

# Stonnington Community Inter-Agency Hoarding and Squalor Protocol

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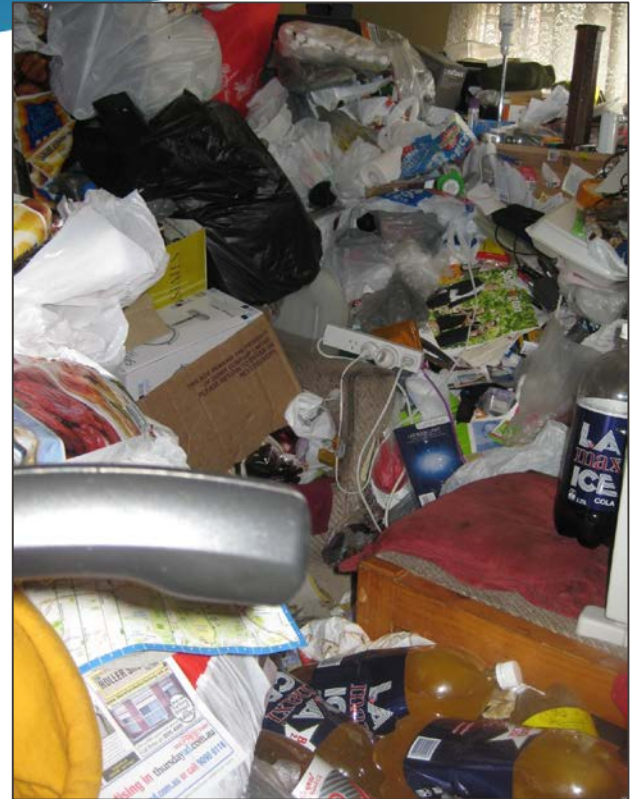
Manager Aged, Diversity, Health and Animal Management

City of Stonnington

# Case Studies



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# Background

The Protocol was developed in 2014 to:

- Further streamline and formalise current inter-agency processes, whilst outlining the functions and responsibilities of all stakeholders and the way in which they will work together.
- Facilitate an aligned approach to the coordination and management of compliance activities and support services, and
- Ultimately ensure that those people affected by hoarding and squalor are handled appropriately and effectively, resulting in their receiving timely access to a range of targeted support services.

# Definitions

## **Hoarding**

Hoarding behaviour is the persistent accumulation of, and lack of ability to relinquish, large numbers of objects or living animals, resulting in extreme clutter in or around premises. This behaviour compromises the intended use of premises and threatens the health and safety of people concerned, animals and neighbours.

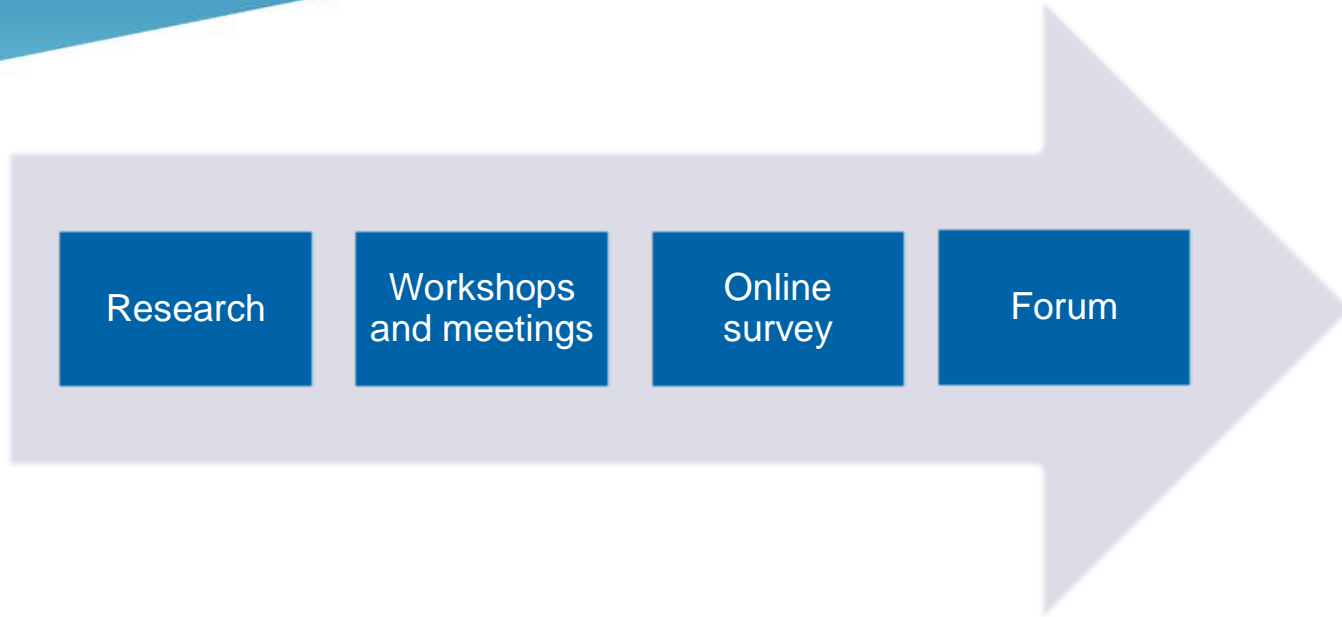
## **Animal Hoarding**

The accumulation of large numbers of animals that overwhelms the person's ability to provide a minimum standard of nutrition, sanitation and veterinary care.

## **Squalor**

Squalor describes an unsanitary living environment that has arisen from extreme and/or prolonged neglect, and poses substantial health and safety risks to people or animals residing in the affected premises, as well as others in the community.

# Development Process





# Contributing Agencies

## People Services

Access Care Southern  
Aged Care Assessment Services  
City of Stonnington: Aged Services - Home and Community Care  
Caulfield Community Health Service  
City of Stonnington: Children and Family Services  
Inner South Community Health  
City of Stonnington: Municipal Recovery  
Prahran Mission  
Room 2 Improve  
Skeletons in the Closet  
State Trustees  
STC Services

## Risk and Safety

City of Stonnington: Building Control  
City of Stonnington: Building and Local Law Services  
City of Stonnington: Environmental Health  
City of Stonnington: Municipal Fire Prevention  
City of Stonnington: Planning Enforcement

## Fire and Emergency Services

Ambulance Victoria  
Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board – Community Resilience Department  
Victoria Police

## Clinical Services

Aged Psychiatry Services – Caulfield Hospital  
Crisis Assessment and Treatment Service  
Swinburne Psychology Clinic  
The Anxiety Clinic

## Housing Services

Department of Human Services  
Launch Housing

## Animal Services

City of Stonnington: Animal Management  
The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

# How it Works

## Initial Contact

The first agency, i.e. the 'first responder', that is aware of a hoarding and/or squalor issue will take responsibility, by agreement for its progress.

Emergency Services are not expected to progress these cases - they are referral points.



## Response

First responders, with the support of other professionals, gather information and engage the most relevant agencies and/or programs as required.



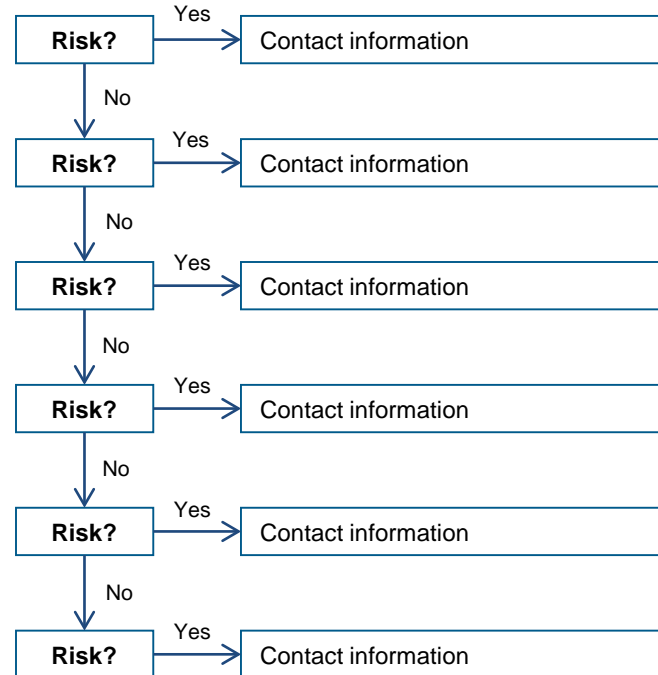
## Handover or Case Closure

When necessary, a relevant handover can be made and/or collaborative arrangements organised, unless the case is closed.

# 'First Responder' Referrals

## Priority risks:

- Child safety
- Older person/s
- Animal welfare
- Sanitation
- Housing/building/property
- Fire safety
- Mental health
- Utilities
- Financial



# Memorandum of Understanding

- Success of the Protocol is dependent upon agreement of a shared responsibility for hoarding and squalor situations.
- All parties have therefore signed a MOU.
- MOU refers to the principles of the Protocol and obligations of both Council and each agency.
- Any party can 'sign-up' for inclusion at any time and/or cease their inclusion at any time.

# Case Studies



# Case Studies



# Internal Responsibilities

- Development of Council guidelines in conjunction with all internal stakeholders.
- Development of a training package for Council staff.
- Establishing funding criteria for high-risk hoarding and/or squalor cases.

# Difficulties

- Keeping the Protocol alive.
- Remembering to engage and not falling into old habits of going it alone.
- Maintaining real connections with stakeholders.



# Looking Forward

This resource is a 'living' document that needs to be reviewed and updated to reflect best current practice and changing circumstances.

Proposed initiatives:

- Council having future and ongoing coordination responsibility for the Protocol.
- Promotion of the Protocol across the community and more broadly across other associations and networks.
- Developing a range of technology solutions to ensure efficient access and ongoing maintenance of data, information and resources.
- Annual Forum to review Protocol and update as required.
- Increase awareness of treatment programs and training.