

# Proposal Form

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Please refer to the prospectus for the criteria to consider when completing this form. Contact the email address below if you have any questions.

**Completed application forms to be submitted by 1 December to:**

[RLEgrantfund@communities.gov.uk](mailto:RLEgrantfund@communities.gov.uk)

Completed applications should include this form, the checklist at the end and a full breakdown of costs.

You may annex essential supporting material where relevant, but key information must be drawn out in your answers below.

Depending on the scale and complexity of the proposal we may seek additional information. Information in this bid may be shared with other government colleagues to inform decisions, help develop our understanding and inform wider policy development and best practice.

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## A. Your details

<b>Project title and brief summary (30 words max)</b>	<p><b><i>Clearer Futures- Tackling hoarding and self-neglect in the rented sector.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>A pilot study supporting landlords and tenants to maintain tenancies; developing good practice with the voluntary, care and health sectors and sharing results through bespoke, practical workshops.</i></b></p>
<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>East Suffolk Council</b>
<b>Contact details of working lead</b>	<p><b>Name: Teresa Howarth</b>  <b>Email: Teresa.howarth@eastsuffolk.gov.uk</b>  <b>Phone: 01394 444206 / 07990848926</b></p> <p><b>POSTCODE: IP12 1RT</b></p>
<b>Partners (if applicable)</b>	<p><b>Access Community Trust</b>  <b>Eastern Landlords Association</b>  <b>Flagship Housing Association</b>  <b>Great Yarmouth &amp; Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group</b>  <b>Ipswich &amp; East Clinical Commissioning Group</b>  <b>Hoarding Disorders UK</b>  <b>Lofty Heights CIC</b>  <b>Suffolk County Council</b>  <b>Suffolk Fire and Rescue</b></p>
<b>Geographical Area covered by the proposal</b>	<b>East Suffolk Council area</b>
<b>Please provide a fuller summary of your proposal that can be used as the basis for press releases (100 words max)</b>	<p>A multi-agency pilot, linking statutory and voluntary sector organisations, with residents and landlords to address poor housing standards in properties where the tenant exhibits hoarding and self-neglect behaviour. Aiming to develop best practice around decluttering, with ongoing support for tenants to achieve long term improvements in mental health and reduce the incidence of recurrence. Working with landlords to deliver improvements in housing standards and encourage maintenance of tenancies. Also delivering environmental benefits to communities through area improvements.</p>

## B. Finance summary

Where further explanation is required on any of the costs this should be included in your description of the proposal in **section 2** below.

**Please provide headline figures in the table below and provide a FULL BREAKDOWN OF COSTS as an annex to your application.**

Financial year 2019-20	TOTAL £56950
Amount requested	
Client support costs	£52350
Workshops/seminars	£3600
Promotional costs	£1000

### **Please note –**

Costs cannot include overheads that are calculated as a flat rate percentage. Actual overheads can be included provided they are clearly evidenced/justified and are proportionate to the size, scale and duration of the proposal.

Costs cannot include management costs/fees that are calculated as a percentage of existing senior management time. Costs can be included for additional project support and management provided these are proportionate to the size of the bid.

Projects cannot be funded where spend would be incurred beyond the end of financial year 2019/20 and cannot be granted where projects include funding in advance of need. Due to this, we will not fund permanent staffing costs. However, the grant can be used to fund temporary staff on a time-limited basis within the funding period.

# **1. What is the issue you want to address, and current action being taken? (500 words)**

East Suffolk is a new Council formed from the merger of Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils in April 2019. The area has a housing stock made up of 14.2% PRS (approximately 14,900 properties) and 13.2% social rented (approximately 13,200 properties). The area is diverse, with affluent areas, pockets of significant deprivation and isolated but common rural poverty.

The issue we want to address is the complex situation of self-neglect and hoarding. Our experience is that households living in these circumstances have complex mental health needs. The homes they occupy are frequently in disrepair; impossible to heat effectively; present a fire and electrical safety risk; may also be filthy and unhygienic, all of which impacts the mental health and general well-being. It is estimated that 2-5% of the population has a hoarding disorder but there are no figures directly linked to tenure. Extrapolating the figures above, we estimate the problem could affect 1000 households who rent in our area.

Landlords who accommodate tenants who hoard, are faced with a difficult dilemma, some will serve notices seeking possession and then be left with a vacant property with bills running into the thousands of pounds to clear. Others will request help from the Council who, have the enforcement options under the Public Health or Environmental Protection Acts, or action under Housing Act 2004 if category 1 hazards exist. The first option invariably leaves the Council with the bill for clearance as the occupants frequently cannot afford to fund the costs and this action does nothing to support the underlying reasons for the hoarding behaviour, leading to recurrence. The second option requires the landlord to act to improve housing standards in a property that they cannot access and does nothing to resolve the tenant's behaviour. It is also likely to lead to landlords to resort to forcing an eviction and the problem moving elsewhere. Other landlords will exploit the situation; taking the rent with no regard for the tenant's health or safety.

Social services can provide support to help with long term behaviour changes, however existing teams are stretched and have no budget to support physical clearance.

In the current housing crisis, we want to support landlords to continue with tenancies where hoarding is an issue. Establishing effective partnerships and tackling problems before they become acute is believed to provide the best solution.

East Suffolk is currently working in partnership with Ipswich Hospital on a hospital discharge scheme. A significant number of clients have been helped from within the acute environment of the hospital to address hoarding via this pilot. The purpose of this bid is to use this learning and apply it at community level to support residents and landlords by early, multi-agency, intervention.

## **2. How are you proposing to tackle the problem, and why is this your preferred approach? (1250 words)**

The proposal hinges around identifying tenants who exhibit self-neglect or hoarding, measured on the clutter scale at 4 or above. These individuals will be identified through a wide range of partner organisations including the emergency services, health and social services, charitable and community groups and landlords. The Eastern Landlords Association have offered their support to disseminate information to their members about the project to build understanding and encourage referrals.

The offer is centred upon holistic support of the tenant to tackle the whole issue providing both practical and emotional support through the decluttering process; resolving underlying poor housing standards; supporting the individual after the property issues are resolved, encouraging a change in lifestyle with improvements in wellbeing and health. We are already aware of individuals in the PRS who's tenancies are at risk because of the condition of the properties. Solutions are stymied by the lack of funding to tackle the clearance and the acute pressures on social services to support the tenants during and after decluttering.

The proposal is costed on the basis of 40-48 person hours of voluntary sector support (and will not involve permanent posts) for each client, plus up to £400 per property for clearance. This innovative element of time for volunteers to work with the client to clear is seen as key to success. Support will be provided by various partners working in different areas of East Suffolk. [Lofty Heights](#), a CIC with an established decluttering and self-neglect programme, will work with PRS tenants in the south of our area providing decluttering and support services to 15 residents. For 5 of the most vulnerable they will also offer an additional 40 hours of post work support.

[Access Community Trust](#) who already support vulnerable residents in a variety of different circumstances, will do the same in the north of the area for up to 10 residents and also operate fortnightly 'Tenant Tuesday Café's modelled on their existing wellbeing cafés. These will provide a safe space for tenants to come and seek support. Alternate cafés will extend to offer training space for landlords who want to learn more about how they can support vulnerable tenants, like care leavers. These would be in Lowestoft and Samuda. We will also work with Flagship Housing who will work to support up to 18 of their own tenants facing hoarding challenges and the fund will help pay for clearance.

In cases where the clearance is at a level of clutter scale 7 and above the sums above could be supplemented by a Council grant under the Regulatory Reform Order adopted by the Council which is for works costing between £1000 and £5000.

Once the work has been completed and the properties are clear they will be inspected by East Suffolk Council's Private Sector Housing team to identify any significant hazards and take action to ensure good standards. In most cases

works should be done by agreement and the Council's Renovation Grant will be made available. The grant policy provides funding in return for an agreement that the landlord will let the property at an affordable rent for 15 years or the monies are repayable. Where agreement cannot be reached, robust enforcement action will follow. As part of the assessment, the energy performance of the building will be reviewed and clients will be matched to available grants for heating or insulation. Suffolk currently has funding from the National Grid Affordable Warmth, Warm Homes Fund so has funding for fuel poor households, including many of the likely tenants identified under this programme, for first time central heating. We will use the minimum energy efficiency standards as an alternative enforcement tool which could bring in fines.

East Suffolk has been working with Ipswich and East CCG over the last 12 months and has developed the [Stepping Home](#) scheme to help patients who are medically fit but unable to be discharged from hospital due to housing issues. The project funds solutions and, as part of the programme, has supported individuals with hoarding disorders. The learning from this scheme will be used to help ensure we have the right people engaged at the right time to support the immediate issues and deliver ongoing support for clients to avoid a recurrence of hoarding.

The service supports the objectives of Suffolk Fire and Rescue service by dealing with high risk properties where means of escape is compromised, and high fire loads increase the risk of fire deaths. Fire Officers will also visit tenants, where appropriate, to give advice on fire safety. All properties should already have been provided with smoke, and in some cases carbon monoxide, detectors by the landlords, but these will be checked to ensure they are working correctly and providing early warning.

The Police are also some of the first professionals to identify potentially hoarded properties, therefore as well as another source of referrals, the pilot may see a reduction in anti-social behaviour, vandalism and other criminally related issues, although these may be difficult to quantify.

Tackling hoarding in the community with this early intervention approach, will help to reduce the tenant's call on health services; both mental health and physical health. There is an increased risk of falls, illness linked to poor hygiene and cold homes and health issues linked to social isolation and lack of exercise. We will work with integrated neighbourhood teams, GP practices and other primary and secondary healthcare providers to identify tenants needing support. It is recognised that outcomes from health services not taken up will be difficult to measure.

By helping tenants retain their tenancies there will be reduction in the need for the Council to support under the duties of the Homelessness Reduction Act, benefitting an already stretched service. There may also be some opportunities for rough sleeper support via mental health signposting (see later).

This approach is our preferred way of attempting to tackle a complex and resource intense issue, in the short term offered by this funding. Hoarding is

made even more complex issue when landlords are involved. By involving a multiplicity of statutory and non-statutory agencies and modelling variations in approach to fit in with the needs of the tenant and the supporting agencies, we can learn and deliver more outcomes in a short period of time.

No significant risks are identified with roll-out as partners are already playing a part in this area, just not in the intensive and cohesive way suggested in this bid. Work could commence with known individuals in early January.

The project will deliver two workshops run by the national organisation [Hoarding Disorders UK](#) ; disseminating information and case studies, sharing experiences and best practice to support sustainable long-term solutions. These will be open to local service providers and other local authorities. We will also publish on the web a summary report to share learning

Access Community Trust have indicated that if the café approach is successful the income from sales will enable them to sustain these beyond the end of the project.

This option is believed to provide the best chance of success and, as this is a pilot, learning will come from it, so no other options have been considered. The project is believed to be scalable beyond the end of the funding subject to outcomes and opportunities for pooled budgets.

The pilot will identify costs and benefits, giving the partner agencies the opportunity to reflect on future funding. Are the savings to the system sufficiently robust to warrant investment in this model, moving forward?

### **3. How will the proposal benefit the local community? (750 words)**

East Suffolk has recently launched 8 Local Community Partnerships to engage those who live and work in East Suffolk communities in deciding priorities for each area based on published data and local insight. We will use these partnerships as a two-way information exchange to provide details of the project, receive feedback on cases and outcomes from the communities and endeavour to support any local needs identified, in addition to the already identified priorities. The partnerships are supported by dedicated community leads employed by East Suffolk Council and they will be key in feeding back grass roots views.

The support cafes will be open to all residents and will bring a new facility to the community strengthening community ties around health and wellbeing and, if successful, will continue after this project as an ongoing asset.

Hoarding cases already result in service requests to the Private Sector Housing team, particularly where the hoarding is visible from outside the property or extends to the garden. Over the last three years the team had received 555 service requests involving refuse, vermin and filthy premises and in 85 of them, hoarding was a factor. East Suffolk already use powers under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 and the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to deal with accumulations of rubbish, but in hoarding cases the problems recur frequently due to the underlying mental health disorder, to everybody's frustration. Hoarded properties are a magnet for fly-tipping a big community concern, and Planning Enforcement complaints are also linked to hoarded properties as they impact on the amenity of the neighbourhood". The multi-agency approach and earlier intervention should reduce or prevent complaints. The additional work to address housing standards should also improve the quality of properties with a positive knock on effect on the neighbourhood. It is difficult to quantify the impact of this short-term project.

There will be community benefits from increased awareness of the issue and the agencies who are there to support. Reduced risk of fire and vandalism will also be tangible outcomes.

Rough sleeping is a community concern and many rough sleepers find it impossible to get back into rented accommodations due to landlord's perceived risks of arson, hoarding, and neglect. There would be opportunities for the rough sleepers to be supported through the tenant's cafes. East Suffolk is also bidding for Housing Needs funds to set up a mitigation fund to support rough sleepers back into accommodation. The mitigation fund of £2000 per case could potentially also support clients identified through this programme, to give confidence to landlords to maintain tenancies and avoid residents losing their homes and adding to rough sleeper numbers.



#### **4. Outputs, outcomes, and evaluation (750 words)**

Please provide a breakdown of targets and expected outputs below and when they are expected to deliver. These must be clearly linked to the issues identified in section 1.

Please note funded proposals will be expected to keep provide regular progress reports to an agreed programme and will be asked to complete an 'Impact Summary' after the project.

##### **Bid Announcement**

**Bid partners and other agencies likely to be interested, advised of bid award subject to cabinet member approval, and invited to inaugural training and information event.**

##### **Rollout**

##### **W/C 5 Jan**

**Cabinet acceptance of Bid.**

**Inaugural meeting and initial training session.**

##### **W/C 13 Jan**

**Scheme launch.**

**Flagship commence casework.**

**PRS Tenants already known to partners identified and initial interventions made.**

**Contact made with professionals and cascade of project information.**

##### **W/C 20 Jan**

**Tenant café launched.**

**New tenants identified.**

**First Flagship clearance cases commenced.**

**Initial work commences with PRS tenants.**

##### **W/C 27 Jan**

**Refresh contacts with social services, police and fire service at local level.**

**Cascade training to mental health support teams.**

**Deliver training to GP practices.**

##### **W/C 3 Feb**

**Review meeting.**

**Dissemination of information – ongoing.**

**New and existing client support ongoing.**

**Review of any completed cases.**

##### **W/C 10 Feb to W/C 9 March**

**Project continues to roll out.**

**Review of completed cases and learning fed into project improvements.**

##### **W/C 16 March**

**Workshop 1 & 2.**

**Project activities continue.**

##### **W/C 24 March**

**Project activities continue.**

##### **W/C 6 April**

**Project review meeting with all delivery partners.**

##### **W/C 25 May**

**Publication of outcomes report and findings presented to key stakeholders to evaluate opportunities for continuing service.**

**All the targets below will be met by the end of March 2020**

**15 tenants supported to declutter by Lofty Heights CIC.**

**10 tenants supported to declutter by Access Community Trust.**

**18 tenants supported to declutter by Flagship Housing Association.**

**30 – 50 tenants supported through attending tenant's cafes.**

**43 Tenants supported to maintain tenancies.**

**25 PRS properties inspected and action taken to ensure they provide good standard of accommodation post clearance.**

**30 landlords and letting agents trained to recognise the early signs of hoarding behaviour and made aware of how to access support.**

**20 other agencies including other local authority staff trained to recognise the early signs of hoarding behaviour and made aware of how to access support.**

**10 agencies engaged in finding solutions for vulnerable residents leading to better partnership working.**

**Other outcomes**

**5 evictions prevented.**

**5 units of temporary accommodation not utilised for these residents.**

**3 Hospital admissions avoided (cost in the region of £400 per day).**

**This checklist will help you ensure your proposal meets the Fund's criteria. You should indicate all that apply and submit this with your application form.**

**Your proposal should:**

Demonstrate how your project will meet the following criteria:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve positive enforcement outcomes and have clear supporting evidence.</li> <li>Have measurable outcomes and planned evaluation</li> <li>Demonstrate that the project is cost effective, clearly deliverable and financially sustainable.</li> </ul>	Y Y Y
And (where relevant):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are innovative in the way they tackle enforcement challenges.</li> <li>Enable the local authority to self-finance future enforcement activity.</li> <li>Encourage positive landlord/tenant/local authority relationships</li> <li>Contain a mechanism for the local authority to share their experiences and learning.</li> </ul>	Y Y
Detail existing issues and challenges faced in taking successful enforcement action.	Y
Demonstrate benefits to the wider local community.	Y
Have a clear success measures and narrative.	Y
Seek reasonable funding, which is proportionate to the scale of the issue and overall size of the Fund.	Y
Be based on local evidence.	Y
Make use of scalable approaches, and demonstrate how these could be taken forward in wider-reaching pilot schemes in the future	Y

**Your proposal must not:**

Duplicate mainstream funding, or funding received through other sources.	N
Fund any local authority provision or services that are already being provided.	N
Fund in advance of costs incurred, for instance through funding permanent staffing costs	N
Include overheads that are calculated as a flat rate percentage. Actual overheads can be included provided they are clearly evidenced/justified and are proportionate to the size, scale and duration of the proposal.	N
Include management costs/fees that are calculated as a percentage of existing senior management time. Proposals can include costs for additional project support manager that are proportionate to the size, scale and duration of the proposal.	N
Fund Police or Fire and Rescue Service staff time	N
Fund the start-up costs for selective licensing schemes, as these should be self-funding. Consideration will be given to housing projects within a selective licensing area provided the additional benefits are clear.	N

If you are still unclear about the criteria checklist please contact:

[RLEgrantfund@communities.gov.uk](mailto:RLEgrantfund@communities.gov.uk)