



Service Standard Housing Options Service

خدمة خيارات الإسكان

আবাসন সম্পর্কিত বিকল্প পরিষেবা

Xizmetguzariya Hilbijêrkên Îskanbûnê

خدمتگوزاری بی بژارد مکانی خانووبه ره

गृहसिंता द्विबल्ल मेदा

Adeegga Kala doorashada Guriyeynta

رهائشی انتخابات کی خدمت



Author: Bev Jones (March 2011)

This Service Standard provides guidance on accessing the following services:

- Housing options advice
- Emergency temporary accommodation
- Homelessness.

Housing Options Service

The Housing Options Service provides advice and assistance, free of charge, to help people in Sandwell to find a new home or to help keep their current home.

The service includes:

- Explaining the housing options available to you and offering advice on what might be best in your circumstances.
- Advice and assistance if you are homeless. We administer homeless applications on behalf of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council.
- The provision of temporary accommodation where a person or family find themselves with nowhere to stay and are accepted as priority homeless.

The Housing Options Team will always attempt to prevent you from becoming homeless by discussing a range of housing options available to you. However, if this proves to be unsuccessful we will complete a homeless application with you.

People can be threatened with homelessness for many different reasons, including:

- Being asked to leave by parents or friends
- Relationship breakdown
- Domestic abuse

- Financial problems causing rent or mortgage difficulties
- Loss of a private tenancy
- An emergency, such as fire or flood.

Our Commitment to you:

We realise that people have different needs and when assessing your case we will try to meet your needs wherever possible.

Housing Options Advice

We will:

- Provide you with an initial assessment over the telephone
- Interview you in private if preferred. You are welcome to bring a relative, friend or anyone else to the interview for support
- Ensure that you have an interview with a housing options officer of the same gender if you request this
- Arrange for an interpreter if your first language is not English
- Provide offices that are accessible if you have physical or sensory disabilities
- Interview you at a convenient location if you are unable to get to the office
- Provide good quality and comprehensive leaflets on a range of homeless prevention topics
- Provide you with the name and contact details of the officer who will be dealing with your case
- Provide you with up to date information about other agencies that can offer support. For example, voluntary and statutory agencies
- Advise you of any other housing options

- Remind you of actions agreed with you in a way appropriate to your circumstances
- Develop a Personal Housing Action plan with you if required.

Emergency Temporary Accommodation

The Housing Options Service provides emergency temporary accommodation where we have reason to believe you are homeless and in priority need and you have nowhere to stay.

Emergency temporary accommodation could mean a room within a local hotel, a property secured with a private landlord or a property within Sandwell Homes stock. Stays in emergency temporary accommodation are covered by agreements that basically give people permission to occupy for a period of time.

If you have nowhere to stay you can approach us in a number of ways.

You can:

- Telephone us during office hours
- If an emergency you can telephone us outside office hours
- Visit any of our neighbourhood offices
- Visit the Housing Options Service
- Ask an advocate (family member or friend) to contact us on your behalf.

We will:

- Provide you with a copy of your license agreement and provide information about the local area and local amenities
- Provide you with contact details of the Temporary Accommodation Team
- **Help you complete an application for Housing Benefit**
- Visit you within five working days of moving into your temporary home to ensure you have settled in and signpost you to other agencies who may be able to help you
- **Deal with your homeless application and come to a decision within ten working days of you being placed in temporary accommodation**
- Carry out a support visit and keep in contact with you at least every 10 working days
- **Report any repairs to the landlord on the same day you report them to us**
- We will also ensure that any private property used by Sandwell Homes for emergency temporary accommodation, is inspected by Sandwell Council's Private Sector Housing Team at least once a year and that the property is suitable and safe for letting.

Your Responsibilities

You will be expected;

- Wherever possible, to consider staying temporarily with family or friends before being provided with temporary accommodation.
- To make a financial contribution to your stay in temporary accommodation
- To maybe have to leave or change temporary accommodation at short notice
- When you leave the temporary accommodation, to complete a customer satisfaction questionnaire.

Homelessness

(Duties under Housing Act 1996 *amended by Homelessness Act 2002*)

We will:

- **When you contact us, we will give you an interview date within 5 working days where we have reason to believe you are homeless and/or threatened with homelessness in the next 28 days and this cannot be prevented**
- If you are suffering from domestic abuse, we will contact you within 1 working day where we have reason to believe you are homeless and/or threatened with homelessness in the next 28 days and this cannot be prevented
- **Interview you on the same day if you have nowhere to stay**
- Require you to sign a declaration about giving false information and withholding information
- **Require you to consent to us contacting third parties for relevant information**
- Make appropriate enquiries to enable us to decide whether you are:
 - homeless or threatened with homelessness in the next 28 days
 - in priority need
 - intentionally homeless
 - have a local connection in Sandwell

- Provide you with temporary accommodation if we have reason to believe you are homeless and in priority need and you have nowhere to stay
- Notify you of our decision within 33 working days of opening a homelessness application
- Provide an Out Of Hours telephone service for emergencies
- We will give you 21 days to request a review if we refuse your application for homeless priority, or if we think a property offered to you under the homeless act is unsuitable for you
- We will inform you of our decision on your review, in writing, within 27 working days of receiving your review request.

Your Responsibilities

We expect you to;

- Give us the information we ask for as soon as possible. This will help speed up the process
- Attend agreed appointments on time and with any information we request from you. This helps us keep appointments with other customers on time.
- Tell us about any changes in your circumstances
- Be polite and courteous
- Please be patient. There are times when we are very busy. We do what we can to keep waiting times to a minimum.

Want to know more?

Further information about finding accommodation, housing advice and homelessness is available;

- On our website www.sandwellhomes.org.uk
- In your nearest Housing office

Housing Options Service

Housing Options Service, Court House,
335-337 High Street, West Bromwich B70 8LU.

Tel: **0121 569 6000 (option 3)**

Email: housing_options@sandwellhomes.org.uk

Out of Hours Emergency

Tel: 0121 525 4688

If you would like a copy of this document translated, or require a copy in Braille, large print or audio tape, please contact 0121 569 6030

إذا كنت تود الحصول على نسخة مترجمة من هذا المستند، أو كنت بحاجة لنسخة مطبوعة بطريقة برايل للمكفوفين أو بطباعة كبيرة أو على شريط تسجيل صوتي، يرجى الاتصال برقم 0121-569 6030

আপনি যদি এই নথিটির অনুবাদ পেতে চান অথবা ব্রেইল-এ, বড় অক্ষরের ছাপায় অথবা অডিও টেপ-এ এটি চান, তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে 0121-569 6030 নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করুন

Eger hûn dixwazin kopiyeye vê dokument bê wergerandin yan jî dixwazin kopiyeye bi Tîpên Koran (Braille), bi Tîpên Mezin yan jî wekî Axaftina Qeydkirî bide bixin, ji kerema xwe têkildar bin bi hejmarê telefonê 0121-569 6030.

"ئەگەر تۆ دتەوت ئەم بە گەیه وەر بگ رینهوه سەر زمانی خۆت، یان بە د ی برهیل، چاپی قە هو یان لە سەر شریتی کاست بۆ تۆ ئاملا ده بکەین، تکایه پەيوهندی بکه به ژماره تەلەفۆنی 0121-569-6030.

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦੀ ਇਕ ਕਾਪੀ ਦਾ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਜਾਂ ਬੁਲ, ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਜਾਂ ਅੱਡੀਓ ਟੇਪ ਦੀ ਕਾਪੀ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 0121-569 6030 'ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ

Haddii aad jeclaan laheyd nuqul dukumeentigan ah oo tarjuman, ama aad u baahan tahay nuqul ah Luuqadda indhoolayaasha, Daabacad weyn ama Cajalad Dhegeysi, fadlan la xiriir 0121-569 6030

اگر آپ کو اس دستاویز کی ایک ترجمہ شدہ نقل چاہئے یا بریل، بڑے حروف یا آڈیو ٹیپ میں ایک نقل کی ضرورت ہو تو برائے مہربانی 0121-569 6030 پر رابطہ کریں

Your nearest Housing office is: