

BRENT SELF NEGLECT & HOARDING PROCESS

1

Recognise Signs

Look for indicators: severe clutter, poor hygiene, risk to physical health or safety, inability to access basic facilities.

2

Assess Risk

- Carry out a risk assessment — consider fire risk, infestation, structural damage, self-neglect of personal care.
- Use structured tools if appropriate (e.g., Clutter Image Rating Scale).
- If the person meets the criteria (adult with care and support needs at risk of abuse/neglect, unable to protect themselves), you must make or request a safeguarding enquiry.
- Balance respect for autonomy with duty of care — forced clear-outs are rarely helpful and can re-traumatise.

3

Engaging the individual

- Approach sensitively — build trust and rapport.
- Respect the person's autonomy; hoarding and self-neglect often link to trauma, loss or mental health conditions.
- Use motivational interviewing or similar techniques — don't push too hard too fast.

4

Assessing Mental Capacity

- Under the Mental Capacity Act 2005, assess if the person has capacity to make decisions about their living conditions.
- If they do not have capacity, any actions must be in their best interests.
- Document capacity assessments carefully.

5

Develop a support plan

Support should be tailored to the individual, on a case by case need.

- Practical help (e.g., decluttering with consent)
- Mental health or counselling support
- Practical services like pest control, cleaning
- Advocacy (e.g., independent mental capacity advocate if needed)
- Breaking tasks into small, manageable steps.

6

Multi-agency working

Self-neglect and hoarding are best managed with a multi-disciplinary approach.

- Possible agencies involved:
- Adult Social Care (statutory duty under Care Act 2014)
- NHS mental health services or GP
- Housing providers
- Fire and Rescue Service
- Environmental Health
- Voluntary and community sector organisations
- Hold a multi-agency meeting to agree a plan.
- Where needed, escalate to the **High risk Panel** for more senior multiagency oversight

Legal options if necessary

If there's serious risk to health/safety concerns:

- Environmental Health can use Public Health Act 1936 or Environmental Protection Act 1990 powers.
- Housing providers may take action under tenancy agreements.
- In extreme cases, applications to the Court of Protection may be needed if the person lacks capacity.

These interventions should not happen in isolation and form part of a person centred, agreed multi-agency response.

7

Monitor and Review

- Agree realistic goals and timeframes for any plans or interventions.
- Revisit regularly — progress is often slow.
- Be prepared for setbacks — maintain support and engagement.

Key Principles

- Work with compassion and respect for the person's wishes
- Balance risk with rights
- Always document your actions and decisions
- Seek supervision when you need it