

**DRAFT  
HALTON STANDARD FOR ALLOCATIONS**

What customers said...	What customers want...our commitment to you
<b><i>Applying for housing</i></b>	
<p>Each landlord has their own housing application form, allocations policy and waiting list. This is confusing and means customers have to apply to many different landlords to get a property in Halton.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>One waiting list</i></b> and <b><i>one allocations policy</i></b> for Halton that all partner associations will adopt, by December 2010</li> <li>• Customers who want to apply for social housing in Halton will only have to fill in <b><i>one application form</i></b> by December 2010</li> </ul>
<p>Information about allocations is not always understandable and each landlord has different quality and quantity of information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer <b><i>information</i></b> about the allocations service, your prospects for rehousing and different housing options available to you will be provided to anyone who applies for housing</li> <li>• An interview will be offered to help customers to apply for housing. An <b><i>appointment</i></b> will be offered and you can choose to receive a home visit or call into a local housing office.</li> <li>• <b><i>Clear, comprehensive and jargon free</i></b> customer information will be available in a range of different formats to meet customers communication preferences. A customer editorial panel will be involved in production of information to ensure it is clear, comprehensive and jargon free.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Waiting for an offer of accommodation</i></b>	
<p>Once customers have applied for accommodation they are not kept informed about the progress of their application.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waiting list customers will receive <b><i>information on a regular basis</i></b> (<i>frequency and format to be agreed in consultation with customers</i>)</li> <li>• This information will be provided in a range of formats that meet the <b><i>needs of individual customers</i></b> e.g. in different languages, Braille,</li> </ul>

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	large print
Different officers deal with customers' enquiries each time they make contact. This can be frustrating and impersonal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By end of 2010, customers who qualify for housing will be given the <b><i>name and contact details of an advisor(s) who will assist them.</i></b></li> </ul>
<b>Choice</b>	
Local people find it difficult to access social rented housing outside Halton. This limits their choice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By the end of 2010, customers registered on Halton's waiting list who want to <b><i>move to other parts of Merseyside</i></b> (Liverpool, Knowsey and Wirral) can be considered for accommodation in these other areas</li> <li>By October 2010, customers who want to <b><i>move to areas outside Halton</i></b> will be able to apply for and access housing through a scheme called Homeswapper</li> </ul>
<b>Quality of accommodation offered</b>	
Accommodation offered to customers is not always in a good condition. Sometimes repairs have not been completed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From April 2010 (<b>may take a little longer</b>) partner associations will develop a <b><i>single minimum standard for properties</i></b> that are ready to let. This standard will be determined in consultation with customers.</li> <li>The ready to let property standard will be <b><i>publicised</i></b> and every customer will be given a copy of the standard when they receive an offer of accommodation.</li> <li>Information provided will include photographs illustrating <b><i>what the standard 'looks like'</i></b>.</li> <li><b>Should the housing association partners provide a common form of 'welcome pack' or 'your new home pack' for customers?</b></li> </ul>

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	<p>Setting out information about the property, area, and landlord? If so, what type of information would you like included?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All of the above information will be provided in a range of formats that meet the <b>needs of individual customers</b> e.g. in different languages, Braille, large print</li> </ul>
<b>Setting up home</b>	
<p>Some customers need a little extra help when moving into a new home. For example, young people who are setting up home for the first time and people who are ‘vulnerable’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housing providers will offer <b>tenancy support</b> to those customers who are not already in receipt of other support from other agencies.</li> <li>Support offered will include assistance with benefit entitlements and applications, signing up for gas and electricity supplies</li> </ul> <p>(We will seek customers’ views on this when consulting on the draft standard, in terms of the type of support that would be useful.)</p>
<b>Performance</b>	
<p>Information is not readily / not available to advise customers about effectiveness of local landlords’ allocations services or the outcomes for customers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Performance targets</b> will be set, in consultation with customers, and the housing providers will be required to meet, if not exceed, these.</li> <li><b>Customer inspectors and a customer scrutiny panel</b> will monitor the performance of housing providers</li> <li>Their <b>findings will be publicised</b> on a quarterly basis in customer newsletters and in regular information given to waiting list customers. This information will also be displayed on the partners’</li> </ul>

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	<p>websites and in their local offices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This information will be provided in a <b><i>range of formats</i></b> that meet the needs of individual customers e.g. in different languages, Braille, large print</li></ul>