

DASH Accreditation and Appeals Panel*

Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Accreditation and Appeals Panel (AAP) is to improve standards of private rental property, by acting on behalf of the wider community of landlords, tenants and subscribing councils:

- To ensure a fit for purpose Accreditation Scheme and Manual
- Supported by clear policies and procedures
- Ensuring that the Scheme is applied in an effective, fair and transparent manner
- Providing landlords with a mechanism to appeal DASH decisions
- Driving continual improvement

2. Roles & responsibilities

To ensure a fit for purpose Scheme and Manual:

- Agree and undertake an annual work plan, in partnership with the DASH Team
- Bring to DASH's attention, any legislative or regulatory changes which may require an urgent amendment to the Scheme
- Review and approve any urgent amendments to the Scheme, including where identified by DASH
- To oversee a review of the Manual every three years, and consider and approve any recommended changes
- Review and update these Terms of Reference

Supported by fair and transparent policies and procedures:

- Review and agree a policy and procedure, proposed by DASH, for Cancellation of Accreditation by landlords who have commenced this process
- Reviewing and agreeing a policy and procedure, proposed by DASH, regarding the resolution of Complex Cases
- Review and agreement of other policies to enable the effective running of the Scheme as required

Ensuring that the Scheme is applied in an effective, fair and transparent manner:

- Receive performance reports on the level and timescale of completed, cancelled and ongoing Accreditations, and make recommendations

- Consider the findings of an annual consistency review, and make recommendations
- Provide assurance of the ongoing effectiveness of virtual inspections by overseeing an annual hazard level check; consider the results and making recommendations, including if necessary, a sample of physical inspections or re-inspections

Providing landlords with a mechanism to appeal DASH decisions:

- To hear landlord appeals against decisions made by the DASH Manager (following advice from the Accreditation Review Group)
- To receive the landlord appeal within 4 weeks of the date of this communication.
- These may include Accreditation cancellation, recommendation to meet Scheme standards or a tenant complaint
- Consider appeals fairly and consistently, in accordance with the relevant DASH policies
- May request further information, including a property visit, to come to their decision
- Make a decision to:
 - > Uphold the appeal made by the landlord
 - > Uphold the recommendation by DASH, which may lead to a decision to cancel an Accreditation application, not to Accredite or removal from the Scheme
 - > Request further information and readjourn in a timely manner
 - > With the above to include issuing advice to third parties, within DASH's data protection provisions
- Make and report its decision within the timescales set out in the relevant DASH policies
- The AAP decision is final

Driving continual improvement:

- Bring insight from respective sectors
- For local authority members, bringing insight from and providing feedback to local authority peers.
- Champion the Scheme within members' own organisations and sectors
- Learn from performance data and appeals and make recommendations for practice, communications and training

3. Membership

The membership comprises:

- An independent Chair (voting), appointment subject to review by the AAP every 3 years
- Three private landlords (voting), appointed until such time as they resign, are no longer Accredited or bring the Scheme into disrepute

- An agent associate (voting), appointed until such time as they resign, leave the organisation or bring the Scheme into disrepute
- One Local Authority representative per county geography, for each county area with council subscribers (voting), appointed until such time as they resign, change job, the council cancels its subscription or they bring the Scheme into disrepute
- The DASH Manager (non-voting)

Appointment

- Landlords and agents to be recruited via open invitation, appointed on merit by recommendation by the AAP with support of the DASH Manager
- Local Authority representatives to be appointed by inviting expressions of interest from current subscribers via the DASH points of contact, appointed on merit by recommendation by the AAP with support of the DASH Manager

In attendance

- The DASH Team may attend to support the running of the meeting and to present information as required
- Other invited experts may attend to provide specialist advice

4. Principles

Members will:

- Actively engage
- Use their expertise to advise and support the aims of DASH
- Provide constructive challenge
- Be fair and consistent in their decision-making

5. Quoracy, decision-making & attendance

- The AAP will meet at least twice per year
- Quoracy requires the Chair, 1 landlord or 1 agent, a Local Authority and the DASH Manager or their representative to be present
- Meeting may take place in person or online
- Urgent decisions on policy updates may be taken via email
- The AAP will aim for agreement by consensus, but if not possible, then by simple majority and with the Chair holding a casting vote
- Substitutions are permitted with prior notice
- For AAP meetings where an appeal is being considered:
 - Any member who has provided prior technical advice on the case to DASH will absent themselves

- Any member representing the local authority where the property is located will absent themselves if there is a direct conflict of interest (e.g., they or a member of their team has been directly involved in licensing the property)
- The AAP, by simple majority, can establish task groups or sub-committees to conduct work on its behalf and to make recommendations to the AAP

6. Hosting & administration

- DASH provide the secretariat
- This includes provide meeting dates and times
- Arrange venues for the forthcoming year
- Provide updates for substantive items
- Call for agenda items will take place at least 2 weeks prior to meetings, with agendas and any papers requiring a decision or advance consideration issued at least 1 week prior to the meeting
- DASH will issue minutes with actions within 3 weeks of a meeting
- DASH will issue the draft annual workplan
- DASH will maintain a membership list and ensure any external communications regarding the AAP remain up to date

7. Other parties

- Derby City Council delivers DASH services and employs its staff, and so requires DASH to work within its policies and procedures
- DASH is responsible to individual councils for the delivery of the respective contract / SLA
- Individual councils are responsible to DASH for meeting expectations set out in the complex case and other relevant policies

*Formerly the Committee of Management

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Next review due: May 2025