Everyone should have a home

Raising the standard of temporary accommodation for children and young people

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Overview

- Setting the scene
- The case for a minimum temporary accommodation standards
- Progress so far
- What could the standards look like?
- How to take forward raising the standard of temporary accommodation?
Temporary accommodation in Scotland

- 10,278 households in TA on 31 December 2009
  - including nearly 6,000 children
- Rise in use of TA
  - a 160% rise in last 10 years
  - 3,864 households in TA in 1999
- People are spending longer in TA
  - councils taking longer to discharge their duties to homeless households
  - 23 weeks from application to discharge in 07-08, 17 weeks in 06-07
No. of households in temporary accommodation 1999-2009

- **as at 31 March 1999**
- **as at 31 March 2004**
- **as at 31 March 2009**

- **Other**
- **B & B**
- **Hostel**
- **Social sector**
No. of households with children in temporary accommodation 2006-09

- Mar-06: 5200 (2785 Other households, 2415 Families with children)
- Mar-07: 5483 (3094 Other households, 2389 Families with children)
- Mar 08: 5547 (3988 Other households, 1559 Families with children)
- Mar-09: 6228 (3825 Other households, 2403 Families with children)
- Dec-09: 6683 (3595 Other households, 3088 Families with children)
The case for TA standards

- Inconsistent standard of temporary accommodation
  - Provide a minimum level to ensure consistent quality of housing
  - Outline what tenants can expect and what their rights are

- Consolidate existing standards and good practice
  - Existing standards are mainly physical or safety related

- More people are spending longer in TA

- Pressure will continue with meeting 2012 commitment
Progress so far

- CIH survey (2008) 97% of housing professionals are in favour of standards

- Potential to use section 7 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
  - introduced to ensure minimum rights for people in hostels and others in insecure accommodation
  - no progress since consultation in 2004

- Shelter with CIH are looking at taking forward standards

- Consulting with families and young people on what these standards should look like
Views of young people and families in TA

“...You need to be able to lock the door and know you are safe. When you arrive someone needs to help you settle in and tell you the rules” Young person in a hostel

“Living in the temporary flat was unbearable... the walls were all mouldy, the toilet floor was soaking, there were slugs coming through the cupboard. The weans just hated it, they were never well. I had them at the doctor’s all the time. There was no central heating, just one electric fire in the living room” Grandmother who cares for grandchildren
What would standards look like?

- They need to be realistic and achievable but yet meaningful for the service user
- Physical, service, proximity and management standards
- Introduced in stages e.g. a core group of initial standards followed by secondary ones
- **Physical**
  Clean, safe, secure, comply with fire regs. etc.
  Sufficient bedrooms, with communal living space, cooking and laundry facilities and own bathrooms, space for homework and play
  Meet any disability requirements
  Agreed notice period before landlord can access
  24 hour access for household; easy access for people with small children i.e. pushchair access

- **Location/proximity**
  Near GP, school/college, support networks, work etc for ALL in household
  Dispersed TA across local authority so a mix across area

- **Service**
  Assessment and regular review of all household member’s needs with referrals to relevant services
  Support to access relevant information and services
  Regular and sustained home visits

- **Management**
  Regular reviews – include tenant’s views
  Repair procedures and timeline
  Written agreement-landlord and tenant
  Agreed notice period + clear guidelines
  Storage of possessions
  Handover procedures when a move
Summary

- We cannot move people out of TA as quickly as we would like so need to ensure there is a consistent level of quality across TA
- There is an opportunity to take forward a minimum standard using section 7 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
- Housing professionals are in favour of standards
- We need to look at what these standards would contain
Over to you - group discussion

To improve the experience of TA for families and young people....

1. What should be the priorities of TA standards, keeping in mind that they need to be realistic but yet meaningful to service users?

2. How can the standards be best implemented?

3. What will the challenges be?