



Move on and Resettlement Procedure

Ref No: Version 6

Date Approved: 23 November 2020

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In consultation with: Operational teams, Customers

Equality Impact Assessment Date: 23 November 2020

Review date: 23 November 2023

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1. Procedural Context

Our services provide people with the accommodation and support they need to recover from homelessness. Positive move-on and resettlement is essential for customers to ensure individuals don't become dependent on support services and are able to go on to lead fulfilling lives. There is no 'one size' fits all approach to resettlement and move-on which means we should be flexible, psychologically-informed and person-centred in our own approach to ensure we are supporting individuals in the most effective way to meet their own needs and aspirations.

All Procedures referred to for Care and Support can be found on the RIC here:
Central Services > Care and Support > Procedures

2. Application

This procedure mainly applies to Riverside Supported Housing services where there is an expectation for customers to move on into more independent living.

All colleagues should read and understand this procedure for information and guidance on supporting customers to move on and resettle into independent accommodation.

3. What is Resettlement?

Resettlement is the process whereby a customer moves on from temporary housing, supported housing or rough sleeping into more settled accommodation. In line with our person-centred approach to support, what this resettlement process looks like depends on each individual, what accommodation and support they feel they need and their specific circumstances. Some examples include:

Independent Accommodation	Where customers may feel ready to manage a tenancy in social/Local Authority housing or the private rental sector. This may include some level of ongoing floating support if people feel they need it, as well as Keeping In Touch support from Riverside.
Step Down Accommodation	Where customers may want more independence than a traditional 'hostel type setting' can provide, but may not feel entirely ready to stop all existing support they receive. Step Down accommodation acts as a bridge between 24/7 services and living independently, by providing accommodation with visiting support (usually from a nearby 24/7 service).
Housing First	Where customers are able to move on from rough sleeping / homelessness straight into an independent tenancy, provided a specialist Housing First service is in place delivering an intense, long term package of support.

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Retirement Living	Some customers find that more housing options become available to them once they meet the age criteria for Retirement Living accommodation and may prefer to move from supported accommodation into Retirement Living accommodation.
Floating or Dispersed Support	Some customers may find that, after a period of support, they are doing well enough to cope on their own in their tenancy and so move-on simply means support tapering off.
Care services	Over time, some customers may find that their health has deteriorated and may move on to a dedicated Extra Care / Care service that provides them with the care and adaptations they need to live as independently as possible.
Other supported accommodation	Supported Accommodation can, in itself, be a positive move-on destination. Some customers may find that they need more intensive and/or specialist support than they are currently getting, or simply a different environment. For example, people with Learning Disabilities might find that they prefer living with people with similar life experiences in a specialist supported environment. Where a customer is moving to an environment that is right for them and meets their needs more effectively, this is undoubtedly a positive move.

4. Our approaches

When do we start talking about resettlement?

Most of our supported services are, by their very nature, temporary. People typically come to us at a crossroads in their life and our role is to support them to navigate an often complicated journey from homelessness to a more stable, fulfilling life.

Move-on and resettlement should be discussed as soon as possible in a customer's stay with us and planning for the future should be part of every aspect of the support planning process. Equally, there may be a number of practical barriers which can be relatively easily overcome from the outset, for example:

Local Connection - customer hasn't lived in the area long enough

- ✓ Support to evidence local connection
- ✓ Look at other options, e.g. Private Rented Sector
- ✓ Armed Forces Covenant; veterans may automatically gain local connection.

Tenancy History - customer has past evictions for arrears, ASB etc.

- ✓ Setting up payment plans
- ✓ Register on Choice Based Lettings and ensure correct priority banding.

Poor Credit History - customer unable to access private rental sector

- ✓ Register with Xperian Rental Exchange so that rent payments appear on credit reports
- ✓ Refer to local Money Advice Service/Citizens' Advice Bureau or Riverside's Income Maximisation team which can be done by Service Managers through CRM.

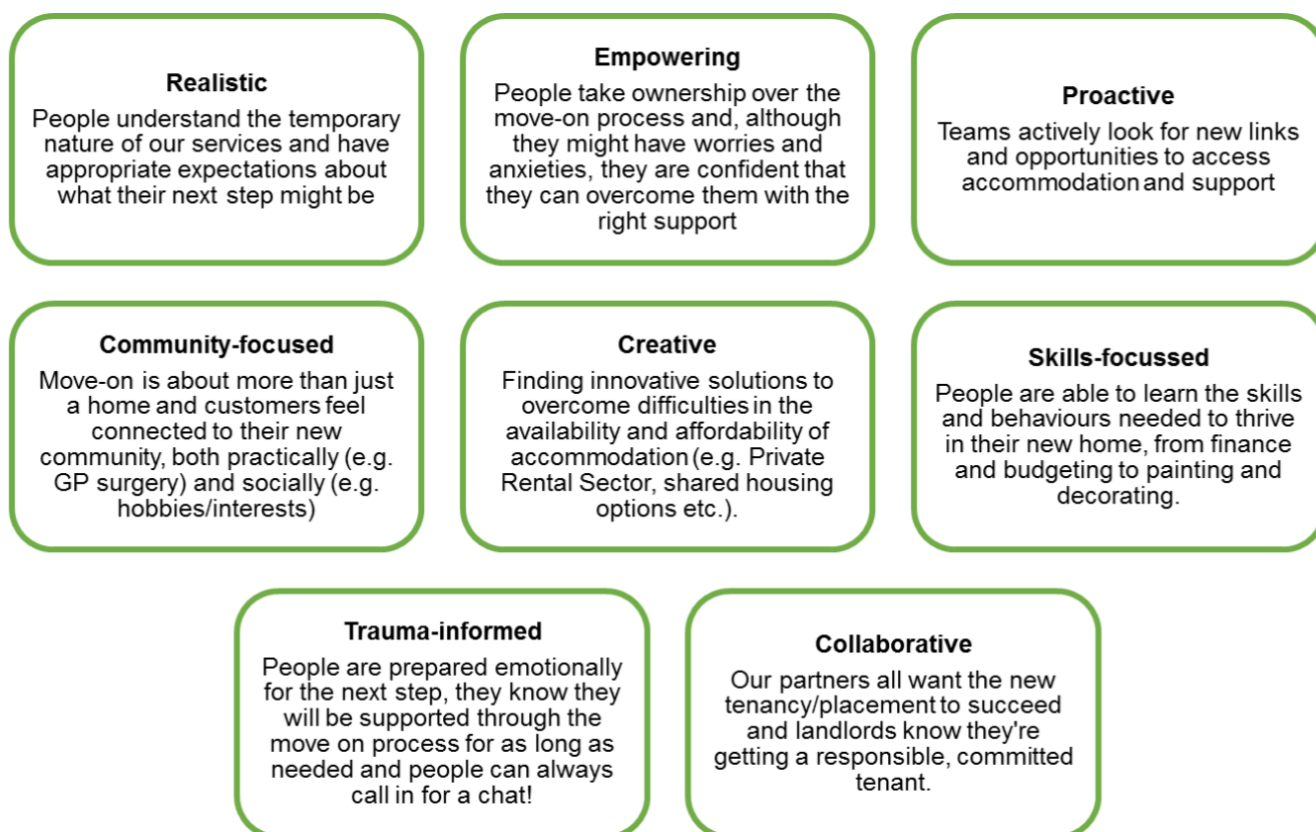
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Affordability - rent levels are above Local Housing Allowance

- ✓ Identify and support any aspirations for Employment, Training and Education
- ✓ Explore other options, e.g. house share, looking further afield etc.

We acknowledge that some customers may take a while to trust us or (in some cases) even accept that they need support at all. Early conversations should therefore focus on encouraging customers to picture where they might like to move on to. Once people know where they want to get to, support sessions can then be framed around how we can go about achieving these goals together.

We believe the best approaches to supporting people to move on positively are:



Move-on and Resettlement should be an entirely person-centred process. If customers feel that they are being pushed towards an option they are not entirely comfortable with, they are unlikely to make a success of their tenancy.

5. Resettlement Options

We recognise that both the affordability and availability of housing are some of the biggest challenges to supporting customers to move on successfully, and this is a situation that is unlikely to change in the near future. Colleagues should therefore be aware of the different resettlement options for their service and be creative in finding solutions for customers beyond the obvious. Ideally, any routes should meet the varying needs of the customers, for example:

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- Social housing (council or housing associations)
- Private rented sector (including shared houses or 'Houses in Multiple Occupation' - HMO)
- Residential detox and rehabilitation
- Supported Housing (including specialist provision e.g. rehabilitation or refuge)
- Retirement Living
- Reconnection, e.g. with family (with support)

Colleagues should work with customers supporting them to identify their preferred option, and act as a facilitator to make this happen whilst ensuring customers are making informed, realistic choices and managing their expectations appropriately.

Support teams working with customers should:

Be objective

- Try not to let any personal views get in the way of people's move on ambitions, but provide practical, realistic advice.

Be knowledgeable

- Know and keep up to speed on your local authority's housing allocation policy and how this applies to supported housing.

Know what's out there

- Develop your knowledge of the availability, affordability and suitability of accommodation for your customers across all tenure types.

Be creative

- There may be options that customers haven't thought of.
- E.g. maybe they get along with someone in the hostel in a similar situation – would a shared property work well?

Internal move-on options

As an existing provider of social housing across over 160 local authorities we are well placed to provide move-on accommodation options for care and support customers within our own social housing stock, even where a customer wants to relocate to another part of the country for example.

We recognise the work that takes place to support customers prepare for move-on and where they are ready to make that next step, utilising our own social housing stock can be a good option for all parties. This provides the customer with a home of their own within an organisation they already have links with and provides our social housing colleagues with a reliable customer who we have worked closely with to prepare them for independent living.

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An Internal Move On Accommodation process has been agreed with an accompanying user guide for colleagues to use, where they are interested in exploring this option on behalf of a customer.

For further information on how to make referrals please see the Internal Move On Accommodation User Guide which can be found on the RIC:

Service Areas > Social Housing Shared Services > Allocations and Lettings > Procedural User Guides > Internal Move On Accommodation User Guide

6. Affordable rents and housing allowances

Colleagues should support customers to understand the local housing allowance in their area to ensure the affordability of rent costs.

Local Housing Allowance (LHA) determines how much housing benefit people are entitled to when renting in the private rental sector. LHA rates vary depending on:

- Where you live
- How many bedrooms you need

There are five different rates per area:

- Shared Accommodation rate
- One bedroom rate
- Two bedroom rate
- Three bedroom rate
- Four bedroom rate

The four bedroom rate is the maximum even if you need more bedrooms for your household. To find your local housing allowance rate please follow the link below:
<https://lha-direct.voa.gov.uk/search.aspx>

Everyone under 35 will only be entitled to the Shared Accommodation Rate unless they are eligible for an exemption. Examples of exemptions include Care Leavers (until they turn 22)

Similarly, customers may be liable to pay council tax in their new home, which should be taken into account when assessing affordability, although some exemptions/discounts are available, e.g. single households.

7. Starting Work

Employment is one of the most sustainable routes out of homelessness for many people. We support all of our customers to access employment. Getting a job is a positive step forward for customers, but it can create challenges for people leaving supported accommodation. An increase in people's income can significantly reduce their benefit entitlement, meaning they have to pay more of the rental costs living in supported accommodation which can be expensive. Colleagues should act quickly when people gain employment to assess their housing benefit entitlement and, if necessary, support people to move into affordable accommodation as a matter of urgency.

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8. Grants and Funding

If a property doesn't feel like a home, people are more likely to abandon it. Colleagues should encourage and support customers to search for grants and local charities which may help them fund essential household items for their new accommodation, e.g. furnishings and decoration. Colleagues should understand what the local authority and local area has to offer in terms of resettlement support and build partnerships to support customers with this.

Colleagues can use different services / websites available such as the [Turn2us Grants search tool](#) to find any grants which meet their criteria.

Information on grant options can also be accessed at local Citizen's Advice Bureau and colleagues should contact the relevant Local Authority, as they may have funding available locally to support move-on.

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)

A DHP is an extra payment which could support customers if they are struggling to pay their rent or if these payments do not cover all of their rent. DHPs can help pay the tenancy deposit on a new home or the rent in advance, only if the customer is receiving housing benefit where they live now. The customer would not need to repay the DHP.

Colleagues can support customers to apply for a DHP from their local council and ask for a claim form. Search by postcode for your closest local council to apply to and download an application form by using the following search tool:
<https://england.shelter.org.uk/advice-tools/tools/6/search?postcode>

Church Homeless Trust (CHT)

We work in partnership with CHT, who are a grant-giving organisation helping homeless people to rebuild their lives. CHT provide grants to Riverside customers for resettlement which can be used to purchase furniture and household essentials when a customer moves on from supported housing.

Other funding available

For further information about CHT, as well other charitable organisations offering hardship funds to customers please visit the following RIC page:

Central Services > Care and Support > Grants and Funds for Customers

9. What can customers do to ensure positive move-on

Colleagues should empower customers to understand their goals and start working towards them. There are a range of tools and resources available on the RIC for colleagues to be able to support customers in this area and help prepare them for move-on. This includes our Library of Targeted Support (LoTS) 'Move-on and Resettlement' module as well as other supporting documents which customers can

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use to prepare for move-on and evidence the work they have done to achieve this. These can be found on the RIC here:

Central Services > Care and Support > Supported > Supported Housing Strategy, PIEs and Library of Targeted Support > Move-on and Resettlement

The table below sets out a range of key things customers can do to manage the process:

<p>✓ Keep to the terms of the Licence/tenancy agreement</p>	<p>One of the key functions of our accommodation-based services is in providing customers with the opportunity to learn how to manage a tenancy, within a safe environment and elastic tolerance culture. Colleagues should support customers to avoid the behaviours leading to any breach of their tenure. See Riverside’s License and Tenancy Support Procedure for more information.</p>
<p>✓ Get Tenancy Ready</p>	<p>When allocating properties, landlords have to weigh up how ‘risky’ they think a tenant is going to be, e.g. the likelihood of them being a reliable tenant and paying their rent on time as opposed to causing any problems. As a result, they might be risk averse and have conscious or unconscious bias towards people with a known history of homelessness or risky behaviour. This creates stigma against people with a homeless background and can be tough to break down.</p> <p>Knowing where landlords are coming from can provide customers with a route into accommodation by demonstrating exactly why they are a less ‘risky’ tenant than someone the landlord knows relatively little about. There are tools available on the RIC to support them to do this, e.g. LoTS modules and other supporting documents.</p> <p>Customers can also ask colleagues to provide a letter confirming that they are ready for independent living and setting out what measures will be in place to ensure they are able to move on successfully e.g. follow-on / floating support.</p>
<p>✓ Keep staff in the loop</p>	<p>The sooner we know when customers have received an offer of accommodation, the sooner we can provide the appropriate support to ensure move on is a success. Customers might want support staff to accompany them on a viewing which can be arranged where possible.</p> <p>Prior to any viewings, colleagues should support customers to ensure any property is affordable / or within the local housing allowance of which they are eligible for, and research the area and accessibility prior to attending the viewing. Customers should be encouraged to accept an offer of accommodation where it suits their needs and requirements, as multiple refusals can sometimes result in</p>

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	<p>an individual being penalised by the local authority, e.g. their banding being downgraded.</p> <p>Colleagues should also accompany the customer to sign up for a property where possible to help negotiate a suitable moving in date allowing them sufficient time to pack their belongings.</p> <p>If a customer accepts an offer for accommodation, colleagues should then work with them to make applications to any charitable trusts or local organisations to help secure grant funding to make their new accommodation a home.</p>
<p>✓ Set up and notify relevant suppliers</p>	<p>Colleagues should support customers to set up and notify any relevant suppliers, e.g. set up gas and electrics, notify council tax and inform any other relevant agencies / support services of their new address. For more information and guidance on what individuals need to do when moving home, see the Move on and Resettlement page on the RIC.</p> <p>Central Services > Care and Support > Supported > Supported Housing Strategy, PIEs and Library of Targeted Support > Move-on and Resettlement.</p>

10. Keeping in Touch

When the service comes to an end, we can keep in touch with our customers until they feel ready to relinquish support. This varies from person to person and customers should feel able to contact the service with a question after they have left. We should recognise that relinquishing support can be a big step for people and that this change can be traumatic. Follow on support should taper off gradually as people get used to their newfound independence.

Where people need ongoing support, we should make appropriate referrals to floating support and/or local befriending services prior to moving in, so that there is no unnecessary gap in support. We should also make it clear that they will always be welcome at the service for a cup of tea, ad hoc support, as a volunteer or as a lived experience worker.

11. Closing a customer's account

When a customer moves out of a Riverside property there are a number of administrative actions which must be taken. These are detailed in the table below:

Action	Responsibility
Complete room check with the customer as part of the booking out process and ensure any appropriate forms are completed.	Support Team (e.g. project assistant / housing officer)
Close down customer's account on Open Housing / SP Provider, adding a forwarding address where available. This should be done within one working	Support Team (e.g. project assistant / housing officer)

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day of the customer leaving and the date should be the last fully chargeable day.	
Contact the Income Team to advise them that the customer has moved out.	Support Team (e.g. project assistant / housing officer)
Add a closing note onto Open Housing for the attention of the Former Tenant Arrears team where appropriate. Where a forwarding address hasn't been added, liaise with the relevant service to try and confirm this.	Income Team
Ensure any final Housing Benefit invoices are approved and email Housing Benefit team to confirm when the customer moved out (including a forwarding address where available).	Income Team
If it is a transfer ensure any miscoding or balance transfers are complete.	Income Team
Where appropriate, send final balance letter to customer for any outstanding arrears. Note – this should only be done if the account is fully up to date with HB and there are still outstanding arrears within the initial 8 week period.	Income Team
Arrange re-payment of any customer credit on their account where necessary.	Income Team

It is essential that Support and Income teams work together at this stage to ensure any relevant accounts are closed correctly and any follow up work, e.g. final rent / arrears collection can be completed.

12. Continuous Improvement and other opportunities

Move on can also be an opportunity for reflection and continuous improvement. We know that:

- Services that have a high level of co-production and customer involvement are often better equipped to meet people's needs.
- Many customers, after moving on, want to 'give back' to the services that helped them recover from homelessness in the first place.
- People with lived experience who have 'been there', are experts in support services and offer new perspectives on how we can support people to move on more effectively.
- Employment, education and training are three of the most powerful enablers of sustainable move on and resettlement.
- In many areas of the country, we may struggle to recruit people, especially to entry level roles in areas with high costs of living.

Colleagues should use move-on as an opportunity to get people thinking about how they want to spend their spare time and whether they have any ideas or aspirations around employment, education or training. Consider whether there are opportunities for informal volunteering, e.g.

- Acting as a peer mentor, or

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- Any suitable vacancies within the service that would be suitable for someone with lived experience of homelessness.

If you need any support establishing these opportunities, please contact our Volunteering Manager for more information.

13. Managing Expectations

Expectations for Local Authority Housing

Some Riverside services may have a limited number of resettlement options. Local Authority housing is increasingly hard to access and changes to welfare benefits may restrict options in the private rented sector). Customers may have unrealistic expectations on what they could expect for their resettlement options, therefore colleagues need to focus on what is possible and provide realistic information at the beginning of the process. It could help to invite customers who have moved on to independent accommodation, to talk about their experience of resettlement and barriers that they may have come across.

Timing of resettlement (quick turnarounds)

When the customer views a property the timing of resettlement is sometimes beyond the control of colleagues at the service or customer. These quick transitions can be traumatic for people, as they may feel a loss of control over their situation. Therefore, customers need to be informed that there is potential for a quick turnaround between viewing the property and starting the new tenancy. We can prepare customers by discussing the process in advance and agree a plan to manage this together and how people want to be supported if they feel disappointed by unsuccessful applications or anxious about the rapid transition to their new tenancy.

Costs

Move-on can be expensive, with additional costs such as deposits, rent in advance, removal costs etc. We should support customers to factor this into their budgeting and savings goals in preparation for move on wherever possible.

Tenancy Fee Act 2019

With effect from 1 June 2019, the Tenant Fees Act 2019 bans landlords and letting agents from requiring a tenant, licensee or other 'relevant person' to pay fees, other than 'permitted payments', in connection with specified private rented sector tenancies/licences.

Therefore, colleagues should support customers to ensure the payments the landlord is asking for meets the 'permitted payments'. For more information see the link below: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/tenant-fees-act>

14. References and Resources

Homeless Link Guidance on Resettlement

<https://www.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/site-attachments/Resettlement%20guidance.pdf>

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Shelter: Priority for council Housing

https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/council_housing_association/priority_for_council_housing

Discretionary Housing Payments & Rent in advance

https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/private_renting/rent_in_advance

Shelter: Tenancy rights checker tool

https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/downloads_and_tools/tenancy_rights_checker

Crisis - Private Rented Sector website with a wide range of resources and tools

www.privaterentedsector.org.uk

National Homelessness Advice Service

www.nhas.org.uk

Xperian Rental Exchange

<https://www.experian.co.uk/business/consumer-information/consumer-credit-management/rental-exchange/>

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