advice and communicate this to the landlord within 2 weeks of the ARG meeting.
- DASH will cancel Accreditation at the point where a landlord chooses not to complete the remedial works, or where there is no response within 4 weeks of the DASH Manager's decision being made available to the landlord
- DASH will communicate the outcome to the relevant local authority / authorities

## **Appeals**

- Upon cancellation which the landlord disputes, they may appeal to the AAP within 4 weeks of the date of this communication, setting out their concern in writing
- The appeal will be considered by the AAP, as set out in DASH's complaints policy

## **5. Other parties**

- The ARG will be made aware of any relevant AAP decisions they have advised on, but cannot overturn them
- Derby City Council delivers DASH services and employs its staff, and so requires DASH to work within its policies and procedures - any complaints regarding conduct of individual DASH Team members are therefore outside of the scope of this policy and are to be addressed by DCC management. The Head of Service which covers DASH Services is [lan.Fullagar@derby.gov.uk](mailto:lan.Fullagar@derby.gov.uk)
- Any decision made by DASH or the AAP is for Accreditation process purposes only and does not constitute legal case law or a decision for licensing purposes

## **6. Contacts**

For further information about this policy or to make an appeal, please contact:

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Next review due: June 2025