

Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers - Summary Audit Report

January 2010

Ayr Housing Aid Centre

Stephen Rhind

1 INTRODUCTION AND AUDIT OUTCOME

Ayr Housing Aid Centre (HAC) is based at 3A Holmston Road, Ayr.

The remit of the service is:

1. To provide advice, information and advocacy services to homeless persons, those threatened with homelessness and those in housing need within South Ayrshire.
2. To work with representatives of statutory, voluntary organisations and individuals in identifying the needs of homeless people.
3. To develop training opportunities for those involved in homeless and housing need services.
4. To do all things lawful as are necessary for the attainment of the objectives of the organisation without bias to race, religion, sex or politics.
5. To provide a Housing Support Service.

1.1 AUDIT OUTCOME

The on-site audit visit took place during 7th and 8th December 2009.

Following the audit visit, it was concluded that the advice service provided by Ayr Housing Aid Centre meets the requirements of the Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers (the Standards).

Ayr Housing Aid Centre is accredited to the Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers in the topics and for the types of service shown below until January 2014.

Housing topics accredited

TOPIC	Type Applied for	Type Accredited to
2.1 Rent Arrears	III	III
2.2 Mortgages/Secured Loans	III	III
2.3 Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit	III	III
2.4 Disrepair in Rented Housing	III	III
2.5 Housing Options	II	II
2.6 Discrimination in Housing	III	III
2.7 Eviction	III	III

2.8 Anti Social Behaviour	III	III
2.9 Harassment and Illegal Eviction (includes race discrimination)	III	III
2.10 Homelessness	III	III
2.11 Relationship Breakdown	III	III
2.12 Rent: Private Sector	III	III
2.13 Security of Tenure	III	III
2.14 Statutory Tenancy rights	III	III
2.15 Repair and Improvement Grants	III	III

2 AUDIT FINDINGS

2.1 STRENGTHS

The auditors were impressed with the energy and commitment of the staff in the project. The auditors were of the opinion that the systems in the HAC for logging and tracking key dates - both in respect of casework and tracking payments due and other administrative functions - worked particularly well in the particular context of the service provided. The auditors were of the opinion that the HAC system for recording time spent on casework worked particularly well in the particular context of the service provided.

2.2 AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS - Quality of Advice

a) Closing off letters

Recommendation: The agency should review its practice in sending casework closing-off letters. (Standard: 4.5 key indicator 4a)

2.3 AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS - Processes

a) The premises

Recommendation: No recommendation. The agency is aware of the deficiencies in its premises and is dealing with this on an ongoing basis. (Standard: 6.1, 3.3, generic competence 1.1 &c)