



Borough of Poole

Move on Protocol for Supported Accommodation

The Borough of Poole is committed to achieving the best possible outcomes for those people who approach us for assistance. This protocol is an important part of our overall strategy for improving our response to people who need housing.

The purpose of this protocol is to provide an agreed framework between **the Supported Housing Providers and Housing and Community Services** for working together to prevent homelessness, and to identify responsibilities for working with vulnerable people moving on from Supported Accommodation.

Supported Housing Providers as part of a Service User's move on plan, will look at future housing options in a timely manner as part of their support plan. It is however recognised that some Service Users may find it more difficult to reasonably secure accommodation themselves due to vulnerability or their housing history, for example:

- Those with repeated hospital admissions due to Mental Health
- Those with a history of entrenched Rough Sleeping
- Those with a history of prolific offending or specific offences

At the point that it is identified that the Service Provider is experiencing difficulty in supporting the Service User to secure suitable accommodation, the Service Provider is requested to complete the 'Supported Housing Move on Request Form' and email it to housingadvice@poole.gov.uk.

A Housing Options Interview will take place with the Housing Options Advisor, the Supported Housing Support Worker and the Service User to establish the most suitable housing options. This may be a move to private rented accommodation, a move into Low Cost Home Ownership (LCHO), moving in with family or friends or an application to Dorset Homechoice (DHC). (This list is not exhaustive and there may be other options that could be considered)

1. Rent in Advance and Deposit for Private Rented

- 1.1 Support providers are expected to support Service Users save towards the cost of Rent in Advance and Deposit whilst residing in supported housing.
- 1.2 The Borough of Poole Rent Deposit Financial Assistance (RDFA) scheme provides, for households meeting prescribed criteria, loans for the cost of rent in advance and deposit payments for privately rented tenancies.
- 1.3 The RDFA scheme is not a right for those moving from supported housing but is offered at the discretion of the Housing Options Team. Service Users who

have demonstrated an ability to save for themselves will be considered favourably. Service Users and properties must meet certain minimum criteria before any loans are made.

1.4 Applicants must:

- Be at least 18 years old and meet the statutory criteria of being eligible (in immigration terms) for housing assistance, homeless or threatened with homelessness, have a priority need, not be intentionally homeless and, subject to certain exceptions, have a local connection with the Borough of Poole, as defined by the 1996 Homelessness Act (as amended).
- Be unable to financially resource the cost of a private rented tenancy through any other means.
- Be able to manage loan repayments, with or without support and, and must have maintained regular repayments of these debts if there existing debts with the Borough of Poole.
- Be able to maintain and manage a tenancy, with or without support. This is subject to an assessment of a households financial, medical, social and behavioural needs, and the confirmation of support services assistance before approval for the scheme.

1.6 Financial assistance is only provided for properties which meet certain minimum standards. Properties must:

- be safe and affordable.
- have adequate heating, smoke alarms and gas safety certificates.
- have an EPC rating of not less than E.

1.7 The scheme provides a repayable loan to cover the rent in advance and/or deposit payments required by a landlord or agent. It does not cover administrative fees, moving costs or refurbishment costs.

1.8 During the Housing Options Interview, the Housing Options Advisor will determine if the Service User fulfils the criteria and if private rented accommodation if the most suitable housing option.

2. Low Cost Home Ownership (LCHO)

2.1 LCHO is a scheme that offers those eligible the opportunity to purchase part of their home and begin building their own equity. There are a number of schemes designed to help you buy an affordable home. LCHO in Poole is managed through South West Homes (<https://www.helptobuysw.org.uk>). The Housing Options Advisor will be able to provide more information to the Service User if this is a suitable option.

3. Dorset Homechoice (DHC)

3.1 The Borough of Poole's Housing Register & Allocation Policy allows move-on quota's to be awarded to Service Users of supported accommodation. The

policy ensures applicants in supported accommodation have opportunity to be considered for social housing as a form of move-on to greater independence by giving them reasonable preference by placing them in the 'Gold' Band. Move-on quotas ensure adequate throughput is also applied to this accommodation type to avoid unnecessary blockages and silting up of supported housing.

- 3.2 There is a need to ensure all properties are allocated with transparency, and that all Housing Register applicants have a consistent assessment of their need, and relative priority determined (prior to allocation), irrespective of the accommodation type they occupy. This procedure recognises the significant demand for social housing amongst those in supported accommodation, and aligns their housing need assessment to that of others on the housing list.
- 3.3 The decision to award Move on Priority on the Housing Register will be made by the Senior Housing Practitioner (SHP) following a full Housing Options Assessment and receipt of supporting evidence. Any specialist or bespoke needs will be identified to inform a suitable allocation.. however the speed with which an allocation will become possible will be dependent on the supply of accommodation and competing demand. The decision will be confirmed in writing as with all other DHC banding decisions.
- 3.4 When arriving at a decision the SHP should consider that the award of Move-on priority where:
- the applicant no longer requires the support provided within a supported living environment **and**,
 - a move to greater independence is essential to improve an applicants circumstances **and**,
 - the applicant cannot reasonably be expected to secure suitable accommodation for themselves either in the private sector, low cost home ownership , **and**,
 - all potential alternative solutions have been fully explored and their situation can be resolved only by a move to social housing **and**,
 - it is agreed with the Housing Options Advisor that social housing is the most suitable housing option for the Service User.
- 3.5 The number of requests received from Service Providers will be monitored each year.
- 3.6 Reviews of Housing Register decisions will be carried out in accordance with the Housing Register & Allocations Policy and by a Manager independent to the original decision.

4. Training, Monitoring and Evaluation

- 4.1 In order for this protocol to work and continue to achieve its purpose it is essential that all relevant staff are aware of the protocol and relevant training is provided. Regular monitoring of the protocol should also be undertaken and

any relevant changes in legislation or policy of departments which affect the protocol should be fed back and changes made accordingly.

4.2 We are committed to learning from this protocol in practice, and to improving our response and outcomes for vulnerable people in Poole. To do this, at least once each year we will review:

- the effectiveness and coherence of the principles and procedures set out in this protocol, and
- the sustainability and effectiveness of outcomes for those who have approached for assistance.