



# Temporary Accommodation Policy

Last reviewed December 2016

# 1.0 Temporary accommodation policy overview

This policy was adopted by XXX on XXX and is managed and adhered to by XXX. This policy will be reviewed on a XXX basis.

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## 1.1 Introduction

As a local authority, people who are homeless or threatened with losing their home will approach us for advice and support. In some emergency cases, temporary accommodation can be offered as interim housing to those who are eligible and in priority need.

If you are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, you should make contact with us as soon as possible via our online [quick response form](#) or by emailing [housingoptions@dacorum.gov.uk](mailto:housingoptions@dacorum.gov.uk). You can also call us on 01442 228 000 and ask for 'housing options' or if you become homeless outside of normal working hours and cannot make your own arrangements, please call the emergency homeless line on 0800 018 6050.

## 1.2 Aim(s) of the policy:

The aims of this policy are to:

- To clarify our approach, for staff and residents, to providing temporary accommodation to those eligible and in priority need;
- To ensure the effective management of temporary accommodation premises;
- To ensure support is provided to residents in temporary accommodation to help them move on to a more secure housing option;
- To provide accommodation that meets the guidance defined within the Homelessness Code of Guidance in relation to suitability of temporary accommodation.

## 1.3 Links to Council's corporate aims

This policy supports the council's corporate priorities of creating "a clean, safe and enjoyable environment" and "providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need" which is set out in 'Delivering for Dacorum – Corporate Plan 2015-2020'.

## 1.3 Equality and diversity

The council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity in housing services and has procedures in place to ensure that all Applicants and Tenants are treated fairly and without unlawful discrimination.

## 1.3 Policy Statement(s)

We will ensure that households moving into temporary accommodation will be appropriately placed (see 2.1).

We will manage temporary accommodation effectively (see 2.2).

We will provide support to residents of temporary accommodation to help them in moving on to a more secure home (see 2.3).

In some cases we will discharge our temporary accommodation duty (see 2.4).

# 2.0 Temporary accommodation policy detail

## 2.1 Suitability

Referrals for temporary accommodation come via the housing options team. Households are assessed as to whether they are eligible, homeless and in priority need and then, if approved, are allocated a temporary accommodation property.

When a household is identified as being in need of temporary accommodation, we will work to ensure that they are placed in a property which is most suitable to their needs. This may be a room in shared accommodation, a bedsit, flat or house.

In some instances we may need to place a household in bed & breakfast accommodation. However, we aim to avoid this as much as possible and will not place 16 and 17 year olds here under any circumstances. We will only place families in a bed & breakfast in the case of an emergency and we will ensure they remain there no longer than 6 weeks.

There is a right of appeal for residents of temporary accommodation if their accommodation is considered to be unsuitable for the households needs.

## 2.2 Management of temporary accommodation

All of our temporary accommodation properties are managed by our Temporary Accommodation Officers. They carry out randomised weekly, monthly and CCTV checks which consist of:

- Estate inspections of outside areas;
- Internal communal area checks;
- Room / property inspections;
- Health & safety checks e.g. fire alarm.

Residents of temporary accommodation must adhere to their licence agreement. This includes paying weekly rent, appropriately maintaining their property and not engaging in anti-social behaviour. If residents do not adhere to license agreements they will be issued with a warning letter. On the third consecutive warning for rent arrears or anti-social behaviour, the household will be issued with a 28 day notice to leave the property. We are not required to go to court to seek possession of the property. We can also use immediate eviction in serious cases of anti-social behaviour or in situations where it is believed that other residents, member of the public or staff is at serious risk of harm.

Tenants may be able to keep a domestic pet in temporary accommodation; this will be at the discretion of the Housing Officer. Pets cannot be kept in emergency accommodation such as a hostel, bed and breakfast or hotel.

## 2.3 Support for residents

A main aim of temporary accommodation is to provide an interim housing to those in need. Therefore, we ensure that support is available to our temporary accommodation residents to enable them to achieve a prompt and successful move on.

Each resident is allocated a Welfare & Support Officer who will work with them to draw up a support plan. Support plans are tailored to the individual household but can cover a number of things, including (but not limited to) the following:

- Support with finding employment / applying for benefits / school attendance;
- Referrals to other agencies;
- Advice in the case of a negative decision;
- Offering 'positive pathways' support if the household is approved as eligible for it.

If households have children under 5 years old, they will also receive an appointment from a health visitor every two weeks who will monitor the wellbeing of the children and make referrals to other agencies if appropriate or required. A representative from a local children's centre will also visit to monitor the children's development and offer advice re. schools and local playgroups.

## 2.4 Discharge of duty and eviction

Once a negative decision has been made we may remove a household from their temporary accommodation property, even if they have requested a review of the decision. If a positive decision is made and the resident is waiting to be housed they must maintain adherence to their licence agreement, otherwise we will take action which may lead to discharge of duty and an intentionally homeless decision.

If a resident is found to not be occupying their interim accommodation as their main residence then we will take action towards eviction. If we offer suitable interim accommodation and it is turned down by the household, then we will discharge our temporary accommodation duty.

## 3.0

### Links to other corporate documents

This policy links to and should be read in conjunction with the following policies and strategies:

- Corporate Plan 2016 – 2020
- Allocations Policy
- Licence Agreement
- No Second Night Out Policy

## 4.0

### Legislation

The legislation listed below will be taken into consideration when implementing this policy:

- Housing Act 1996
- Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) Order 2012