



ABERDEEN

CITY COUNCIL

Homelessness Policy 2009 - 2012

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1 Introduction and Key Themes

- 1.1 Aberdeen City Council is committed to preventing and alleviating homelessness.
- 1.2 Our 2009 Homelessness Strategy identifies the key themes in meeting this commitment. They are:
 - **Prevent the loss of accommodation** by providing a pro-active early intervention service, provide better advice and information and increase the use of SSST with support where appropriate. Provide services to increase access to suitable temporary and sustainable permanent accommodation, improve access to a wider range of housing options in different tenures and provide appropriate support to reduce the risk of repeat homelessness.
 - **Improve joint working** within Council services and across all agencies in the City through effective partnership working and better referral and information sharing protocols. By pooling resources, expertise and energy we will meet the needs of those at risk or homeless in the City.
 - **Provide appropriate responses** to eviction notices and notices of proposed actions by reviewing policies and associated operational procedures to give a more pre-emptive and supportive housing management service in the social and private rented sector.
 - **Provision of appropriate support** and supported accommodation to ensure accommodation is retained or secured. Provision of high quality advice and information to HomePoint standards from a number of sources. Ensure that health is not a contributing factor to homelessness by promoting and maintaining access to appropriate health and social care services.
- 1.3 This Policy Statement sets out how Aberdeen City Council will deliver services to contribute to the achievement of these strategic goals within the legislative framework and Code of Guidance enacted through the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003.
- 1.4 The Aberdeen Homelessness Strategy Advisory Group will be supported by the Council to develop, review and implement our Homelessness Strategy. Issues arising from the strategy will inform and influence this policy which will be reviewed as appropriate.

2 Delivery of the Homelessness Service

- 2.1 The Council's Homelessness Service is delivered from the centralised Homelessness Section based at St Nicholas House, linking with other Council services and voluntary organisations and working with homeless people to provide a range of facilities and services to meet their needs.

2.2 In addition to the Homelessness Section, information, advice on homelessness issues, and signposting to sources of further advice and help, are available from the goodapple Accommodation and Advice Service, the Council's Area Housing Offices and the customer access points at St Nicholas House (The Point) and Kincorth Library. The iKiosks which the Council has established around the City can also be used to seek information and contact details.

2.3 Services provided by the Homelessness Section include:

- Reception, interview and assessment for all homeless people or those threatened by homelessness.
- An out-of-hours emergency service.
- A range of interim, temporary and supported accommodation.
- Young Single Persons' Housing Project for 16 and 17 year old customers.
- Advice and Information Service to HomePoint Standards.
- Resettlement service.
- Referral to appropriate specialist accommodation services.
- Referral to appropriate advocacy and support services.
- New Tenancy Support Service.
- Furniture uplift and storage.
- Access to household items.
- Interpretation and signing service, on request.

3 Looked After Children

3.1 The Council is committed to providing a planned approach to the resettlement of 'looked after children' through the Betterways Forum to ensure they do not become homeless. The Social Work Service, with the support of the Housing Service and our Registered Social Landlord partners, discuss with the individual their housing and support needs as appropriate, and identify the best option for their future accommodation requirements. Looked after children are therefore given equal priority with statutory homeless applicants for housing.

4 Accessing Homelessness services

4.1 The Homelessness Service will provide advice and assistance to any person with a concern about homelessness and those referred from the Council's Area Housing Offices, other Council Services or voluntary agencies. No person will be refused the right to make a homeless application and no initial screening of applicants will be carried out. An appointment will be arranged for an interview at a convenient time. External visits are available for those who are infirm or in prison.

4.2 The Council will provide access to homeless services 24 hours daily, every day of the year, and customers contacting the out of hours service will be offered advice and, where appropriate, temporary accommodation pending an assessment interview which will take place as soon as possible.

4.3 All reception or telephone enquiries, interviews and subsequent contacts with customers will be conducted in accordance with the service standards (see Appendix A).

5 Prevention of homelessness

5.1 The Council will seek to employ all available means of making the public aware of the Homelessness service e.g., posters in relevant locations, leaflets, website material etc, complying with equal opportunities guidance.

5.2 The Council will work in partnership to provide pre -school leaving information on homelessness.

5.3 The Council will seek to maximise the use of the Next Stage Housing Group and the Betterways Young Peoples' Multi-Agency Resource Forum to ensure planned move on accommodation is available to those leaving institutions or who have been looked after by the local authority, to prevent them becoming homeless.

5.4 The Council will refer those threatened with homelessness to goodapple Accommodation and Advice Service for appropriate housing option advice.

5.5 The Council will provide good quality advice and information, to HomePoint standards, to those presenting as homeless, and will refer customers to agencies providing independent advocacy and advice in the voluntary sector.

5.6 The Council will seek to prevent homelessness amongst its own tenants by sensitively dealing with rent debts or associated breaches of tenancy conditions, the use of eviction being a last resort.

5.7 The Council will liaise with RSLs to ensure their tenants who may be threatened by homelessness are provided with appropriate advice and assistance.

5.8 In response to our duty under Section 11 of the 'Homelessness Etc (Scotland) Act 2003' we will provide advice and assistance to owner-occupying households in response to notifications received from creditors raising court action for mortgage arrears.

5.9 The Council will use links established with private landlords through the Council's Private Landlord Registration Unit in order to prevent and address homelessness in the private sector through the effective use of Section 11 notice of eviction proceedings.

5.10 The Council recognises that the private rented sector is a useful and flexible resource for resolving homelessness and other housing need. We will work to improve access to good quality, well managed private rented sector

5.11 The Young Single Persons Housing Project (YSPHP) will seek to mediate between young people and their families where family breakdown may lead to homelessness.

- 5.12 The Council will access supported accommodation for those requiring support to prevent the recurrence of homelessness amongst vulnerable groups.
- 5.13 We are committed to the prevention of homelessness by targeting appropriate services at vulnerable groups and by the development of discharge protocols for people leaving hospital, prison and the armed forces.

6 Assessment of homeless applications

- 6.1 Persons threatened with homelessness within 56 days or homeless will have their applications assessed in accordance with the relevant legislation, regulations and Code of Guidance.
- 6.2 In particular, a person will be considered to be a member of the household of a customer applying as homeless if:
- they are married or civil partners, or they are living together as partners;
 - they are a parent or a child of the applicant;
 - they are a step-parent or a step-child of the applicant;
 - they are a foster parent or foster child of the applicant;
 - they are a grandparent or a grandchild of the applicant;
 - they are a brother or sister of the applicant;
 - they are close relatives such as the aunt, uncle, niece or nephew of the applicant;
 - they are a live-in carer of the applicant, or receive live-in care from the applicant.
- 6.3 Relationships by marriage are treated as if they were relationships by blood.
- 6.4 A person will be considered to be threatened by homelessness or homeless where accommodation available to him/her is unreasonable to occupy because:
- The accommodation is below the tolerable standard (BTS).
 - The applicant is living in bed and breakfast accommodation.
 - The applicant is living in a hostel or other accommodation such as a women's refuge, which is not intended to provide long-stay accommodation.
 - There is external violence, including racial or other harassment.
 - There is a risk of domestic violence.
 - Continued occupation of the accommodation poses a substantial risk to a person's health.
 - The accommodation is impracticable for a particular applicant because of his or her physical infirmities or disabilities.
 - He or she cannot secure entry to it
 - He or she has a mobile home, caravan, houseboat or other moveable structure but has no place where he or she is entitled or permitted to put it or moor it and to live in it.
 - The accommodation is both overcrowded within the meaning of section 135 of the Act **and** may endanger health.

- It is not permanent accommodation, and a local authority had a legal duty to house the person at the time he or she occupied it.
- As a result of an emergency e.g. fire or flood.

6.5 A person will be considered to be in priority need if:

- they, or a member of their household, is pregnant;
- they have a dependent child or children who live with them or might reasonably be expected to live with them;
- they are considered vulnerable because of:
 - old age;
 - mental illness or personality disorder;
 - learning disability;
 - physical disability;
 - chronic ill health;
 - having suffered a miscarriage or undergone an abortion;
 - having been discharged from a hospital, a prison or any part of the regular armed forces of the Crown; or
 - other special reason (including those persons who have substance misuse problems)
- they are homeless as a result of an emergency such as fire, flood or any other disaster;
- they are aged 16 – 26;
- they are fleeing or at risk of domestic abuse;
- they are fleeing non domestic violence (violence from persons outside the household);
- they are at risk of violence or harassment;
- they are refugees.

6.6 The Council will continually monitor and review the categories of priority need as it works toward meeting the 2012 target to abolish priority need.

7 Young Single Persons Housing Project

7.1 The Young Single Persons Housing Project (YSPHP) provides accommodation, advice and assistance to 16 and 17 year old homeless people.

7.2 Prior to offering supported accommodation to young people who present for assistance the Project will always look to assist the customer to return home through mediation where this is a reasonable course of action

7.3 The Project assists young people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, providing emotional and practical support in order to help establish independence. It manages 60 furnished bedsits and offers supported tenancies to eligible applicants in preparation for a move to permanent mainstream accommodation. Help and assistance is initially offered to all eligible people who approach the YSPHP to establish their accommodation and support needs.

7.4 For those in accommodation with support YSPHP provides:

- assistance with education, employment and training opportunities;
- help with budgeting, health, job skills, personal problems;
- planned move-on to permanent mainstream accommodation;
- support tailored to individual needs.

7.5 The Homelessness Service will seek advice and assistance from Social Work services with a view to determining whether a joint assessment is necessary. This will include whether the Council has other statutory responsibilities towards the young person.

8. Vulnerable Applicants

8.1 Appropriate support and care will be provided to applicants deemed to be vulnerable. In respect of any person deemed to be vulnerable and thus in priority need and, with the agreement of the homeless person, the homelessness service will liaise with Social Work services, the landlord and other statutory or voluntary agencies. This is to ensure a support and care package appropriate to the clients needs is made available.

8.2.1 In respect of any person deemed to be vulnerable and thus in priority need as a result of threats of domestic or external violence, our policy will be not to:

- require medical evidence, contact the perpetrator, discuss or speak to anyone else about the case without the express consent of the applicant;
- require the applicant to return to a place where he/she experienced or is likely to be at risk of violence;
- regard a person who is the victim of domestic violence as intentionally homeless or decide that a person is not homeless because they have not pursued legal remedies e.g. matrimonial homes legislation.

The Council will refer women to Women's Aid and/or the Council's Domestic Abuse Unit as appropriate.

9 Determining whether an applicant is intentionally homeless

9.1 The local authority will determine whether an applicant has deliberately done, or failed to do, something that has resulted in them becoming homeless or threatened with homelessness. For example:

- giving up their accommodation without good reason;
- failing to pay rent or mortgage repayments when it could be considered reasonable to do so;
- being evicted because of antisocial behaviour by the applicant or someone living with them.

9.2 Intentionality does not apply to temporary accommodation. Applicants can only be intentionally homeless from permanent accommodation.

9.3 Should the Council decide that an applicant is not in priority need or is intentionally homeless, it still has a duty to provide temporary accommodation

for a reasonable period of time and advice and assistance to give a reasonable opportunity to find alternative accommodation.

- 9.4 In assessing whether an applicant is intentionally homeless, staff will take account of whether, before becoming homeless or threatened with homelessness, the applicant was aware of all the relevant facts, and the implications of their actions.

10 Local connection

10.1 A local connection with the City of Aberdeen can be defined as follows:

- normal residence in the city (for at least 6 months in the last year or 3 years in the last 5);
- are in permanent employment in the city;
- have close family links in the city and they have lived here for the last 5 years;
- qualify under special circumstances (for example domestic abuse, or vital ongoing medical treatment).

10.2 If an applicant is not intentionally homeless and is in priority need, but does not have a local connection with Aberdeen, the Council has the power to make a referral to another local authority in Scotland, England or Wales with which the applicant does have a connection. If there is a local connection with more than one area, the applicant can choose which authority they are referred to.

10.3 If there is no local connection with any area, Aberdeen City Council will accept the application.

11 Other special circumstances

11.1 Applicants who are fleeing from a settled address due to violence or harassment, and cannot continue to live in their home locality, will be accepted, all other things being equal, as having a local connection.

11.2 Where no local connection exists the applicant will be referred to an appropriate local authority where a local connection does exist. However, only applicants who are assessed as being homeless in priority need and unintentionally homeless will be referred to another authority.

11.3 An applicant will not be referred to another local authority if there is a risk of domestic abuse, to either the applicant or anyone who might reasonably be expected to reside with him or her in that other local authority's area. "Abuse" includes violence, harassment, threatening behaviour, and any other conduct giving rise, or likely to give rise, to physical or mental injury, fear, alarm or distress.

11.4 Applicants who have been granted refugee status and who have no connection with another authority will, on application, be accepted by Aberdeen City Council as having a local connection with Aberdeen

11.5 The Council will co-operate with and provide assistance to other local authorities in compliance with its statutory duties.

12 Provision of temporary accommodation

12.1 Where an applicant is deemed to be homeless the Council will:

- Provide accommodation while all customers are being assessed, and for those deemed not in priority need, for a reasonable period while the client is provided with advice and assistance in order to find alternative accommodation. That period in temporary accommodation will vary from customer to customer depending on individual needs.

12.2 Where an applicant is deemed to be intentionally homeless the Council will:

- Provide temporary accommodation for a reasonable period while the client seeks alternative accommodation. The time allowed will vary according to individual needs. The applicants will also be encouraged to register for non-priority housing through the goodapple Accommodation and Advice Service (based in the same building as the Homelessness Team). Applicants must also work with help and advice, to resolve their homelessness. The Council's Advice and Resettlement Worker will provide a range of information on housing options available from housing providers in Aberdeen.

12.3 Where a customer has no local connection with Aberdeen the Council will:

- Provide temporary accommodation pending referral and acceptance by another authority. In addition, it will provide accommodation during the transitional period of acceptance by another authority and the move to that authority.
- When arranging temporary accommodation and subject to availability, the homelessness service will strive to ensure that the household's needs, including any support requirements, are taken into account.

13 Temporary arrangements

13.1 Appropriate arrangements will be made to protect and arrange storage of the applicant's belongings where necessary.

13.2 Our policy is not to use bed and breakfast accommodation for families with dependent children and expectant mothers. For all other applicants we will restrict use and provide ~~a more~~ the most suitable form of temporary accommodation where it is available. Out of authority placements will only be considered for personal safety issues and with the agreement of the applicant.

13.3 All bed and breakfast accommodation must be HMO compliant and meet the Council's own standards.

13.4 In considering placements in temporary accommodation we discuss with the individual or household their needs, and the range of options currently or soon

to be available. Where appropriate we will, with the individual's agreement, include their social or care worker in these discussions

13.5 The Council does not allow any pets in temporary accommodation units, unless the pet is a direct aid for homeless people with sight or hearing impairment.

13.6 On being admitted to temporary accommodation:

- Advice and assistance will be given to ensure the applicant can meet any costs associated with their temporary accommodation.
- An occupancy agreement will be drawn up, explained to the applicant and signed.
- Assistance with access to health and education services will be given.
- Any moves to other accommodation will be kept to a minimum.
- Contact details of staff will be given.

13.7 Homeless people do not have to access temporary accommodation provided by the Council. Accommodation with friends or relatives is encouraged where this does not prejudice the safety of the homeless household. Such arrangements will not affect the applicants' homeless determination or speed of resettlement.

14 Permanent accommodation

14.1 Where the Council has a statutory duty to offer permanent accommodation to a customer, the Council will seek to provide suitable accommodation through the public or voluntary sector. The Council has in place formal protocols to assess applicants, to assist applicants in accessing choice-based letting housing arrangements, to make Section 5 referrals for available housing with Registered Social Landlords, and to monitor these arrangements.

14.2 The Council will seek to:

- make an offer of suitable permanent accommodation within as short a time as possible.
- meet the requirements of the household within the housing resources available.
- provide a choice of housing areas within the housing resources available.
- provide up to two offers of suitable housing.

14.3 The Council will advise the client how to appeal if they are dissatisfied with the suitability of an offer.

15 Allocations policy

15.1 Applicants assessed as statutory homeless single persons are placed on the AS housing list. The AS list gives absolute priority to applicants in that category. Statutory homeless single persons are eligible for bedsits and one bedroom properties.

15.2 Applicants assessed as statutory homeless families and couples are placed on the AB housing list. The AB list gives additional priority to applicants in this category in the form of 25 extra points and they are eligible for the size and property type required following the homelessness assessment.

16 Monitoring Outcomes

16.1 Monitoring and reporting of outcomes for customers in relation to the provision of temporary and permanent accommodation will be carried out in accordance with the Performance Management Framework for Housing Services.

17 Notification and review of homelessness decision

17.1 The assessment decision will meet the requirements of the legislation and Code of Guidance and will:

- be provided to the applicant within 28 days of the assessment interview;
- include an explanatory leaflet, "Your Decision Letter";
- offer a plain English explanation;
- comply with equal opportunities requirements;
- provide advice on the implications of the decision and factors taken into account;
- provide clear information on the appeal process;
- provide information on independent advice services.

17.2 Review of homelessness decision

17.2.1 Appeals against a homeless decision or offer of permanent accommodation may be made up to 21 days after the date of the decision letter and in accordance with the following conditions:

- Appeals may be lodged verbally or in writing.
- Appeals will be recorded and the applicant notified of the appeal hearing arrangements within 14 days.
- Appeals will be considered by the Senior Homelessness Officer or the Shelter Manager.
- Appeal outcomes will be notified to the applicant in writing, normally within 7 days.
- Temporary accommodation, where required, will be provided throughout the review process and for a reasonable period after notification of the review decision.
- Appeals will be monitored and reported in accordance with the Performance Management Framework for Housing Services.

17.2.2 We will provide an independent member of staff to process a homelessness application where an applicant is related to or associated with the case officer. This will ensure impartiality of the homelessness process and avoid conflict of interest.

18 Complaints procedure

- 18.1 The Council has in place a formal complaints procedure. Complaints forms are available in all public areas, or can be obtained from the Complaints Officer, Performance Management and Quality Assurance, Continuous Improvement, St Nicholas House, Broad Street, Aberdeen AB10 1EZ. Details of our corporate complaints procedure are given on the Council's website (www.aberdeencity.gov.uk).

19 Further information

- 19.1 Further information on homelessness in Aberdeen can be found on the Council's website (www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/homeless).

APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

2012: At present the law requires Scottish local authorities, in considering applications for homelessness assistance, to determine whether the applicant is 'in priority need'. Councils have a duty to assist applicants deemed to be in priority need to find permanent accommodation. Applicants not considered to be in priority need are entitled to advice, assistance and temporary accommodation for a reasonable period. By 2012, people who apply as homeless will no longer be categorised as 'in priority need' or not, and will be assessed on the basis of their individual housing needs. All people who are considered to be unintentionally homeless will be entitled to assistance to find permanent accommodation.

Aberdeen Homelessness Strategy Advisory Group: this is a body which is made up of elected members of the Council, officers of the Council and representatives of other groups with an interest in homelessness (for example, NHS Grampian, voluntary organisations and local Registered Social Landlords). Its purpose is to oversee and advise on the development and implementation of the Council's strategy to meet its commitment to preventing and alleviating homelessness in Aberdeen.

Allocations Policy: properly known as the Scheme for the Allocation of Council Houses. This is a set of rules developed by the Council which determines how we let our houses, largely based on legal requirements and guidance. Copies of the Allocations Policy are available from the Council's Area Housing Teams and from the goodapple Accommodation and Advice Service. It can also be downloaded from the Council's website (www.aberdeencity.gov.uk).

Below Tolerable Standard (BTS): this term defines the principal measure of housing quality in Scotland. If a property falls below this standard it is not considered reasonable for people to live in it. Local authorities have legal responsibilities to deal with houses which fall below this standard, and take it into account when considering applications for housing. Factors taken into account include serious disrepair, inadequate water supply and electrical supply or thermal insulation.

Betterways Young Peoples' Multi-Agency Resource Forum: this is a body made up of Council officers, representatives of local Registered Social Landlords and representatives of voluntary organisations such as Aberdeen Cyrenians and Aberdeen Foyer. Its purpose is to provide an integrated, co-ordinated, single access point, offering individual packages of accommodation care and support for young people leaving Council care.

Choice-Based Letting (CBL): a form of applying for housing. The traditional arrangement for processing applications for social housing is that when a property becomes available to be let the landlord selects the most appropriate application from a housing list and contacts that applicant to offer them the tenancy. A number of local authorities and Registered Social Landlords are now moving to CBL schemes. Under this arrangement, the landlord advertises its available properties, and people who have made housing applications can choose to bid for particular properties for which they qualify.

Code of Guidance: the Code of Guidance on Homelessness is published by the Scottish Government. It sets out the duties of local authorities in providing assistance to homeless and potentially homeless people, based on legal requirements and examples of good practice. Copies of the Code can be downloaded from the Scottish Government's website (www.scotland.gov.uk).

goodapple Accommodation and Advice Service: 'goodapple homes' is the brand name of Aberdeen City Council's Housing service. The Accommodation and Advice Service processes applications for housing with the Council.

HomePoint Standards: HomePoint is a quality assurance framework for the delivery of housing information and advice, developed by the Scottish Government's Information and Advice Standards Unit. The purpose of the framework is to improve the standard of housing information and advice provided by local authorities, Registered Social Landlords and voluntary organisations throughout Scotland. Accreditation by HomePoint is achieved through an audit process which determines whether the service delivered reflects the framework set out in the guidance.

House in Multiple Occupation (HMO): this is a legal term, which applies to a residential property where at least three people live, and they belong to ~~three~~ two or more families (excluding the owner of the property and their family), and they share a kitchen, bathroom or toilet. The owners of such properties are required by law to be licensed by their local authority.

Intentionality: Local authorities in Scotland are required to give different levels of support to applicants for homelessness assistance depending on whether they are determined to be intentionally or unintentionally homeless. This determination is referred to as an Intentionality test.

Looked after children: this term refers to children (under 18) who are in public care, who are placed with foster parents, in residential homes or with parents or other relatives.

New Tenancy Support Service: Part of the Council's Homelessness Service, the New Tenancy Support Team provides practical assistance, advice and support to help people resettle and make the journey out of homelessness. The overall objective of the service is to promote independence and is an integral part of Aberdeen City Council's commitment to making tenancies work.

Next Stage Housing Group: this group performs a similar function to the Betterways Forum, but its focus is on young people leaving institutions other than Council care (for example hospital or prison).

Private Landlord Registration Unit: All private landlords in Scotland are required by law to register with their local authority. Part of the registration process requires us to assess that the landlord is a 'fit and proper person' to let property. This Unit of the Council administers the process for Aberdeen.

Registered Social Landlords (RSLs): this is a collective term for Housing Associations and Housing Co-operatives registered by the Scottish Housing Regulator (an agency of the Scottish Government). They, like local authorities,

provide 'social housing', and have legal duties to assist councils in alleviating homelessness.

Section 5: This is a clause of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 which places a duty on Registered Social Landlords to assist local authorities in discharging their duty to secure permanent accommodation for homeless applicants. The RSL is required to accept an agreed percentage of applicants nominated by the local authority.

Section 11: This is a clause of the Homelessness Etc (Scotland) Act 2003, which requires all landlords other than local authorities, and creditors, to notify their local authority when they raise legal proceedings for possession of a residential property, or serve certain other notices on a tenant.

Section 135: This is a clause of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 which gives a legal definition of overcrowding.

Short Scottish Secure Tenancy (SSST): Local authorities in Scotland can give different types of tenancy agreements to their tenants. Most are given a Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST), which gives the tenant the right to the tenancy for as long as they wish, as long as they do not break the terms of their tenancy agreement. The Short Scottish Secure Tenancy (SSST) is used under specific circumstances, for example if a person has previously been evicted from a tenancy, or if they or a member of their household have been subject to an Antisocial Behaviour Order. Under this type of agreement, at the end of the six-month period the landlord can offer the tenant a full SST, or offer a further SSST, or the landlord can end the tenancy. It is a condition of a SSST that the landlord makes support available to help the tenant maintain their tenancy and have it converted to a full SST.

Appendix B

HOMELESSNESS SERVICE STANDARDS

Standard	How measured?	S	M	A	R	T*
When you present as homeless, we aim to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide free advice, information and assistance to help resolve your homelessness in accordance with HomePoint Standards. 	Case notes Information and advice checklist	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer you an appointment for a comprehensive interview within 7 calendar days of your approach. 	HL1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer suitable temporary accommodation to a good standard if you have been deemed to be homeless, and you need it. 	HL1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer storing your essential household property (e.g. furniture, pots, pans, clothing etc.) if you are unable to protect or deal with it. 	Case notes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
When you come for your interview, we aim to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer you the services of an interpreter / signer if you need them. 	Case notes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Never discriminate against you because of your race, ethnicity, religion, social background, marital status, gender, disability, age or sexual orientation. 	HL1 statistics on outcomes for minorities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If required, offer you an interview with a same sex interviewer. 	Case notes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
In general, we aim to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise you of our decision or assessment of your homelessness application within 28 calendar days of your interview. 	HL1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep you informed of the process of your application. 	Case notes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond in writing to all appeals against decisions within 14 calendar days. 	HL1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

* These Service Standards should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound (SMART).