

**BEST VALUE REVIEW IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN  
PROGRESS AGAINST TARGETS**

*Numbering refers to Best Value Action Plan*

1. PROCESS REVIEWING

Process Improvement Teams have been established to review specific service areas including a cross-service team to review Disabled Facilities Grants.

2. WRITTEN PROCEDURE

Written procedures have been introduced for all mainstream-housing grants, Housing Enforcement, Group repair, Homelessness, Joint Housing Register and Right to Buy.

3. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

All customers of the Homelessness Service, Group Repair Schemes, Disabled Facilities Grants and Home Repair Assistance are consulted at the point of service or once work to their house is complete.

4. COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

Comprehensive benchmarking takes place through Urban Renewal Officers Group, the CIEH Unitary Cities Group, East Midlands Empty Property Forum and other Regional or County organisations.

5. HOUSING OPTIONS CENTRE I.T

The Housing Options Centre have installed a PC network to include new Right to Buy and Homelessness modules and e-mail for all staff. IT for management information is being developed.

6. EXISTING SOFTWARE

Enhancements to the existing nominations system have been superseded by the introduction of Choice Based Lettings, which has resulted in better performance monitoring. There are plans to extend Choice Based Lettings across the City by April 2003.

7. INFORMATION TO CUSTOMERS

All new leaflets, publications and questionnaires include information that signposts access to other formats for visually impaired people and those whose first language is one of the three main Asian languages.

8. STANDARD LETTERS AND FORMS

There is a rolling review programme to consider all communications with customers to ensure compliance with plain English requirements.

10. GROUP REPAIR SCHEME LIAISON

Staff at the Pear Tree Home Improvement Centre have improved communication with customers in general and those from minority ethnic groups in particular. Satisfaction levels with translation help have almost doubled in the last year.

11. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT TIMESCALES

The target to reduce the average time to deal with a Disabled Facilities Grant of 50 days by 2003 has already been exceeded, reduced by 72 days.

12. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT BUILDERS FORUM

The first meeting of the DFG Builders Forum will be held on 26 June 2002.

13. ADDRESSING THE INEQUALITIES OF ADAPTATION PROVISION BETWEEN TENURES

A joint working party was established in July 2001 and continues to review working practises for delivering adaptations across tenures. The working party is also reviewing the housing allocations process for disabled applicants.

14. LANDLORDS FORUM

All known landlords have received information and invitations to attend the Landlords Forum.

15. See above

16/17 EMPTY PROPERTIES

An Empty Property Officer has been appointed. The Empty Property Strategy is currently being reviewed and will be re-launched in September 2002.

18. HOUSING OPTIONS CENTRE SERVICES FOR 18-24 YEAR OLDS

A Joint Housing and Social Services review has been carried out of the care leaver protocol to take account of the Leaving Care Act. The implications of the impending Homelessness Act have been accounted for in ongoing service improvements.

20. ADVICE ON COUNSELLING TO CUSTOMERS WITH DEBT

A bid for funding to provide a Debt Welfare Advice Worker has been made under the Homeless Support Strategy.

21. REVIEWING THE HOUSING REGISTER

This has been completed successfully and have removed approximately 3000 cases from the waiting list.

22. ACCESS TO THE JOINT HOUSING REGISTER

Owing to the implementation of Choice Based Lettings, a fundamental review of the Joint Housing Register is in progress and the allocation policy has been partly reviewed in consultation with partner RSLs, Service Users and other Stakeholders.

24. ALLOCATIONS APPEAL PROCEDURE

The written procedure is in the process of being developed.

25. PROCESSING JOING HOUSING REGISTER APPLICATIONS

Owing to the introductions of Choice Based Lettings there is a backlog of housing applications, which is being addressed by the employment of temporary staff.

26. COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN JOINT HOUSING REGISTER PARTNERS

A working group has been established to co-ordinate procedure and resolve training and IT problems.

**Additional recommendations made by the Housing Inspectorate following their inspection of the service in 2001**

Removing Duplication of Inspection Work Associated with Disabled Facilities Grants

- All work in progress inspections are now carried out by the Architectural Design Division of Commercial Services thus eliminating duplication of work.

Assessing the Reasons for Empty Properties in the RSL Sector

- The assessment has been carried out in consultation with the RSL Liaison Group. The majority of RSL empty properties are in supported housing schemes and a full review of supported housing is currently in progress.