Homelessness—Customer Journey

Person presents themselves as homeless to the Council. A meeting is held with a housing officer. The council has a statutory duty to accept and process the application process.

Between April and June 2016 329 homeless or potentially homeless individuals approached reception and were referred to the housing team.

The applicants need to pass 3 initial statutory tests to qualify for emergency housing.

1. **Are they eligible** – as a UK citizen habitually resident in the UK or someone who has the right to live in the UK with recourse to public funds?
2. **Are they homeless** – does not have accommodation to occupy or reasonable to be able to continue to reside in?
3. **Are they priority need** – for example if you have children, are elderly or disabled.

Answers no to any of the 3 tests

Answers yes to all 3 tests (only need to provide a reason to believe at this stage) the Council has a duty to provide immediate emergency housing.

Housing officers further clarify the first 3 tests, and determine if the applicants is intentionally or unintentionally homeless. The Council has 33 days to make a decision.

Intentionally homeless: If the applicants does not meet the 3 initial tests or is intentionally homeless; WDC will give reasonable notice to end TA (between 7 and 28 days depending on circumstances.)

Unintentionally homeless: If the applicant is not intentionally homeless; the last test is to determine if they have a local connection? In case of violence (such as fleeing domestic abuse) this last test is not applicable.

No local connection: WDC can refer them back to the LA in an area they do have a connection to. The LA would have to accept the decision made by WDC and accept the duty of care unless the applicant would be at risk of violence or it would not be reasonable for them to return to the area.

Local connection: applicant will continued to be housed in temporary accommodation until the duty of care can be discharged. Between April and June 2016 WDC accepted duty of care for 25 applications.

WDC will provide the applicant with a formal decision letter and signpost the applicant where to go for external help or advice
Organisation signposted to include:

- Social Services
- Wycombe Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme
- Wycombe Homeless Connection
- Connection Outreach (for rough sleepers).
- Street Link for Rough Sleepers
- Wycombe Women's Aid or National Women's Aid (for those affected by domestic abuse)

Duty of care can be discharged:

- If applicant becomes intentionally homeless (i.e. ASB in TA provided)
- When suitable affordable private rented accommodation is found
- Offer of accommodation from the housing register

There needs to be a change of circumstance to warrant a new application.

Intentionally homeless (from TA):

If the applicant can find settled accommodation for a reasonable period and then becomes homeless again, they can submit a new application.