

### **Case Study – Poor Housing Condition in the Private Rented Sector**

A property first came to the attention of the councils Housing Enforcement Team back in November 2010 following a complaint regarding the poor housing conditions at the property which was privately rented. Various courses of informal action ensued with the appointed letting agent and the landlord owner which proved to be unsuccessful in addressing the housing conditions reported.

Subsequent arrangements were made to inspect the property which was carried out on 1st April 2011.

The property in question is a pre-1919 end terraced three bedroom house located in the New England area of the city and in close proximity to The Salvation Army premises, Occupation Recreation Ground, St. Pauls Church and The Triangle.

The property was found to be of traditional solid brick walls with a concrete tiled roof and comprised an open plan living/dining room with the main staircase open on both sides and with a formed opening to the rear of the main house leading to the kitchen and a bathroom. At first floor level there were two double bedrooms and one single bedroom.

The property conditions were such that the majority of the external walls revealed thermally inefficient qualities having been built of single skin (4.5 inches thick) brickwork with a mixture of external renders. There was also evidence of serious manifestations of dampness throughout the property, particularly in the kitchen and the main front bedroom. Various measures of inadequate security to the property were also evident with some of the windows having no handles with which to secure them shut. The rear entrance door also suffered from disrepair which also compromised the security of the property. Other concerns of significance were a lack of fire safety generally and the poorly arranged kitchen facilities.

To summarise, the property was found to have no less than 3 Category 1 and 12 Category 2 hazards in existence as defined by the Housing Health & Safety Rating System assessment under the Housing Act 2004.

Following the property inspection formal statutory action was taken by the Council to require the owner landlord to carry out comprehensive remedial works to bring the property up to the required standards and to remove or reduce the hazards identified to an acceptable level.

Due to the extensive and disruptive nature of the remedial works required the occupying tenants were temporarily displaced by the owner landlord into another one of his properties within the locality.

Consequently, all of the works have now been completed to an acceptable standard including additional remedial works that were also deemed necessary during the programme. The occupying tenants have now returned to the property.

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