



Information Governance Team

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Dear Sir/Madam

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)

Request ID: FOI678226594

Thank you for your request for information relating to living with HIV and social housing.

You have requested the following information:

Clarification: I would like information for both:

- priority for people living with HIV in the social housing allocations policy (which sets out who is prioritised for social housing in the city)
- information about 'priority need' as assessed in a homelessness application, specifically for those that are homeless (which could result in a duty that could be discharged with an offer of accommodation in social housing or in the private rented sector, it is not specifically priority for social housing)

1. Does your local authority routinely consider people living with HIV to have a priority need for social housing?

Not routinely, it would depend on the suitability of their current home, or their individual circumstances regarding homelessness, please see below for more detail.

a) – What criteria do you use to determine whether a person living with HIV has a priority need for social housing?

- Regarding access to social housing through Coventry Homefinder (the council's allocations policy):

The Coventry Homefinder policy uses a banding system to provide different levels of priority for

social housing. Applicants may be assessed as having an urgent housing need due to health issues (Band 1) or medium housing need due to health issues (Band 3). The policy clarifies that the banding is not based solely on the medical condition or disability of the applicant but is based on the suitability of their current home, and whether it has an impact on that condition or is unsuitable for the needs of the applicant. A range of factors can be considered, such as the layout and facilities, location of the property and impacts on mental health as well as physical health. The banding policy and details of medical/health banding can be found here:

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/housing-1/coventry-homefinder-policy-autumn-2021/5>

- Regarding assistance given to homeless households under the Housing Act 1996:

Priority need is assessed according to Chapter 8 of the Homelessness Code of Guidance for local authorities, which may include priority for people who are vulnerable and living with HIV, having regard to advice from medical professionals and any other relevant information regarding the individual's specific circumstances.

b) – Do you use the MHCLG “Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities” to assess whether a person living with HIV has a priority need for social housing?

- Regarding assistance given to homeless households under the Housing Act 1996:

Yes. We use the Homelessness Code of Guidance when carrying out a homelessness assessment, including whether a person has a priority need, when assessing whether a person is owed certain duties under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996. To clarify, the council may discharge these duties in various ways, which may be in social housing but may be another way, such as accommodation in the Private Rented Sector.

- Regarding access to social housing through Coventry Homefinder (the council's allocations policy):

If a person is found to be homeless following a homelessness application, they will be given the appropriate banding on Homefinder. For details of the bands for people who are assessed as being owed the various duties under homelessness legislation, please see:

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/housing-1/coventry-homefinder-policy-autumn-2021/5>

2. Does your local authority have the sufficient time and resources to assess the priority need for social housing of a person living with HIV?

- Regarding access to social housing through Coventry Homefinder (the council's allocations policy):

If a person living with HIV makes an application on Coventry Homefinder and identifies their health condition as a reason for needing to move, they will be assessed by an Occupational Therapist (OT). The OT works with the Homefinder Team and is available to assess all applicants where a medical, health or disability need is raised as a reason for needing to move. The OT can assess (alongside medical evidence provided) whether a move is necessary due to the impacts of the health condition and the suitability of the current home, advise whether any adaptations could be

provided in their current home to make it suitable, and advise on the suitability of homes that become available through Homefinder.

- Regarding assistance given to homeless households under the Housing Act 1996:

The Officer carrying out the homelessness assessment will request details from medical professionals and any other relevant support providers to assess whether the individual circumstances of the person living with HIV mean that they are vulnerable (including considering any other potential vulnerabilities alongside living with HIV), which may mean that they have priority need for homelessness assistance (not necessarily social housing).

3. Are there further resources or guidance that do not currently exist that would help your local authority assess if a person living with HIV had a priority need for social housing?

No.

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For information, we publish a variety of information such as: [FOI/EIR Disclosure Log](#), [Publication Scheme](#), [Facts about Coventry](#) and [Open Data](#) that you may find of useful if you are looking for information in the future.

If you are unhappy with the handling of your request, you can ask us to review our response. Requests for reviews should be submitted within 40 days of the date of receipt of our response to your original request – email: infogov@coventry.gov.uk

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our review, you can write to the Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or email icocasework@ico.org.uk.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in your response.

Yours faithfully

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