

Govan Law Centre

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The Prevention of
Homelessness Project

The Prevention Of Homelessness Project (s11 pilot project)

Set up by:

- Govan Law Centre
- Govan Money Matters
- South West Community Health and Care Partnership

Funded by

- Glasgow Homelessness Partnership

Section 11 of the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003

Will require all Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), Private Sector Landlords and Mortgage Lenders to give notice of new eviction proceedings to the Local Authority

What does the legislation do?

Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003

- Enables the local authority to consider the assistance which could be provided to prevent eviction
- Provides local authorities with an opportunity to prevent homelessness by directing the tenant or homeowner to the appropriate legal and housing advice
- Provides the tenant or homeowner with knowledge of his/ her legal rights which they can use to prevent eviction or repossession

Project: Key Aims & Objectives

- To prevent homelessness and repeat homelessness
- To halt evictions and repossessions
- To enable its clients to meet their financial responsibilities through affordable repayment plans
- Maximise income with entitlement to benefits system
- To provide support, assistance and advocacy
- To provide comprehensive high quality legal and money advice
- To enable its clients to know their rights and give them the power to act on these rights

What the project offers

Provides:

- Legal advice and representation
- Money advice
- Coordination, on going Support, Advocacy and access to relevant services
- For:
 - Tenants of RSLs
 - Owner-occupiers
 - Tenants of Private Landlords
 - Those experiencing or threatened with homelessness

How the Section 11 Pilot Works

- Strategic referral system – developed in partnership with SW CHCP (local Authority) WRO's
- Development of Local Processes – H/A's & LHO's
- Early Intervention at NPRP stage – High volume of urgent work: Court Callings, Evictions (granted, extracted, eviction date set)
- Prioritised referrals (NPRP) re SW procedures
- Other Referral routes – CCT's, other agencies, client

Legal Representation and Advice

Govan Law Centre

- Urgent appointment within 24 hours
- Provides advice and representation at all stages of the eviction or repossession proceedings
- Halts evictions and repossessions
- Ensures clients know their legal rights and can act on these rights
- Negotiates reasonable, affordable payments with landlords and lenders according to the statutory requirements

Money Advice Govan Money Matters

- Quick access to Specialist Benefits and Money Advice Services and advisors (urgent cases given immediate appointments)
- Linking in with legal & court work which is time limited
- Specialised Service: Welfare Benefits (applications, appeals, tribunals and commissioners level work)
- Specialised Service: Money Advice, Bankruptcy, Protected Trust Deeds, Mortgage to Rent applications (Communities Scotland) and full range of options for client
- Specialist Advisor – A8 & A2 Nationals and BME advisor

Key successes

- Over 600 RSL tenants' eviction proceedings halted
- More than 60 owner-occupiers' repossessions halted
- Over 100 private landlord tenants' unlawful evictions halted
- Around 1400 referrals to Money Advice and other agencies

Emerging Issues (Clients)

- Vulnerable Clients
- Private Lets
- Mortgage Lenders

Emerging Issues (Project)

- Further development of strategic referral system
- Partnership & planning (AIG, HLG Local Processes)
- Policy & practice (local & national)
- Development of SW POH Steering Group
- Evaluation of Project

Other Issues

- Caseload – identifies work never addressed before
- Section 11 – becoming statutory requirement
- Resources and Funding

Useful Websites

- www.scotland.gov.uk/publications/2007/05/09164209/0
- www.govanlc.com
- www.statutelaw.gov.uk
- www.shelter.org.uk