

**DRAFT
HALTON STANDARD FOR ALLOCATIONS**

What customers said...	What customers want...our commitment to you
Applying for housing	
<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"> • One waiting list and one allocations policy for Halton that all partner associations will adopt, by December 2010 • Customers who want to apply for social housing in Halton will only have to fill in one application form by December 2010
<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"> • Customer information about the allocations service, your prospects for rehousing and different housing options available to you will be provided to anyone who applies for housing • An interview will be offered to help customers to apply for housing. An appointment will be offered and you can choose to receive a home visit or call into a local housing office. • Clear, comprehensive and jargon free 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.
Waiting for an offer of accommodation	
<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"> • Waiting list customers will receive information on a regular basis (<i>frequency and format to be agreed in consultation with customers</i>) • This information will be provided in a range of formats that meet the needs of individual customers e.g. in different languages, Braille,

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

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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"> All of the above information will be provided in a range of formats that meet the needs of individual customers e.g. in different languages, Braille, large print
Setting up home	
<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"> Housing providers will offer tenancy support to those customers who are not already in receipt of other support from other agencies. Support offered will include assistance with benefit entitlements and applications, signing up for gas and electricity supplies <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>
Performance	
<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"> Performance targets will be set, in consultation with customers, and the housing providers will be required to meet, if not exceed, these. Customer inspectors and a customer scrutiny panel will monitor the performance of housing providers Their findings will be publicised 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’

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