



Housing Management Service Delivery Plan Leaflet

This leaflet outlines our Service Delivery Plan for the Housing Management Service.

This leaflet covers three main areas: -

- 1) Who the service is for and what the services cover;
- 2) How the services are provided;
- 3) Improvements to the service.

This leaflet is intended as a plain language guide only, not as a precise statement of the law.

It is also available in other languages, on request, and in formats such as in large print, compact disc and Braille.

Orkney Islands Council is referred to as "we" throughout this leaflet.

What service do I need?

Management of Council houses is the responsibility of Housing Services; this is intended to include the letting of our properties, sustainability of tenancies and taking appropriate action where a tenant has breached their tenancy conditions. This area is intended to exclude the physical maintenance of the Council's housing stock as this is covered specifically by our Asset Management Strategy.

We aim to make sure there is a strong focus on service delivery and planning for future provision. This is to ensure that services achieve an appropriate balance between quality and cost. In addition we aim to ensure that our services encourage integrated positive communities and sustainable areas where people wish to live.

Services Offered by Housing Services

Within Housing Services, our Housing Management Section is involved in the delivery of housing advice relating to the wider area of lettings, tenancy sustainment and dealing with tenancy breaches.

Given the broad role of Housing Services, this sections has a wide remit but their duties that link to housing management services include:

Housing Management Section

This section provides advice and assistance on a range of issues but relevant to the field of housing allocations, it advises on the following areas:

- ◆ Lettings arrangements and policy terms including priority passes;
- ◆ A broad range of tenancy matters including security of tenure;
- ◆ Housing options and allocation of Council and Housing Association property.
- ◆ Likely turnover of properties in a given area and property particulars;
- ◆ Housing for particular needs;
- ◆ Transfers, mutual exchanges, assignation and removal grant;
- ◆ Joint tenancies;
- ◆ Succession;
- ◆ Statutory tenancy rights;
- ◆ Right to Buy.

Advice will always be tailored to the individual/household's needs. If appropriate, staff can liaise, on the household's behalf, with other parties involved such as a landlord.

In other situations, a referral may be made to another agency to provide support or advice specific to the situation.

Tenancy Management Services

In addition the Housing Management Section deals primarily with issues arising from the tenancy agreement and therefore provides advice and assistance relative to housing management, in the following areas:

- ◆ A broad range of tenancy matters including security of tenure;
- ◆ Rent Arrears;
- ◆ Housing Benefit;
- ◆ Anti-Social Behaviour and disputes;
- ◆ Racial discrimination;
- ◆ Statutory tenancy rights
- ◆ Garden Condition;
- ◆ Pets;
- ◆ Abandonment of property;
- ◆ Requests to take in a lodger;
- ◆ Requests to conduct a business from home;
- ◆ Actions to recover a property following a sustained or serious tenancy breach;
- ◆ Eviction.

In addition our Housing Management Section provides advice relating to tenant participation and tenant involvement in our services.

Our Housing Management Section can signpost to provide assistance with money advice, energy efficiency etc.

Our Housing Management Section works closely with other sections within Housing Services and various partner agencies to ensure that the applicant can access the best service for their needs. For instance we may refer a service user to a partner agency for help if they wish to dispute one of the Council's decisions about how their case has been dealt with or whether an offer of accommodation is appropriate for the household's needs.

Access to the Service

Our services are delivered through the Council Offices in Kirkwall.

If you wish to speak to a member of Council staff, our facilities at the One Stop Shop include private interview rooms, a comfortable reception area and waiting room, toilet facilities and toys for small children. A home visit could also be arranged and very often this may be particularly appropriate in relation to housing management. In order to make such arrangements please contact Housing Services directly at the address above.

We introduced a Housing Management Charter in August 2009 and this outlines the service you can expect from us and what we in turn expect from you.

A broad range of written information is also available and this can be obtained from our One Stop Shop or from our website at www.orkney.gov.uk

We are committed to working in partnership with a range of other agencies in order to ensure that our services are seamless and appropriately tailored to the needs of the service user concerned.

Service Improvement

It is our intention to deliver good quality, person centred user friendly, sensitive and efficient services for the people of Orkney. We aim to continually improve our service and part of this process involves collecting information regarding our customer's views.

Central to this aim is the need to adapt to social change and also to determine what our service users think of a range of aspects to our services. In order to assess this we collect and analyse information from a range of sources including:

- ◆ Focus groups;
- ◆ Customer satisfaction surveys (new tenants surveys, outgoing tenants surveys, etc);
- ◆ Complaints;
- ◆ Appeals;
- ◆ Comments made by service users in relation to requests on footnotes of letters;
- ◆ Information relating to the profile of the local community;
- ◆ Statistical information from related policies.

This includes consideration of:

- ◆ Our premises;
- ◆ Our hours of business;
- ◆ Quality of our written information;
- ◆ Other methods of service delivery including our website etc;
- ◆ Extent of client involvement with other agencies;
- ◆ Standard of advice given;
- ◆ Provision/scope of services in rural areas;
- ◆ Accessibility of services.

Service user feedback is vital to the success of our services and staff are fully trained in the importance of this. Your views are very important to us.

The information we collect is monitored, assessed and included in an annual review of our service delivery. Therefore this information is vital to us in ensuring our services remain reflective of your needs and wishes.

Contact Details

Housing Services

Council Offices

School Place

Kirkwall

Tel:- (01856) 873535

Fax:- (01856) 886530

E-mail:- housing@orkney.gov.uk

Website: www.orkney.gov.uk