**Audit Tool: Local Housing Authority**

**Scotland**

This audit tool is for Local Authorities to complete to understand how well their housing services are meeting the needs of veterans.

The audit tool is split into 4 clear sections linked to the different role a Local Authority has in relation to housing. For non-stock-holding Local Authorities not all sections may be relevant, however in their strategic role Local Authorities may wish to work with the relevant registered provider and/or commissioned provider of services to understand how well the housing needs of veterans are being met.

The completion of this self-audit tool will provide you with a baseline position. By using the associated toolkit you will be able to ensure that you have a clear plan on how your services can be developed to better meet the housing needs of veterans.

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| **Strategic Approach** | |
| **Armed Forces Covenant** | See **Section 4** of the toolkit |
| * **Is the Armed Forces Covenant in place?** * **Has this been signed?** * **Does it reference anything about housing?** * **How clear are those housing statements/pledges?** * **Are there mechanisms to review it?** * **Are housing staff aware of it?** * **Is there an Armed Forces Champion?** | |
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| **Strategy Approach** | See **Section 5** of the toolkit |
| **What does the Local Housing Strategy identify in relation to veterans and their families? Are veterans mentioned?**  **Are there any specific actions in relation to veterans?** | |
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| **Has the Local Authority worked closely with relevant partners (e.g., veterans’ charities/Brigades, housing associations) to ascertain likely levels of need among veterans and designed services accordingly?** | |
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| **Housing Options, Prevention & Homelessness** | |
| * **How are veterans and their families identified?** * **Do you ask all customers if they or a family member are a veteran?** * **Does the form identify whether any member of the household is a an (ex)partner/widow(er) of a veteran?** * **Do you ask if the customer or a member of the household is a Reservist?** | See **Section 3** of the toolkit |
| **Have you developed any PHPs for veterans and their families?** | See **Section 8.1** of the toolkit |
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| **Are there any bespoke factsheets/leaflets for veterans?** | See **Section 6.2** of the toolkit |
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| **What information is available on the website for veterans in relation to housing options and homelessness?** | See **Section 6.2** of the toolkit |
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| **What local services/charities are available to support veterans? How well does the Local Authority work with these organisations? Do staff know about them? How well does your organisation work in partnership with them?** | See **Section 6.2** of the toolkit |
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| * **Does the service work with Service personnel from the point that they receive their certificate of cessation of entitlement to occupy service accommodation 6 months before discharge?** * **Is this 6-month period used to help clients find accommodation? Or are clients only worked with 56 days prior to homelessness?** * **Do the procedures reflect this?** | See **Section 7.1** of the toolkit |
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| * **Are staff aware where Service personnel are required to vacate Service quarters as a result of leaving the Service they should not be considered to be intentionally homeless?** * **Is this referenced in any local policies/procedures?** | See **Section 8.2** of the toolkit |
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| * **Are staff aware that Armed Forces personnel can establish a local connection by virtue of having served in an area while in the Forces?** * **Is this referenced in any local policies/procedures?** | See **Section 8.2** of the toolkit |
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| **Allocations & Lettings** | |
| * **Allocation Policy – is it legally compliant in relation to veterans?** * **Does it give additional preference to veterans/reservists/widows?** * **Does the policy reflect that serving members of the Armed Forces can establish a local connection to an area by virtue of having served in the area while in the Forces?** | See **Section 9** of the toolkit |
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| **Does the Housing Register form ask key questions to identify veterans/reservists/widows?** | See **Section 3** of the toolkit |
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| **Are there any nomination arrangements in place to allocate properties to veterans?** | See **Section 9.4** of the toolkit |
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| **Do you allocate a set percentage of social housing vacancies to veterans?** | See **Section 9.4** of the toolkit |
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| **Do the waiting lists for affordable/low-cost home ownership afford any additional priority to veterans and their families?** | See **Section 9.5** of the toolkit |
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| **Housing Management** | |
| **Do you identify if any new tenant or a member of their household is a veteran at sign up?** | See **Section 3 & 9.7** of the toolkit |
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| **Does any of your pre-tenancy work address the specific needs of veterans?** | See **Section 9.7** of the toolkit |
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| **Do your development plans take the specific needs of veterans into account? (e.g., building/spaces that do not reinforce trauma, accessible properties, etc.)** | See **Section 9.6** of the toolkit |
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| **Staff Knowledge & Awareness** | |
| * **Do staff know how to identify veterans?** * **How knowledgeable are staff about veterans? (In terms of who qualifies as a veteran, what the Housing Law says? What support agencies/charities are available? Support needs of veterans?)** | See **Section 3, 8 and 9** of the toolkit |
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| **Do staff know about the Veterans’ Gateway?** | See **Section 6.2** of the toolkit |
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| **Have any staff had any specific veteran training/briefings (e.g., the Armed Forces Covenant Training)?** | See **Section 11** of the toolkit |
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| **Is there a Housing Options officer who specialises/leads on working with veterans?** | See **Section 11** of the toolkit |
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| **What does your organisation do as an employer to support members of the Armed Forces community and veterans?** | See **Section 12** of the toolkit |
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