

Epping Forest District Council Housing Directorate			
HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2007/8			
Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	Performance 2006/7

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	N/A	
(G2) Generally satisfy at least 85% of our tenants with the overall housing service provided	Director of Housing	Level of tenant satisfaction (Tri-annual STATUS survey)	85%
(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.	
(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 currently measured – to be measured from 2008/9
		(b) Panel Appeals/reviews heard	9

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(G5) Give you an opportunity to complain about anything you are unhappy about and, if necessary, have your complaint heard by a panel of district councillors if you are unhappy about the way your complaint has been dealt with by housing officers	Director of Housing	(a) No. of Step 2 complaints received	4
		(b) No. of Step 3 complaints received	[TBA]
		(c) No. of Step 4 complaints received	0
(G6) 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	2 (1 further copy was distributed just before the start of the year – in March 2006)
(G7) Consult you on any significant matters relating to your tenancy and take your views into account when making decisions	PHO (Information/Strategy)	(a) Major district-wide consultations –	Choice based lettings
		(b) Routine consultation	Refer to EFDC Consultation Register
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 Needs Manager (Homelessness)	Not measured.	
(H2) Investigate your homelessness application, and give you a written decision on how we will help you (with reasons), within 33 calendar days	Asst. Housing Needs Manager (Homelessness)	(a) Average time	31 days
		(b) % Within target time	67 %

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(H3) If necessary, provide you with suitable temporary accommodation, whilst we investigate your homelessness application, until we provide you with a written decision	Asst. Housing Needs Manager (Homelessness)	Total no. of applicants in temporary accommodation at 31.3.07	91
(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) <i>(Stat)</i>	Director of Housing	% Within target time (unless with the permission of the applicant to extend period)	100%
(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 <i>(Stat)</i>	Asst. Head of Housing (Operations)	% of applicants notified of their right	100%
(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 Needs Manager (Homelessness)	(a) Average timescales	Not currently measured – to be measured from 2008/9
		(b) % within timescale	Not currently measured – to be measured from 2008/9

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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 Needs Manager (Allocations)	(a) Average time	Not measured
		(b) No. of applications awaiting registration at 31.3.07	0
(HR2) Notify you in writing of any change in your priority banding, within 7 days of the change being made	Asst. Housing Needs Manager (Allocations)	Not measured.	
(HR3) Review your housing application every year, provided that you provide us with any required information.	Asst. Housing Needs Manager (Allocations)	Not measured	
(HR4) Give you at least 5 calendar days notice between offering you a tenancy and the tenancy commencement date	Asst. Housing Needs Manager (Allocations)	Not measured.	
(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	Asst. Housing Needs Manager (Allocations)	Not measured.	

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<p>(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.</p>	<p>Area Housing Managers</p>	<p>Not measured.</p>	
<p>(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.</p>	<p>Asst. Housing Needs Manager (Allocations)</p>	<p>Not measured.</p>	
HOUSING MANAGEMENT			
<p>(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.</p>	<p>Area Housing Managers</p>	<p>Not measured.</p>	
<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 in the country • 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>Housing Resources Manager</p>	<p>N/A</p>	

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(HM3) Provide you with the opportunity to pay your rent at post offices, "Pay-points" and "Pay-zones" throughout the country.	Housing Resources Manager	Not measured.	
(HM4) Give you a choice of three dates in the month to pay your rent by direct debit.	Housing Resources Manager	No. of direct debit payment dates available as at 31.3.07	3
(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)	Area Housing Managers	Date balances sent out (as at 31.3.07)	Sent on a phased based from W/C 30.4.07
(HM6) Provide you with a detailed statement of your rent account for the previous 12 months on request	Area Housing Managers	N/A	
(HM7) Try 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	Area Housing Managers	Not measured.	
(HM8) Try to meet with you to discuss any rent arrears before any court hearing takes place	Area Housing Managers	Not measured.	
(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.	Asst Director of Housing (Operations)	(a) No of reviews held for introductory tenants	0
		(b) No. of reviews held for demoted tenants	1

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(HM10) Remove abandoned vehicles from housing estates (after making enquiries of the DVLA on ownership) within 5 days of receiving a complaint	Area Housing Managers	a) Timescales	Not measured
		b) No. of abandoned vehicles removed	37
(HM11) 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	
(HM12) Undertake a formal inspection of your estate by a housing officer and make a note of any required work at least once every year	Area Housing Managers	No. of estate inspections undertaken	53
(HM13) Give you a decision on your request for permission to carry out improvements to your Council home (or former Council home) within X days of us receiving your request and all the required information.	Area Housing Managers	Not measured.	
(HM14) 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	Not currently measured – to be measured from 2008/9
(HM15) 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.	Area Housing Managers	Amount of compensation paid	[TBA]

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(HM16) 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.	Area Housing Managers	Not measured	
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REPAIRS, MAINTENANCE & IMPROVEMENTS

(R1) Carry out emergency repairs within 24 hours of you reporting the repair.	Housing Repairs Manager	% emergency repairs completed within target time	99%
(R2) Carry out urgent repairs within 5 working days of you reporting the repair.	Housing Repairs Manager	(a) Average time to complete urgent repairs	6 days
		(b) % urgent repairs completed within target time	89%
(R3) Carry out routine repairs within 8 weeks of you reporting the repair.	Housing Repairs Manager	(a) Average time to complete routine repairs	4 weeks
		(b) % routine repairs completed within target time	90%
(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	
(R5) Keep any appointments that we make for tradesmen to carry out repairs to your home.	Housing Repairs Manager	% appointments kept	96%

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(R6) Satisfy at least 97% of tenants with the general standard of the repairs service we provide ^(f) .	Housing Repairs Manager	% tenant satisfaction	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.	
(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.	Chief Works Officer	(a) No.of repair requests received	15,163
		(b) No. of dissatisfied tenants	54 (0.36%)
		(c) No. of dissatisfied tenants considered justifiable by Works Unit	14 (26 %)
		(d) No. of dissatisfied tenants considered to be due to only a minor problem	19 (35 %)
		(e) No. of dissatisfied tenants considered unjustifiable by Works Unit	9 (17 %)
		(f) No. of cases where the dissatisfaction was considered to be not due to the Works Unit	4 (7 %)
		(g) Properties unable to gain access	8 (15 %)

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(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 ⁽⁹⁾ (Stat)	Housing Repairs Manager	No. of tenants exercising their "Right to Repair"	0
(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) ⁽⁹⁾ (Stat)	Housing Repairs Manager	Amount of compensation paid	£ Nil
(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	Housing Assets Manager	% of properties where servicing not undertaken within 12 months (due to access not provided by tenants)	North – 0.25 %
			South – 1.4 %
(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	Housing Assets Manager	% attended within 2 hours	North – 100 %
			South – 100 %
		% attended within 1 hour	North – 99.5 %
			South – 70.9 %
(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 %
			South – 100 %
(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 %
			South – 100 %

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<p>(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</p>	<p>Housing Assets Manager</p>	<p>(a) No. of internal decorations competed</p>	<p>80</p>
		<p>(b) Average time from request to completion</p>	<p>5.1 weeks</p>
		<p>(c) No. of internal decorations outstanding at end of year, not completed within target timescale</p>	<p>0</p>
DISABLED ADAPTATIONS			
<p>(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</p>	<p>Housing Assets Manager</p>	<p>(a) Minor adaptations</p>	<p>1.7 days</p>
		<p>(b) Major adaptations</p>	<p>2.9 days</p>
<p>(D2) Carry out minor adaptations to your home within 4 weeks of receiving details of the required work from the Occupational Therapy Service</p>	<p>Housing Assets Manager</p>	<p>(a) Average time from decision to completion of work</p>	<p>26.6 days</p>
		<p>(b) No. of minor adaptations at end of the year not completed within the target time</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>(D3) Carry out non-minor adaptations to your home within 13 weeks of receiving details of the required work from the Occupational Therapy Service</p>	<p>Housing Assets Manager</p>	<p>(a) Average time from decision to completion of work</p>	<p>7.6 weeks</p>
		<p>(b) No. of non-minor adaptations at end of the year not completed within the target time</p>	<p>1</p>

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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)	(a) % alarms in sheltered accommodation tested within 3 months	Nil
		(b) % alarms in non-sheltered accommodation tested within 3 months	Nil
(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
(S3) Renew mains batteries in individual (dispersed) alarms every 5 years	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	% of batteries not replaced within 5 years	22 %
(S4) Answer alarm calls to Careline, on average, within 10 seconds and 97 % of all alarm calls within 30 seconds	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	(a) % of calls answered within 30 seconds	98.9 %
		(b) Average time to respond to calls (including non urgent, routine calls from scheme managers and test calls	6.3 seconds

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(S5) Repair your Careline alarm, or provide you with a replacement, within 24 hours of us being made aware (excluding Telecare sensors)	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	
(S6) Visit you annually to test the back-up batteries in your Careline alarm and to review your personal details held on our records	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured – but records of visits are kept	
(S7) 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)	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured – but records of visits are kept	
(S8) 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 – but records of visits are kept	
(S9) 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)	No. of older people receiving visits	Weekly - 27 Fortnightly - 44 Monthly - 274
(S10) 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 – But random checks are undertaken	

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(S11) 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
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>Stat = 4 weeks</i>)	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	(a) Average periods:	F/hold - 3.0 days L/hold - 4.2 days
		(b) % within statutory timescale (4 weeks)	Freehold - 100 % Leasehold - 100 %
(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 (<i>Stat</i>)	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	(a) Average time to provide information	F/hold - 4.5 weeks L/hold - 4.3 weeks
		(b) % within statutory timescale	F/hold (8 weeks) – 96.3 % L/hold (12 weeks)– 100 %
(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 (<i>Stat</i>)	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	No of appeals to DV	3

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(HS4) Complete the purchase of your property within X weeks of your confirming that you wish to proceed, provided that you and your solicitor deal with all required matters promptly	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	Average period between tenants accepting the Offer Price and completion	Not currently measured - to be measured from 2008/9
(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 (<i>Stat</i>)	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	No. of notices issued	Not currently measured - to be measured from 2008/9
LEASEHOLD SERVICES			
(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	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	No. of weeks before 2 nd April 2007 when all estimated service charge accounts were issued for the 2007/8 financial year	4 weeks
(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	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	No. of months after 1 st April 2007 when all actual service charge accounts were issued for the 2006/7 financial year	6 months
(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)	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	Not measured.	

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(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 <i>(Stat)</i>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	Not measured	
(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 <i>(Stat)</i>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	Not measured	
(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	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	Not measured	
(L7) Support a District-wide Leaseholders Association and ensure that it meets at least 4 times each year	Tenant Participation Officer	No. of meetings held	5

Notes:

(Stat) This standard/timescale is a statutory (legal) requirement

(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.

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(c) Homeless applicants will be 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 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 parent, 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.

(f) Measured through our 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

October 2007