



**Older People's
Short Term Housing Support Services
commissioned by
Fife Council
Housing Services**

**Guidance on
Making a Referral for Older People's
Short Term Housing Support Services**

Updated 01.10.18

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Introduction

It is essential that with the ever increasing demand on the resources of the housing and social care sectors in Fife that Older People’s Short Term Housing Support services are used efficiently and to full effect to ensure we continue to deliver the highest standard of service to those individuals and families in housing crisis.

Fife Council’s Housing Services and the commissioned Older people’s short term housing support provider in Fife (Kingdom Support & Care) are experiencing a significant increase in the number of inappropriate referrals being made - including referrals being made to as a ‘stop gap’ because long term support or other services are not available to the applicant. This is having a detrimental effect on housing support resources, resulting in referrals which *are* appropriate and would benefit from short term housing support, having to be placed on a waiting list because the required services are not available immediately. This is placing some individuals at risk of their circumstances deteriorating further potentially increasing their risk of homelessness.

Fife Council’s commissioning team and the Older People’s commissioned short term housing support provider in Fife are committed to working effectively with referrers and all sectors of Health and Social Care to ensure appropriate referrals are made for housing support. The aim of this guidance is not to be restrictive but rather proactive in ensuring that the right people within our communities receive the right service with the minimal of delay.

Many individuals and families maintain an independent lifestyle despite facing a disability, long term health condition or difficult circumstances. It is therefore critical that no referral is rejected simply on the grounds of a condition or disability alone. However, no matter what the circumstances referrals must meet the criteria for short term housing support and referrers should be able to evidence that the individual has the ability and desire to work towards independence. It is for this reason that we are unable to accept referrals for individuals with a dementia diagnosis or for individuals who are living in residential care.

It is therefore essential that referrers include as much detail as possible about the individual’s needs and circumstances leading up to the referral, the past and present support needs and potential to become independent within the remit of the Older People’s short term housing support services.

Updated 01.10.18

Section 1 – the process; eligibility for Older People’s Short Term Housing Support; prioritising referrals; exiting the service

1.1 Administration process:

- Centralised referral and allocation system. All referrals must be sent to Trust in Fife (Lead Agent for the Homelessness & Short Term Housing Support Public Social Partnership) STHS Allocations Team and not directly to housing support providers. Referrals are received by the STHS Allocations Team via: the FORT CRMS system; Trust in Fife’s web-based system (used by non-Council staff with no access to FORT CRMS); or paper referral for those with no online access.
- When a referral is received, the STHS Allocations Team ensures the referral form and risk assessment have both been completed in full. Risk information is also checked on the SWIFT system.
- STHS Allocations Team checks the information given within the referral form to assess a level of priority for each request for STHS using the criteria in this guidance document.
- All referrals completed correctly and within criteria will be placed on the waiting list awaiting allocation to a housing support provider.
- Incomplete referrals on FORT CRMS are rejected and the referrer notified of reason. Where incomplete referrals are received from alternative routes, the referrer will be contacted and the information corrected over telephone/email.
- STHS Allocations Team will check the referral against the criteria. If housing support tasks are not requested (as per the tick box selection section on the referral form), the referral will be rejected.
- ***Whilst every effort is made to allocate the provider of the applicant’s choice, applicants cannot wait for a particular provider to become available, due to the lengthy delays incurred and the negative effect this places on the individual.***

1.2 Eligibility for Older People’s Short Term Housing Support provided by Kingdom Support & Care

- Adult over 60 years of age. No upper age limit.
- Service provided is for a maximum of 10 hours housing support per week.

Older People’s Short Term Housing Support can assist with some tasks which the mainstream (General) Short Term Housing Support (STHS) service cannot, and for a longer period than General STHS. There is 1 organisation which carries out this service in Fife and can support individuals for as long as they are living at home (unfortunately referrals cannot be accepted for individuals with a dementia diagnosis or individuals residing in residential care) :

Kingdom Support & Care Housing Support Service for Older People aged 60+, living at home and:

- (i) Has age related needs
- (ii) Living at home in Dunfermline, Rosyth, Cowdenbeath, Lochgelly, Glenrothes, Kirkcaldy and, wherever feasible, in North East Fife.

Further information on the service offered by Kingdom Support & Care can be found at:
www.kingdomhousing.org.uk/support-care/types/older-people/

Email contact is enquiries@ksc.scot

1.4 Accepting urgent referrals onto the *priority* waiting list for housing support provider assessment:

Incoming referrals are initially checked over by the STHS Allocations Team and placed on the waiting list in order of priority and in date order. Those meeting the priority categories (for quicker assessment) are placed at the top of the waiting list in date order.

The priority categories are as follows:

1. Crisis response to prevent homelessness (Prevention First referral). This means that the applicant is at tangible risk of losing their accommodation within 6 months (e.g. substantial rent arrears, Notice to Quit, residing in temporary accommodation).
2. An adult within the household is considered by Social Work Services to be an Adult at Risk (this will be highlighted on the SWIFT hazard system). Applicants who do not meet this SW criteria but are considered to be a vulnerable adult by the referrer (e.g. attempts of suicide / suicide ideation / subjected to financial abuse; referrer has submitted a Cause for Concern to Social Work Services) are also given priority.
3. A child within the household is considered by Social Work Services to be a Child at Risk (this will be highlighted on the SWIFT hazard system).
4. Applicant is a current service user of the Disabled Persons Housing Service (Fife) Hospital Options Project (referral will be from DPHS Fife).
5. Applicant is currently being supported by a commissioned housing support provider in Fife and requires transfer to an alternative provider for any reason (including the current provider being decommissioned).

Where an applicant is not considered to currently meet 1 of the above priority elements, their referral is placed on the regular waiting list for assessment, in date order.

When reaching the top of the waiting list (whether as a priority referral or a regular referral), the applicant will be allocated to a provider for assessment. The housing support provider will assess the referral under all the areas detailed in Section 2.

1.5 Withdrawal of Older People's Short Term Housing Support service

- Application for housing support will be closed if applicant has not been available for assessment within 1 calendar month of the referral being allocated to the provider.
- Service will be withdrawn if the service user disengages.
- Service will be withdrawn when outcomes have been met.

Section 2

Older People's Services – Short Term Housing Support Tasks

Older People's housing support can be provided to individuals requiring ***housing support in their home*** with one or more of the following tenancy support tasks:

- Maximise income - ***Assistance*** with the following: budgeting, bill payments, accessing income maximisation ('Benefit') checks, applying for benefits, accessing energy efficiency (fuel poverty) advice, applying for welfare funding.
- Living environment - Support ***to get into a routine with daily living tasks*** such as healthy eating/cooking, food hygiene, cleaning, laundry, recycling, garden maintenance, dealing with correspondence and form filling, property upkeep; arranging repairs to household appliances; guidance on setting up home; guidance on arranging disability adaptations.
- Buying food – Support with shopping.
- Support to attend appointments

Assistance can also be given on the following areas:

- Assist service user to engage with professionals and access other services to improve their personal health (e.g. registering with a GP/ dentist, mental health, addiction services, befriending).
- Support to increase confidence to leave client's home/ use public transport.
- Accessing community groups to reduce social isolation.
- Completing forms.

The tasks and length of service to be provided remain the decision of the provider and not the referrer.

Older People's short term housing support providers are not required to use staff cars to take service users shopping or to appointments.

Section 3 – Inappropriate referrals for Older People's Short Term Housing Support services

Referrals for Older People's Short Term Housing Support will be rejected in the following circumstances:

A) Referral Process (*referral will be rejected at point of receipt by the STHS Allocations Team – referrer will be required to correct the referral information and resubmit*)

1. Insufficient or missing details, including NI number, date of birth, etc.
2. Risk assessment has not been completed.
3. Details of support needs are unclear or insufficient information provided necessary to make a decision regarding applicant's need for assessment (for example, if support tasks required are not clearly listed).
4. Contact details of person making referral are not included.
5. The applicant is found to have duplicate entries on FORT CRMS. (*ie. Failure to complete an appropriate search on FORT prior to creating a new case file. In this case, referrer will be rejected and referrer required to resubmit their referral via the original FORT CRMS case file and transfer the duplicated information*)
6. *Referral is for an individual with a dementia diagnosis or an individual living in residential care.*

B) Referral for Older People's Short Term Housing Support service provided by Kingdom Support & Care (*referral will be rejected by the assessing provider*).

1. The referral does NOT clearly specify housing support needs as per the categories on the form.
2. The applicant does not agree to accept housing support or is found to have been coerced into accepting a referral for support as part of a broader agreement. (*e.g. threat of action from another service or as part of a tenancy agreement*)
3. The applicant was previously/recently supported long term by long term commissioned housing support via Social Work Services / Health & Social Care Partnership.
4. Referral is solely for support with transport to attend a regular medical or care appointment (*support provider acting as patient transport/taxi service*).
5. Referral is for the purpose of organising a house/garden clearance or removal.
6. Referral is for an individual with a dementia diagnosis.
7. Referral is for an individual living in residential care.

