

**Epping Forest District Council
Housing Directorate**

HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2008/9

Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2006/7	2008/9	Comments
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We aim to....

GENERAL					
(G1) Report on our performance against these Service Standards to your Tenants and Leaseholders Federation every year, and review the Standards in the light of performance	Director of Housing	Not measured	N/A	N/A	Reported to, and reviewed by Housing Scrutiny Panel - Dec 2009 and Federation – Nov 2009
(G2) Generally satisfy at least 85% of our tenants with the overall housing service provided <i>(Proposed change – to “at least 80%”)</i>	Director of Housing	Level of tenant satisfaction (Tri-annual STATUS survey)	85%	83.5%	Performance still good – latest survey had to exclude tenants in sheltered housing – who are known to be most satisfied. Propose a change to the standard to reflect the current definition
(G3) Respond to your letters within 10 working days on routine matters, or acknowledge within 5 working days and then provide you with a full response within 28 days on more complex issues	Director of Housing	Not measured.	N/A	N/A	

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(G4) Give you an opportunity to appeal within 3 months to a senior officer about any decision made about your housing that affects you, and then give you a further opportunity within a further 3 months to appeal to the Housing Appeals and Review Panel of district councillors ^(a)	Director of Housing	(a) Senior Officer appeals	Not measured	Not measured	This is being collected from April 2009, and will be reported next year.
		(b) Panel Appeals / reviews heard	9	6	
(G5) Give you an opportunity to complain about anything you are unhappy about, fully investigate your complaint, and inform you of the outcome of your complaint within the Council's published timescales. <i>(Proposed amended wording – See "Comments")</i>	Director of Housing	(a) No. of Step 2 complaints (to Director of Housing) received	4	20	Although already operating in practice, the wording of the Service Standard has changed slightly (by making reference to fully investigating complaints and informing the complainant of the outcome) to comply with the requirements of the Telecare Services Association (TSA)
		(b) No. of Step 3 complaints (to Chief Executive, investigated by Complaints Officer) received	9	14	
(G6) If you are unhappy about the way your complaint has been dealt with by housing officers, arrange to have your complaint heard by a panel of district councillors	Director of Housing	No. of Step 4 complaints received	1	10	
(G7) Deliver a copy of the Council's "Housing News" to your home (giving useful information about your housing) at least three times each year	PHO (Information/ Strategy)	No. of copies of Housing News produced	3	1	Only 1 issue was produced, due to the long term sickness of the editor. However, 2 issues have been produced in 2009/10 and a 3 rd is planned before the end of the year.

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(G8) Consult you on any significant matters relating to your tenancy and take your views into account when making decisions	PHO (Information/ Strategy)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	
HOMELESSNESS					
(H1) Give you an interview with a Homelessness Prevention Officer within 7 days of initial contact, or on the same day if an emergency	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Homelessness)	Not measured.	N/A	N/A	
(H2) Investigate your homelessness application, and give you a written decision on how we will help you (with reasons), within 33 calendar days (Proposal – Delete Service Standard. For the reason set out in the “Comments”)	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Homelessness)	(a) Average time	31 days	51 days	A target of 33 days was previously a Best Value Performance Indicator, but is no longer. Officers’ emphasis is on collecting sufficient evidence for the investigation to reach an appropriate <i>quality</i> decision – which often takes longer than 33 days. Moreover, increased prevention reduces the no. of homelessness applications, and those cases that do proceed to an application tend to be the more complex, requiring greater investigation
		(b) % Within target time	67 %	26 %	

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<p>(H3) If necessary, provide you with suitable temporary accommodation, whilst we investigate your homelessness application, until we provide you with a written decision</p>	<p>Asst. Housing Options Manager (Homelessness)</p>	<p>Total no. of applicants in temporary accommodation at end of year</p>	<p>91</p>	<p>80</p>	
<p>(H4) If requested by you, review a homelessness decision that you are unhappy with (by either a senior officer or the Housing Appeals and Review Panel of district councillors) within 8 weeks ^(b)</p> <p><i>(Statutory right and timescale)</i></p>	<p>Director of Housing</p>	<p>% Within target time (unless with the permission of the applicant to extend period)</p>	<p>100%</p>	<p>100%</p>	
<p>(H5) Advise you of your right of appeal to the County Court within 21 days on a point of law if you are unhappy with the homelessness decision after it has been reviewed</p> <p><i>(Statutory right and timescale)</i></p>	<p>Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)</p>	<p>% of applicants notified of their right</p>	<p>100%</p>	<p>100%</p>	

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(H6) Keep you in temporary accommodation for at least 3 months after providing you with our written decision, before making you an offer of suitable permanent accommodation, unless provided with accommodation through our Fresh Start Scheme, in which case permanent accommodation will be provided after no more than 3 years	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Homelessness)	(a) Average timescales	Not measured	Not measured	This information will be collected from 1 st April 2010
		(b) % within timescale	Not measured	Not measured	

HOUSING REGISTER AND ALLOCATIONS

(HR1) Register your housing application or garage application, and advise you of the level of priority (band) given, within 10 working days of receipt of all the information we need from you and other people.	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Allocations)	(a) Average time	Not measured	Housing - 3 days Garages – 4 days	
		(b) No. of applications awaiting registration at end of year	0	0	
(HR2) Notify you in writing of any change in your priority banding, within 7 days of the change being made	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Allocations)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2006/7	2008/9	Comments
<p>(HR3) Review your housing application every year, provided that you provide us with any required information.</p> <p><i>(Proposed Change - To “Write to you at least every year if you have not expressed any interest in vacant properties under the HomeOptions Scheme, and ask if you wish to remain on the Housing Register”</i></p>	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Allocations)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	Housing applications are now only reviewed (and deleted if necessary) if applicants do not express any interest in any vacant properties under the HomeOptions Choice Based Lettings Scheme.
<p>(HR4) Give you at least 5 calendar days notice between offering you a tenancy and the tenancy commencement date</p>	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Allocations)	Not measured.	N/A	N/A	
<p>(HR5) Unless you are a homeless applicant ^(c), allow you to choose the vacant Council or housing association home you would like to be offered (through our HomeOption Scheme), subject to the interest expressed by other applicants with higher priority</p>	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Allocations)	Not measured	. N/A	N/A	

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2006/7	2008/9	Comments
(HR6) If you are not a Council tenant already, offer you an Introductory Tenancy initially, followed by a Secure Tenancy automatically after 1 year, if you have not caused any anti-social behaviour, have had any significant rent arrears or broken any other Conditions of Tenancy.	Area Housing Managers	Not measured.	N/A	N/A	
(HR7) Give you a decision on your request for a mutual exchange within 5 working days of receiving an application from you and the other party/parties, with all the required information provided.	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Allocations)	Not measured.	N/A	N/A	
HOUSING MANAGEMENT					
(HM1) If you are a new tenant, visit you at home within 10 weeks of your tenancy commencing, to introduce you to your local housing officer and to discuss the main conditions of your tenancy and any queries you may have	Area Housing Managers	Not measured	N/A	N/A	

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2006/7	2008/9	Comments
<p>(HM2) Provide you with the following options to pay your rent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At one of the Council's Cash Offices • At any post office • At any "PayPoint" access point • By direct debit • By standing order • Through the internet • By telephone • By salary deduction (if you Work for the Council) <p><i>(Proposed change – Add "By text")</i></p>	Housing Resources Manager	Not measured	N/A	N/A	Rent payments by text (SMS) are also now available. Add this method to the Service Standard
<p>(HM3) Provide you with the opportunity to pay your rent at post offices, "Pay-points" and "Pay-zones" throughout the country.</p>	Housing Resources Manager	Not measured.	N/A	N/A	Payment at "Pay-zones" are no longer available. Amend the Service Standard accordingly
<p>(HM4) Give you a choice of three dates in the month to pay your rent by direct debit.</p>	Housing Resources Manager	No. of direct debit payment dates available as at end of year	3	3	
<p>(HM5) Provide you with written confirmation of the balance on your rent account in April/May each year (unless your account is clear or only in credit or arrears by less than £1)</p>	Area Housing Managers	Whether or not balance confirmations are sent out by end of May	Yes	Yes	

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<p>(HM6) Provide you with a detailed statement of your rent account for the previous 12 months on request</p> <p><i>(Proposed change – Add “or automatically every three months if you are in arrears by more than £1”)</i></p>	Area Housing Managers	Not measured	N/A	N/A	Under the Pre-Court Rent Arrears Protocol, the Council must have provided a quarterly rent statement before legal action can be taken.
<p>(HM7) Make every effort to enter into an agreement with you to clear any rent arrears that you have through reasonable instalments, before we take any legal action to recover the arrears</p>	Area Housing Managers	Not measured.	N/A	N/A	
<p>(HM8) Make every effort to meet with you to discuss any rent arrears before any court hearing takes place</p>	Area Housing Managers	Not measured.	N/A	N/A	Although not measured, visits are recorded.
<p>(HM9) If you are an Introductory Tenant or a Demoted Tenant ^(d), give you an opportunity to appeal to a senior officer against any proposed legal action within 2 weeks of you being advised of the proposed legal action.</p>	Asst Director of Housing (Operations)	(a) No of reviews held for introductory tenants	0	9	
		(b) No. of reviews held for demoted tenants	1	1	

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(HM10) Remove abandoned vehicles from housing estates (after making enquiries of the DVLA on ownership and contacting the owner) within 5 weeks of receiving a complaint	Area Housing Managers	No. of abandoned vehicles removed (HM10 and HM11)	37	59	
(HM11) Remove clearly abandoned and potentially dangerous vehicles from housing estates within 5 working days of receiving a complaint	Area Housing Managers				
(HM12) If you live in a flat with more than four flats in the block, clean the communal area weekly and re-charge you the cost to the Council.	Area Housing Managers	Not measured	N/A	N/A	
(HM13) Where we clean communal areas of blocks or flats, inspect the standard of cleaning at least twice a year	Area Housing Managers	Not measured	N/A	N/A	Although numbers are not recorded, inspection records are kept
(HM14) Undertake a formal inspection of your estate by a housing officer and make a note of any required work at least once every year <i>(Proposed change – Add “with a representative of any recognised tenant association covering your area”)</i>	Area Housing Managers	No. of estate inspections undertaken	53	54	It has previously been agreed with the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation that representatives of any recognised tenants associations should accompany housing officers on scheduled estate inspections.

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2006/7	2008/9	Comments
(HM15) Give you a decision on your request for permission to carry out improvements to your Council home (or former Council home) within 2 weeks of us receiving your request and all the required information.	Area Housing Managers	Not measured	N/A	N/A	
(HM16) When you vacate your Council home, inform you of your right to compensation for certain improvements you have undertaken within 7 days of you informing us of your vacation and give you a decision on your request for compensation to your Council home within 2 weeks of us receiving your application and all the required information.	Area Housing Managers	No. of compensation claims agreed	2	7	
(HM17) Pay you any compensation due to you for an improvement you have undertaken to your Council home within 1 week of giving you our decision on the amount due. <i>(Proposal – Delete Service Standard. For the reason set out in the “Comments”)</i>	Area Housing Managers	Amount of compensation paid	£1,856	£7,844	HM16 covers the main commitment on compensation for tenants' improvements. Since it can actually take around 3 weeks for cheques to be issued to vacating tenants, it is suggested that this Service Standard is deleted.

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<p>(HM18) If you are unable to succeed^(e) to a tenancy because there has already been one succession, we will offer you a new tenancy of either the property in which you are currently living or another one.</p> <p><i>(Proposed change – Amend to “offer you a new tenancy of the property in which you are currently living or, if you are not a spouse and are under-occupying the property, the tenancy of another property”</i></p>	Area Housing Managers	Not measured	N/A	N/A	The proposed amendment is a more accurate reflection of the Council’s policy.
<p>(HM19) Comply with the Government’s Respect Standard for Housing Management in dealing with anti-social behaviour on housing estates</p>	Area Housing Managers	Date of self-certification for compliance with the Standard	June 2007	June 2007	
REPAIRS, MAINTENANCE & IMPROVEMENTS					
<p>(R1) Carry out emergency repairs within 24 hours of you reporting the repair.</p>	Housing Repairs Manager	% emergency repairs completed within target time	99%	99%	

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2006/7	2008/9	Comments
<p>(R2) Carry out urgent repairs within 5 working days of you reporting the repair.</p>	<p>Housing Repairs Manager</p>	<p>(a) Average time to complete urgent repairs</p>	<p>6 days</p>	<p>6 days</p>	
		<p>(b) % urgent repairs completed within target time</p>	<p>89%</p>	<p>86%</p>	<p>It should be noted that, following the implementation of the Repairs Refresh Programme, the target for the % of repairs undertaken within the target time was exceeded in both Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 of 2009/10</p>
<p>(R3) Carry out routine repairs within 8 weeks of you reporting the repair.</p> <p><i>(Proposed change – to “within 6 weeks”)</i></p>	<p>Housing Repairs Manager</p>	<p>(a) Average time to complete routine repairs</p>	<p>4 weeks</p>	<p>4 weeks</p>	
		<p>(b) % routine repairs completed within target time</p>	<p>90%</p>	<p>86%</p>	<p>(a) The shorter target time (from 8 weeks to 6 weeks –a reduction of 25%) was agreed by members for 2009/10</p> <p>(b) Despite this shorter timescale, it should be noted that, following the implementation of the Repairs Refresh Programme, the target for the % of repairs undertaken within the target time was exceeded in both Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 of 2009/10</p>

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(R4) Confirm in writing to you the details of any repairs you report, and give you a target date for completion on the day you report the repair (or the next day if reported after Noon)	Housing Repairs Manager	Not measured	N/A	N/A	
(R5) Keep any appointments that we make for tradesmen to carry out repairs to your home.	Housing Repairs Manager	% appointments kept	96%	95%	
(R6) Satisfy at least 97% of tenants with the general standard of the repairs service we provide ^(f) .	Housing Repairs Manager	% tenant satisfaction	98%	98%	
(R7) If a repair needs to be inspected first, give you an appointment for a Housing Inspector to visit your home for a morning or afternoon within 10 working days of your request.	Housing Repairs Manager	Not measured	N/A	N/A	
(R8) Arrange for Repairs Inspectors to randomly inspect the quality of work of a sample of repairs carried out by our Works Unit and contractors	Housing Repairs Manager	Average number of properties visited per week to inspect repairs (including where no access is given)	36	0	Post repair inspections were ceased from the end of 2006/7. However, as part of the Repairs Refresh Programme they have been recommenced from July 2009

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<p>(R8) If you are dissatisfied with a repair, arrange for a Supervisor to telephone or visit you within 5 working days of you telling us of your dissatisfaction.</p>	<p align="center">Building Maintenance Manager</p>	(a) No. of repair requests completed	15,163	18, 664	
		(b) No. of dissatisfied tenants	54 (0.36%)	62 (0.33%)	
		(c) No. of dissatisfied tenants considered justifiable	14 (26 %)	16 (26%)	
		(d) No. of dissatisfied tenants considered to be due to only a minor problem	19 (35 %)	20 (32%)	
		(f) No. of cases where the dissatisfaction was considered to be not due to the Works Unit	4 (7 %)	9 (14%)	
		(g) Properties unable to gain access	8 (15 %)	7 (11%)	
		<p>(R9) If we do not complete certain specified repairs within specific timescales, arrange for another repairs contractor to carry out the repair within the same timescale on request ^(g) (Statutory requirement)</p>	<p align="center">Housing Repairs Manager</p>	<p>No. of tenants exercising their "Right to Repair"</p>	0

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2006/7	2008/9	Comments
<p>(R10) If a second contractor does not complete certain specified repairs within specific timescales, pay you compensation of £10 + £2 per day until the repair is carried out (upto a maximum of £50) ^(g)</p> <p><i>(Statutory requirement and amounts)</i></p>	Housing Repairs Manager	Amount of compensation paid	£ Nil	£ Nil	
<p>(R11) Service all the gas appliances in your home (or undertake a safety check if you have installed the appliance yourself), and provide you with a copy of the associated safety certificate, once a year</p>	Housing Assets Manager	% of properties where servicing not undertaken within 12 months (due to access not provided by tenants)	North – 0.25 %	North – 1.27%	
			South – 1.4 %	South - 3.08%	
<p>(R12) Arrange for a gas contractor to visit your home to attend to a gas appliance that is required as an emergency (e.g. a water/gas leak) within 2 hours</p>	Housing Assets Manager	% attended within 2 hours	North – 100 %	North – 100%	
			South – 100 %	South – 86.5%	
		% attended within 1 hour	North – 99.5 %	North – 100%	
			South – 70.9 %	South – 86.5%	

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(R13) Arrange for a gas contractor to visit your home and carry out a repair to your heating or hot water system within 24 hours (if no part is required)	Housing Assets Manager	% attended within 24 hours	North – 100 %	North- 100%	
			South – 100 %	South – 86 %	
(R14) Arrange for a gas contractor to visit your home to repair a gas appliance within 5 working days (when a part is required)	Housing Assets Manager	% attended within 5 working days	North – 100 %	North – 100%	
			South – 100 %	South – 96.5%	
(R15) If you are over 60 years of age and live in a 1 bed property, redecorate 1 room in your home, on request, every 5 years and within 13 weeks of your request <i>(Proposed change – to “live in a 1 or 2 bed property”)</i>	Housing Assets Manager	(a) No. of internal decorations completed	80	53	The extension of the scheme to 2 bed properties was agreed by the Housing P/H in August 2009
		(b) Average time from request to completion	5.1 weeks	6.5 weeks	
		(c) No. of internal decorations outstanding at end of year, not completed within target timescale	0	0	

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DISABLED ADAPTATIONS

(D1) Advise you in writing about whether or not you are eligible for specific adaptations to your Council home within one week of us receiving a request from the Occupational Therapy Service	Housing Assets Manager	(a) Minor adaptations	1.7 days	1.3 days	
		(b) Major adaptations	2.9 days	1.9 days	
(D2) Carry out minor adaptations to your home within 4 weeks of receiving details of the required work from the Occupational Therapy service	Housing Assets Manager	(a) Average time from decision to completion of work	27 days	22 days	
		(b) No. of minor adaptations at end of the year not completed within the target time	2	8	

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(D3) Carry out non-minor adaptations to your home within 13 weeks of receiving details of the required work from the Occupational Therapy Service	Housing Assets Manager	(a) Average time from decision to completion of work	8 weeks	32 weeks	The delays in 2008/9 were due to the budget for disabled adaptations being spent early, due to increased demand.
		(b) No. of non-minor adaptations at end of the year not completed within the target time	1	66	At the Cabinet meeting in April 2009, an additional one-off sum of £200,000 was allocated in 2009/10 to help clear the backlog. It was also agreed that the Cabinet reviews progress made against clearing the backlog after six months
SHELTERED HOUSING & CARELINE					
(S1) Test your Careline alarm in sheltered accommodation every 3 months and in non-sheltered accommodation every 6 months	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	The requirement for tests is monitored, but statistics are kept on numbers.
(S2) Install an individual Careline alarm in your home within 2 working days (provided that no other telecare equipment is required)	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Average time to install a Careline alarm	0.9 days	1.5 days (Basic pendant and alarm)	

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(S3) Renew mains batteries in individual (dispersed) alarms every 5 years	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	The requirement for battery renewals is monitored, but statistics are kept on numbers.
(S4) Treat all your alarm calls to Careline as potential emergencies, until proved otherwise <i>Proposed new Service Standard</i>	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	Proposed new Service Standard to comply with the Telecare Services Association's (TSA) requirements
(S5) Answer your alarm calls to Careline, on average, within 10 seconds	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Average time to respond to calls (including non urgent, routine calls from scheme managers and test calls)	6.3 seconds	6.6 seconds	
(S6) Answer 97 % of all alarm calls to Careline within 30 seconds	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	% of calls answered within 30 seconds	98.9 %	98.9%	
(S7) Answer 99 % of all alarm calls to Careline within 60 seconds <i>Proposed new Service Standard</i>	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	% of calls answered within 60 seconds	Not measured	Not measured	Proposed new Service Standard to comply with the Telecare Services Association's (TSA) requirements

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<p>(S8) Liaise with other agencies and nominated contacts to ensure the wellbeing of our Careline customers</p> <p><i>Proposed new Service Standard</i></p>	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	Proposed new Service Standard to comply with the Telecare Services Association's (TSA) requirements
<p>(S9) Record and monitor all your calls to Careline, to help train our staff and look at how we can improve our service</p> <p><i>Proposed new Service Standard</i></p>	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	Proposed new Service Standard to comply with the Telecare Services Association's (TSA) requirements
<p>(S10) Repair your Careline alarm, or provide you with a replacement, within 24 hours of us being made aware (excluding Telecare sensors)</p>	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	Records for Individual repair times are kept, but overall numbers statistics are not kept
<p>(S11) Visit you annually to test the back-up batteries in your Careline alarm and to review your personal details held on our records</p>	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	Records for Individual visits are kept, but statistics on overall numbers are not kept
<p>(S12) Record, maintain and update your Careline records in a confidential and secure manner</p> <p><i>Proposed new Service Standard</i></p>	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	Proposed new Service Standard to comply with the Telecare Services Association's (TSA) requirements

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(S13) Train all our Careline staff to a high standard	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	Proposed new Service Standard to comply with the Telecare Services Association's (TSA) requirements
(S14) If you live in sheltered accommodation, ensure that your Scheme Manager gives you a home visit (or sees you) every day (Monday to Friday – subject to holidays and sickness) <i>(Proposed change – Amend “(or sees you)” to “(or accounts for you)”</i>	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	Records of visits are kept, but statistics on overall numbers are not kept The proposed change is a more accurate reflection of current practice, since a tenant can be accounted for over the alarm system, without being seen.
(S15) If you live in sheltered accommodation and your Scheme Manager is on holiday or sick, arrange for another Scheme Manager to visit you 3 times a week	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	Records of visits are kept, but statistics on overall numbers are not kept
(S16) If you do not live in sheltered accommodation, but are visited by a Scheme Manager, ensure that you receive a visit every week, fortnight or month, as appropriate (as determined by a risk assessment)	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Average no. of visits per week	214	255	

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(S17) If you live in sheltered or non-sheltered accommodation for older people, provide you with a Tenant Support Plan – explaining the type and level of support that we will give you - and review the Tenant Support Plan every 12 months (or sooner if requested by you)	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	Except for those certifying that they do not want a Tenant Support Plan, all tenants have a Tenant Support Plan which is reviewed annually
(S18) Carry out fire drills at sheltered accommodation every 3 months	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	No of schemes where fire drills have not been undertaken within 3 months	0	0	
HOUSE SALES					
(HS1) Confirm whether or not you are eligible for the Right to Buy within 2 weeks of receiving a properly completed application from you <i>(Statutory requirement, but the statutory timescale is 4 weeks)</i>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	(a) Average periods	F/hold - 3.0 days L/hold - 4.2 days	F/hold – 4.7 days L/hold – 2.7 days	
		(b) % within statutory timescale (4 weeks)	F/hold - 100 % L/hold - 100 %	F/hold – 100% L/hold – 100%	

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HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2008/9

Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2006/7	2008/9	Comments
<p>(HS2) Advise you of the valuation, discount and purchase price for the property you wish to purchase within 8 weeks of us confirming the Right to Buy if your property is a house or bungalow or 12 weeks if your property is a flat or maisonette</p> <p><i>(Statutory requirement and timescales)</i></p>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	(a) Average time to provide information	F/hold - 4.5 weeks L/hold - 4.3 weeks	F/hold – 7.44 weeks L/hold – 5.5 weeks	
		(b) % within statutory timescale	F/hold - 96.3 % L/hold – 100 %	F/hold – 60% L/hold - 100%	
<p>(HS3) Give you an opportunity to appeal against our valuation of your home, and to obtain an independent valuation (free of charge) from the District Valuer, within 3 months of you receiving our valuation</p> <p><i>(Statutory requirement and timescale)</i></p>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	No of appeals to DV	3	0	
<p>(HS4) Complete the purchase of your property within 10 weeks of you confirming that you wish to proceed, provided that you and your solicitor deal with all required matters promptly</p>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	Average time taken to complete a purchase	N/A	17 week (7 completions during the year)	The actual timescale often depends on how quickly the applicant's solicitor takes to complete. The Housing Directorate has no control over performance

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2006/7	2008/9	Comments
<p>(HS5) If you do not proceed with your purchase, give you two formal notices of 8 weeks each before cancelling your Right to Buy application</p> <p><i>(Statutory requirement and timescale)</i></p>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	Although overall statistics are not kept, cases are monitored to check how long applicants are taking to proceed, so that formal notices are issued at appropriate times. The notices are served direct by the Council's Legal Service
LEASEHOLD SERVICES					
<p>(L1) Provide you with a detailed breakdown of your <u>estimated</u> annual service charge at least 2 weeks before the beginning of the financial year</p>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	No. of weeks before the beginning of the reference year when all estimated service charge accounts were issued for the reference year	4 weeks	4 weeks	
<p>(L2) Provide you with a detailed breakdown of your <u>actual</u> annual service charge within 6 months after the end of the financial year</p>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	No. of months after the end of the reference year when all actual service charge accounts were issued for the reference year	6 months	6 months	

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2006/7	2008/9	Comments
<p>(L3) If you fall into arrears with your service charges, give you an appropriate amount of time to clear the arrear in accordance with the Council's Sundry Income and Dept Policy ^(h)</p> <p><i>(Proposed change – Amend to “If you fall into arrears with your actual service charge...”)</i></p>	<p>Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)</p>	<p>Not measured</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Formal action to recover service charges are only taken on <u>actual</u> service charge arrears, not estimated charges)</p>
<p>(L4) Consult you on proposed major repairs and improvements (over £250) and details of the proposed contractors to provide tender prices at least 30 days before seeking tenders</p> <p><i>(Proposed change – replace “details of the proposed contractors to provide tender prices” with “give you the opportunity to nominate a contractor to provide a tender for the work”)</i></p> <p><i>(Statutory requirement and timescale)</i></p>	<p>Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)</p>	<p>Not measured</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Although statistics are not kept, records of individual consultations are kept .</p> <p>The proposed change corrects the actual legal position</p>

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2006/7	2008/9	Comments
<p>(L5) Consult you on the estimated cost of major repairs and improvements before commencing the work, and give you at least 30 days to provide any comments you may have, which we will take into account</p> <p><i>(Proposed change – insert “and advise you of the selected contractor” after “and improvements”)</i></p> <p><i>(Statutory requirement and timescale)</i></p>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	<p>Although statistics are not kept, records of individual consultations are kept.</p> <p>The proposed change corrects the actual legal position</p>
<p>(L6) Provide you, on request, with a copy of your current service charge account and other relevant information (perhaps if you wish to sell on the leasehold), for a fee, within 2 weeks of your request</p>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	
<p>(L7) Support a District-wide Leaseholders Association and ensure that it meets at least 4 times each year</p>	Tenant Participation Officer	No. of meetings held	5	4	

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2006/7	2008/9	Comments
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PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING

<p>(PS1) Visit 95% of applicants for our Caring And Repairing in Epping Forest (CARE) Service within 3 weeks of the initial enquiry</p> <p><i>Proposed new Service Standard</i></p>	Private Housing Manager (CARE & Grants)	% of visits undertaken within 3 weeks	Not measured	100 %	
<p>(PS2) Undertake jobs through our Handyperson Service within 2 weeks of request</p> <p><i>Proposed new Service Standard</i></p>	Private Housing Manager (CARE & Grants)	Average time for jobs to be completed	Not measured	Area 1 – 9 working days Area 2 – 19 working days	The average time in Area 2 was seriously affected by the poor health of the contractor
<p>(PS3) Generally satisfy at least 95% of our customers for both CARE's core service and Handyperson Service</p> <p><i>Proposed new Service Standard</i></p>	Private Housing Manager (CARE & Grants)	% satisfied with CARE's core service and the Handyperson Service	Not measured	100 %	

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2006/7	2008/9	Comments
<p>(PS4) Respond to applicants for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) within 10 working days of receiving a referral from an occupational therapist (OT)</p> <p><i>Proposed new Service Standard</i></p>	Private Housing Manager (CARE & Grants)	Average time to respond to referrals	Not measured	10 working days	
<p>(PS5) Issue a decision on a formal application for a DFG within 5 working days of receipt</p> <p><i>Proposed new Service Standard</i></p>	Private Housing Manager (CARE & Grants)	Average time to issue a decision	Not measured	3.9 working days	
<p>(PS6) Respond to applicants for other private sector grants within 5 working days of receiving a request</p> <p><i>Proposed new Service Standard</i></p>	Private Housing Manager (CARE & Grants)	Average time to respond to requests	Not measured	2 working days	
<p>(PS7) Issue a decision on a formal application for other private sector grants within 5 working days of receipt</p> <p><i>Proposed new Service Standard</i></p>	Private Housing Manager (CARE & Grants)	Average time to issue a decision	Not measured	3.5 working days	

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2006/7	2008/9	Comments
<p>(PS8) Respond to requests for assistance from private tenants allegedly being harassed by landlords within 24 hours</p> <p><i>Proposed new Service Standard</i></p>	<p>Private Housing Manager (Technical)</p>	<p>% of responses within 24 hours</p>	<p>Not measured</p>	<p>100 %</p>	
<p>(PS9) Respond to initial enquiries for other private sector housing services (e.g nuisance, filthy / verminous properties, mobile homes, HMOs) within 5 working days</p> <p><i>Proposed new Service Standard</i></p>	<p>Private Housing Manager (Technical)</p>	<p>% of responses within 3 working days</p>	<p>Not measured</p>	<p>99 %</p>	
<p>(PS10) Issue licences for houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) within 6 months of receiving a properly completed application</p> <p><i>Proposed new Service Standard</i></p>	<p>Private Housing Manager (Technical)</p>	<p>% of licences issued within 4 months</p>	<p>Not measured</p>	<p>100 %</p>	

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HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2008/9

Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2006/7	2008/9	Comments
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Notes:

(a) Decisions relating to homelessness are considered *either* by a senior officer or the Housing Appeals and Review Panel, and have different timescales.

(b) Decisions relating to the priority need of single people, suitability of accommodation and referrals to other councils are considered by a senior officer. All others are considered by the Housing Appeals and Review Panel of district councillors.

(c) Homeless applicants are able to participate in the Choice Based Letting Scheme, for a period of 8 weeks (4 cycles) after receiving their homelessness decision letter. If no successful expressions of interest are made by the applicant, the Council will initially make expressions of interest on their behalf. If this is still unsuccessful, the Council will make the applicant one offer of accommodation when a suitable property becomes available.

(d) A demoted tenant is someone who held a secure tenancy but whose secure tenancy rights have been taken away by a court and has therefore become a (demoted) tenant - who is allowed to live at the property but with limited rights.

(e) Succession takes place when someone legally takes over the tenancy from their spouse or another family member, following the previous tenant's death. In law, there can only be one succession. A person (spouse or family member) who would otherwise be a successor tenant, but cannot in law because there has already been one succession, will be offered a new tenancy of either the property they are living in or another one, depending on whether or not they under-occupy the property.

(f) Measured through the Council's ongoing repairs satisfaction survey from satisfaction forms provided to tenants for all repairs requested.

(g) Under the Right to Repair legislation, defined repairs must be undertaken within either 1,3 or 7 days as specified by the legislation.

(h) Under the Council's Sundry Income and Debt Policy, people are given the following time periods to repay the following levels of debts:

Debts below £500 Upto 3 months
Debts below £1,500 Upto 6 months

Debts below £2,500 Upto 9 months
Debts above £2,500 Upto 12 months