

## Good Practice Standards for the delivery of non-commissioned supported housing in Nottingham



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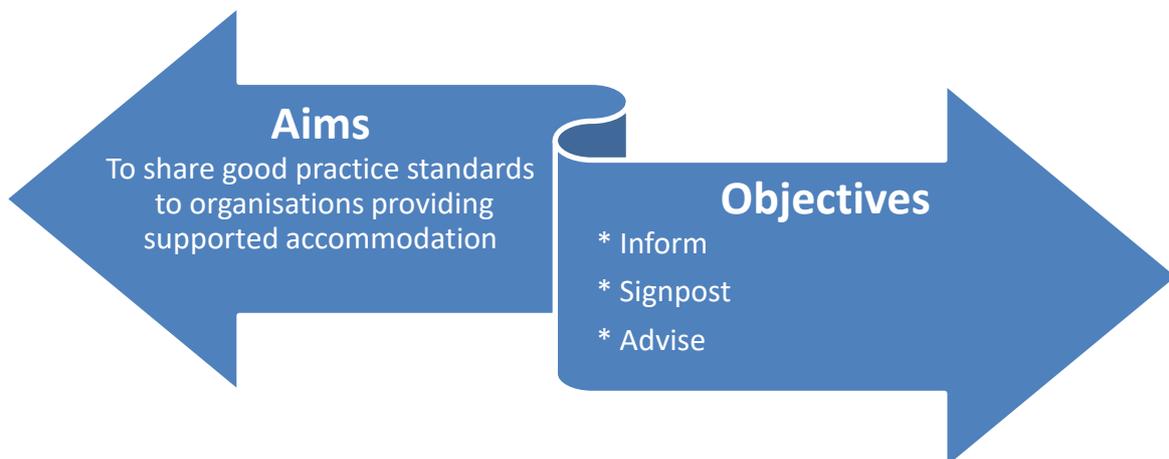
## Introduction

Nottingham City Council is aware of many organisations in the city that provide supported accommodation for citizens with varied support needs and backgrounds, and it is recognised that they fill a gap for citizens who have accommodation and support needs which may not be met by commissioned services.

The Council is committed to ensuring that citizens, who require accommodation including support, receive the highest possible standard of service and support to ease their transition to independence, as well as a responsibility to ensure that housing and support does not adversely impact on the City's neighbourhoods.

This Good Practice Standards document defines Nottingham City Council's principles and expectations of operational supported accommodation providers in the city. It is expected that any organisation, which is delivering this type of accommodation, work towards these standards.

The Council is keen to ensure that all potentially vulnerable citizens are able to access supported accommodation in which providers are able to deliver support and accommodation to a consistent standard, regardless of the organisation.



## CORE VALUES

Core values can help define a supported accommodation provider and establish their organisation's core offer and ethos to citizens. Values can include but are not limited to:

- Working in partnership with other support, voluntary and government agencies as relevant
- Offer support services in an anti-discriminatory manner, including (but not limited to) taking into account gender, race, age, culture, religion, belief, language spoken, sexual orientation (LGBTI) or disability
- Support services are to be delivered within the relevant legislation and best practice applicable to the client group, by suitably qualified and/or experienced staff or volunteers
- Promote and encourage the independence and wellbeing of the individual service user, taking account of his/her particular circumstances and chosen lifestyle
- Maintain the service user's right to privacy, dignity and confidentiality
- Ensure the health and safety of service users, staff and others, and the protection of vulnerable people from abuse
- Ensure service users have the right to participate in decisions about the service provided to them and be regularly consulted about whether it meets their needs
- Services should be delivered reliably and consistently. In the event of a disruptive event affecting the provider's ability to deliver the service, the provider shall take steps to ensure continuity of service delivery is achieved

## CITIZEN FOCUS

The service users must be at the centre of the individuals support / planning process. With this in mind, the following service standards are recommended as good practice:

### Service user standards

The service should have standards and expectations for residents that include:

- Rules for receiving visitors
- Behavioural contracts
- A complaints policy and procedure
- Living standards (e.g. communally)

All standards should form part of the tenant induction and be presented in a clear and easy to understand way.

### **Provider and Service user forums**

Organisations should provide regular forums to encourage a two-way communication channel between themselves and the service user/tenant. This is an opportunity for both the provider and the service user/tenant to raise any concerns and/or make suggestions about the service.

### **Information sharing**

Providers must have and strictly adhere to appropriate confidentiality and data sharing policies and protocols.

Information shared between services or agencies to facilitate the transition of a service user to other support services should be shared or transferred in a secure and confidential manner.

### **Language barriers**

Service users who have limited English or who experience verbal communication difficulties (e.g. BSL users) should be provided with appropriate mechanisms to enable their full participation in support sessions. This might include support from staff with appropriate language skills, community members, or translation services etc. Where friends or family members provide translation, consideration should be given to the appropriateness of this, particularly the need for confidentiality.

### **Substance misuse**

Clear and up to date policies and procedures regarding service user misuse of alcohol and/or substance, must be available. The supported accommodation provider should have a clear process to identify those using illegal substances or misusing alcohol and those who may be at risk of doing so.

Where alcohol or substance misuse is identified, the provider should endeavour to engage and support the service user, or refer into a treatment provider and engage with that provider to facilitate the support of the service user. Where this issue becomes a safeguarding concern, normal safeguarding policies and procedures apply.

## **REFERRALS**

Nottingham City Council has an expectation that providers of supported accommodation operating in the city should be offering their accommodation and support to Nottingham citizens with a local connection to Nottingham City.

Nottingham City Council deems citizens to have a local connection where they have lived, worked or had another significant connection within the City boundary for at least six out of the last 12 months, or three out of the last 5 years.

Where citizens have entered accommodation but it is established, they have a connection to another local authority; opportunities should be explored to re-establish that connection where reasonable.

## CAPACITY AND THROUGHPUT

The provider should work to enable citizens to regain independence and enter into a sustainable tenancy, or to access specialist supported accommodation services appropriate to their individual needs in the shortest time possible.

Short term supported accommodation should not be seen as a long-term housing solution and this ethos should be engendered amongst tenants.

## SUPPORT

Nottingham City Council generally expects that the services provided should enable citizens to regain independence and enter into a sustainable tenancy, and that the accommodation provided, creates an environment that supports and aids the independence of individuals.

Support to service users should be delivered by suitably qualified or experienced staff. Support should be at a level and for a duration that is sufficient to meet the needs of the citizen. Where voluntary staff assist in the delivery of support it would be usual that this was in conjunction with qualified or experienced staff.

Individual support plans should be used and tailored to the specific areas of support that each citizen requires that enable him/her to regain independence.

Specific areas of support should include (but are not limited to):

Developing domestic / life skills	Developing social skills / behaviour management
Managing finances and benefit claims	Emotional support, counselling and advice
Gaining access to other services	Sourcing permanent accommodation
Advice, advocacy, liaison and signposting	Establishing personal safety and security
Setting up and maintaining home or tenancy	Understanding and managing risk
Access to local community organisations	Establishing social contacts and activities
Supervision and monitoring of health and well being	Signposting to culturally specific health/ treatment services
Peer support and befriending	Relevant clientele orientated support mechanisms in place

Topics of discussions, and areas identified for support should be developed into a clearly documented and agreed 'care plan' or similar with agreement from the individual. Developed 'care plans' should take into consideration or complement any other plan or feedback pertinent to the individual. Plans should be reviewed at least weekly, or more regularly subject to the individuals need.

## **Resettlement support**

Ongoing support may not be required at the move-on address. However where appropriate, some of the below may apply or be required:

- Confirmation that the citizen has moved into the property (minimum one home visit)
- Ensuring that the property is set up to aid living sustainably with or without support
- Property provides a safe, healthy and secure environment
- Utilities are in place
- Applying for Universal Credit and any other eligible benefits
- Budgeting plans are in place
- Support sourcing furniture and essential items
- Assisting with information regarding local GPs
- Compile a local info pack – transport, community and leisure information
- Handover to any new support service including a handover meeting involving the client, out-going support worker and the incoming support worker
- Production of an after support plan that addresses individual needs
- Ensuring that key community support is in place dependent on need

The above objectives are designed to foster positive move-on outcomes for citizens that access supported accommodation in Nottingham. Resettlement support is also crucial to ensuring that:

- The experience of citizens using supported accommodation is positive
- The reduction of the risk of citizens encountering additional barriers
- A high proportion of people exiting services progress on to more independent/settled living arrangements
- A greater likelihood that settled arrangements will be sustained and fewer people will require a need for supported accommodation
- There is a greater likelihood of citizens accessing employment or training opportunities in the city

## **ACCOMMODATION**

The following standards are expected from every organisation:

- All privately rented/leased properties should provide a safe and healthy environment for any potential occupier or their visitors. The standard of assessment for properties is the Housing Health and Safety Rating System and as a landlord or lessee, you must be familiar with this.

- Where necessary the property is appropriately licensed under the Housing Act 2004.

There are three schemes operating within Nottingham City:

- Selective Licensing which requires all privately rented properties within certain areas of the city to be licensed;
- Additional Licensing which requires smaller Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) (including section 257 HMOs, that is buildings divided into flats before 1991) in certain areas of the city to be licensed;
- Mandatory Licensing which requires all HMOs with five or more unrelated persons who share amenities to be licensed

Further details on each of the three schemes can be located on the Nottingham City Council website and applications can be completed online.

<https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/information-for-residents/housing/private-sector-housing/>

- Accommodation has relevant safety certificates such as gas & electrical safety, automatic fire detection, emergency escape, lighting test certificates and for new tenancies an Energy Performance Certificate
- Where the property is operating as a house in multiple occupation, the property is being appropriately managed in line with the Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation Regulations 2006 and 2007
- There are appropriate management arrangements in place to deal with both the persons occupying the premises and the property, this would include appropriate financial arrangements to deal with any items of disrepair
- Ensuring that those accommodated are suitable to reside together in harmony i.e. not mixing families with vulnerable singles
- Wherever possible, organisations should specialise in managing a particular specialised groups e.g. ex-offenders or those with mental health issues
- Continually risk assess the accommodation needs of residents on a monthly basis and to work to minimise the likelihood of lifestyle conflict
- Ensuring that all pre-tenancy documents are provided and in order

## TENANCY AGREEMENT

Tenancy agreements or licence agreements are a contract between you as a Landlord or managing agent and the tenant. Correct agreements set out the rights of both the tenant and landlord therefore negating any ambiguity of rights etc.

These should include:

- The tenant's and landlord's name and the address of the property which is being let
- the date the tenancy began
- the duration of the tenancy, that is, whether it terminates on a certain date

- the amount and frequency of rent payable, payment date and when it can be increased. The agreement could also state what the payments include e.g. council tax
- whether the landlord will provide any services e.g. laundry, maintenance of common parts or meals. It should be clear whether the tenant will be charged for these services and how much they will cost
- the length of notice which the tenant and landlord need to give if the tenancy is to be terminated. (Note that there are statutory rules about how much notice should be given and these will depend on the type of tenancy and why it is due to terminate)

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/renting-a-home/tenancy-agreements/>

[http://england.shelter.org.uk/legal/security\\_of\\_tenure/basic\\_principles\\_security\\_of\\_tenure/the\\_tenancy\\_agreement](http://england.shelter.org.uk/legal/security_of_tenure/basic_principles_security_of_tenure/the_tenancy_agreement)

## **ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

Anti-social behaviour covers a wide range of unacceptable activity that causes harm to an individual, to their community or to their environment. This could be an action by someone else that leaves you feeling alarmed, harassed or distressed. It also includes fear of crime or concern for public safety, public disorder or public nuisance.

Anti-social behaviour can manifest itself in a number of ways; some of the following can be deemed as ASB:

- Music and speech from a stereo or television operated at excessive volume
- Shouting and raised voices for prolonged periods
- Dogs barking for prolonged periods
- Dealing or buying drugs, from or surrounding the premises
- Street drinking
- Hate crime (religion / race / disability / transgender / sexual orientation / Misogyny)
- Violence, threats of violence or abuse either physically or emotionally towards anyone

It is the expectation that any organisation or Landlord managing supported accommodation acts reasonably and has consideration for neighbours and the local neighbourhood. Landlords or organisations managing supported accommodation should discuss with tenants their responsibility to act in a responsible manner and that any acts of ASB will not be tolerated.

Anti-social Behaviour Good practice advice for private sector Landlords:

<https://www.dashservices.org.uk/Media/Default/Docs/landlord%20library/ASB%20Guidance%20V3.1.pdf>

<https://www.nottinghamshire.police.uk/site-page/antisocial-behaviour>

## Hours of Service

Service users should have access to support staff during the day e.g. 9-5. An out of hours contact should be made available to service users in cases of emergencies.

## PARTNERSHIP WORKING

It is envisaged that organisations support the transition of all service users during planned moves from the supported accommodation to other accommodation e.g. private rented accommodation, Social housing (Local Authority or Registered Provider), Residential Care or returning to a previous home, etc.

During transition periods into more permanent accommodation, services should work collaboratively and openly with any agency engaging with the service user. This might include other support services, specialist and second stage supported accommodation services, e.g. health service providers, and Local Authority services. Pertinent information about the service user's support needs (as appropriate with respect to confidentiality) should be shared to help ensure a positive and smooth transition to any new support or housing setting.

Effective partnerships must be maintained with any health, mental health, drug and alcohol cessation and support services as well as with all agencies of the criminal justice system. In keeping with this, these agencies and services should be allowed appropriate access with reasonable notice where possible, to the supported accommodation premises in order to carry out any duties in relation to service users residing in the accommodation. This should include allowing such agencies/services access to appropriate private meeting spaces to allow the service user's to maintain confidentiality.

## Duty to refer

Within the Homelessness Reduction Act 2018, a new duty to refer by public authorities was introduced in October 2018. The duty requires public authorities' bodies to identify and refer a service user who is homeless or may be threatened with homelessness, to a local housing authority.

Nottingham City Council will accept referrals from any agency or organisation that is working with a household whom may be homelessness or threatened with homelessness. Therefore, we encourage referrals to be forwarded to Nottingham City Council's Housing Aid Department at the earliest possible opportunity, with the households consent.

<http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/information-for-residents/housing/homelessness/housing-aid>

## SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION

Nottingham City Council strongly recommends you take the opportunity to download and take into consideration the procedures and guidance available on the website via:

<https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/information-for-residents/health-and-social-care/adult-social-care/adult-safeguarding/adult-safeguarding-procedures>

In addition, providers should put the following in place:

- Staff and volunteers should attend the appropriate level of safeguarding training
- All safeguarding referrals must be logged and outcomes recorded
- The provider must establish internal safeguarding policy & procedures as appropriate to the size of the organisation
- The provider must have specific policies and procedures relating to domestic and sexual violence. This should include the practice of direct enquiry with all service users
- Nottingham City Council requires providers to co-operate with investigations of abuse including appropriate representation at City Council safeguarding case conferences and submit action plans in response to recommendations arising from safeguarding investigations as required
- Nottingham City Council requires providers to contribute to all major incidents which require multi-agency review

## **MANAGEMENT**

### **Health & Safety**

The service provider shall be responsible for risk assessments, hazard control and other health and safety matters affecting its staff in the delivery of services and service users residing in supported accommodation. The service provider shall do all that is reasonably practicable to prevent personal injury and damage to property and to protect staff, service users and others from hazards.

The provider must have appropriate policies in relation to the following:

- Fire safety
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH)
- Manual Handling
- First Aid / accidents and injuries
- Substance misuse

Fire Safety is particularly important and more information on the requirements can be located:

[http://www.cieh.org/library/Knowledge/Housing/National\\_fire\\_safety\\_guidance\\_08.pdf](http://www.cieh.org/library/Knowledge/Housing/National_fire_safety_guidance_08.pdf)

### **Workforce**

Support workers and volunteers engaging directly with service users should be appropriately experienced and skilled. They should have the resilience to persist in the support of citizens who may present behavioural challenges and the ability to create appropriate boundaries and set expectations.

The service should be delivered by staff with local knowledge including (but not limited to) knowledge of access routes to settled accommodation, local agencies delivering support and housing services and health and social care services in the city.

The provider must hold a record confirming that all members of staff and volunteers have relevant Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificates, is in line with standard practice for those working with vulnerable adults. DBS certificates must be vetted to ensure that no unacceptable risks are identified. All DBS documentation should be reviewed annually, but not left longer than three years.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/basic-checks>

## **Staff Recruitment**

The service provider must ensure that staff recruitment is compliant with the Equalities Act 2010.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

## **Staff Training**

The service provider shall ensure that every person employed or volunteering in and about the provision of the services is at all times properly and sufficiently trained to carry out their role. Records of staff training should be kept accurate and up to date.

Example of training areas to be covered:

- Day to day operational tasks
- Safeguarding policies & implementation
- Substance misuse policies and implementation
- Drug over-dose awareness and response
- Suicide awareness
- Health and safety, risk assessment, legal framework
- Customer care, dealing with complaints according to policy and standards
- Disability awareness, Disability Discrimination Act, Equalities issues

## **GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS**

Under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), the data protection principles set out the main responsibilities for organisations.

Article 5 of the GDPR requires that personal data shall be:

- a) processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to individuals;
- b) collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a

manner that is incompatible with those purposes; further processing for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes shall not be considered to be incompatible with the initial purposes;

c) adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed;

d) accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date; every reasonable step must be taken to ensure that personal data that are inaccurate, having regard to the purposes for which they are processed, are erased or rectified without delay;

e) kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data are processed; personal data may be stored for longer periods insofar as the personal data will be processed solely for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes, subject to implementation of the appropriate technical and organisational measures required by the GDPR in order to safeguard the rights and freedoms of individuals;

f) processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data, including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures.

Article 5(2) requires that: “the controller shall be responsible for, and be able to demonstrate, compliance with the principles”.

Further information is available via: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>

## Useful Links:

### **National Statement of Expectations for Supported Housing (England)**

A useful guidance document published in October 2020. This sets out the Government’s vision for planning, commissioning and delivery of supported housing. It brings together standards and best practice for accommodation to ensure quality, oversight and value for money. The guidance is non-statutory but it is hoped it will be clear on ‘what good looks like’ and be a useful reference point for ways of working and standards. The guidance particularly emphasises joined up working and collaboration between all partners involved in the delivery of supported housing. This Good Practice Standards Guide is included within their document as a Case Study.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supported-housing-national-statement-of-expectations/supported-housing-national-statement-of-expectations>

### **The Ideal Property Guide**

A useful guidance document in relation to the responsibilities of an organisation managing a property.

<http://www.dashservices.org.uk/Media/Default/Docs/landlord%20library/Ideal%20Property-1.pdf>

## Housing Health & Safety Rating System

The housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS) is a risk-based evaluation tool to help identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. This link provides a shorter overview of the HHSRS. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/9425/150940.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/9425/150940.pdf)

In addition to this, you can find information about your duties as a Landlord on the Council's website:

<http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/environmental-health-and-safer-housing/private-sector-housing/>

Alternatively, in the following landlord handbook:

[http://www.anuk.org.uk/ANUK/media/ANUK\\_Resources/Handbook/anuk\\_handbook\\_2012\\_web.pdf](http://www.anuk.org.uk/ANUK/media/ANUK_Resources/Handbook/anuk_handbook_2012_web.pdf)

## The Wellbeing Hub

The Wellbeing Hub provides free, confidential support and advice to people seeking support for mental health, drugs or alcohol use, housing and employment.

<https://www.nottinghamwellbeinghub.org/>

## The Lion

Lion is an online service directory designed to help people find information about a whole range of organizations and services. The website is compatible with smart phones and tablets, so you can find information when you are on the move.

<https://www.asklion.co.uk/kb5/nottingham/directory/home.page>

## East Midlands Property Owners Ltd

EMPO is a not-for-profit Landlords Association that represents the need of Residential Landlords across the East Midlands. EMPO works with Government, Local Authorities and Industry to provide the best deal possible for independent landlords in this region

<https://empo.co.uk/>

## Hate Crime Reporting

A hate crime is any incident where someone is targeted because of his or her identity. Hate crime can take any shape and isn't always illegal behaviour, but it is always motivated by prejudice

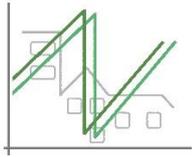
<https://www.nottinghamshire.police.uk/hatecrime>

## Housing Aid

Housing Aid can be contacted via: [housingaid@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:housingaid@nottinghamcity.gov.uk) or on 0115 8763300 / Fax: 0115 8761214

<http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/information-for-residents/housing/homelessness/housing-aid/>

## Nottingham Nouse



Nottingham Nouse is an online platform for all partners and interested stakeholders to get involved in the local housing conversation in Nottingham. Facilitated by Nottingham City Council's Housing Strategy & Partnerships team, Nottingham Nouse has its own Twitter and Facebook pages for posts on local and national housing news, events and intelligence.

### **Safeguarding Training**

The Council currently offers two training courses – Signs of Safety awareness Workshops and Safeguarding Children and Young People from Child Sexual Exploitation training.  
<https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/information-for-residents/children-and-families/nottingham-city-safeguarding-children-board/safeguarding-training/>

### **Safeguarding Adults**

Nottingham City Safeguarding Adults Board (NCSAB) is the statutory forum for agreeing how services, agencies, organisations and the community work together to safeguard adults at risk of harm and abuse.  
<http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/information-for-residents/health-and-social-care/adult-social-care/adult-safeguarding/>

Nottingham City Council is not liable and or responsible for the contents of external links