

# Housing Options and Homelessness Service Standards



We are committed in delivering an efficient and effective housing advice and homeless service.

We use legislation to make homeless decisions and work closely with landlords, local businesses and 3rd sector agencies to provide emergency accommodation and support to customers in housing need. We have a dedicated specialist team who can offer advice, support, guidance and negotiate to find long-term solutions.

If you contact us for homeless advice or assistance we:

- Will offer face to face appointments for those who can provide evidence that they are at risk of homelessness, are homeless that night or need to move due to any form of violence.
  - Will aim to see you within 14 days of your original contact unless your situation is classified as urgent by us.
  - Will conduct an initial interview to assess your current situation and to calculate your level of housing need.
  - Treat each person on a case-by-case basis and prepare a personal housing plan (PHP), what works for one person will not necessarily work for another.
  - Will owe you a homeless prevention duty if you are threatened with homelessness within 56 days where we will try to prevent you becoming homeless by working with your landlord and you.
  - May owe you a homeless relief duty if you are already homeless which means we have 56 days to try and relieve your situation.
  - Will allocate you a named a Housing Options Officer who will deal with your case.
  - Will carry out a home visit on your current accommodation (if appropriate).
  - Will contact you regularly for updates on your PHP and expect you to contact us should there be any change in your circumstances.
  - May offer you Temporary Accommodation in certain circumstances, this may sometimes be out of area depending on accommodation suitability and availability.
- Will provide accurate, comprehensive, and useful information to you.
  - Will assist you to complete application forms for re-housing.
  - Will take any vulnerabilities in the household such as age, health and disabilities into account when preparing your PHP.
  - Will signpost you to relevant agencies for assistance on matters such as debt, mental health, probation.
  - Will respond to any requests for review within 21 working days or 56 days depending on the request

## How can you be sure timescales are being met?

We will:

- Ask you to complete a feedback form when we have closed your case.
- Use our in-house management performance systems to ensure we are meeting timescales.
- Involve our Tenants Panel in writing and reviewing our policies and standards.

