

**Housing & Re-housing - Frequently Asked Questions For Hospital Inpatients**

**Why do I need rehousing?**

You have either:

* identified this need yourself *Or*
* Your Occupational Therapist has recommended that your home is no longer suitable for your needs *Or*
* For your longer term needs, rehousing has been recommended to help you manage more easily.

**Who can help me with rehousing?** Your local **Highland Housing Options Service** can give you advice on **all** the different options. They can help you to e.g. fill in any housing forms / online applications. Options suitable for you might include: applying to the Highland Housing Register (HHR) for a council or housing association house; buying a ‘low cost home-ownership; purchasing or renting a more suitable property. For information:

* See the Highland Council’s website at [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk)
* Phone **01349 886602** to book an appointment with the team (e.g. by phone)
* Email them on **housingoptions@highland.gov.uk**
* Your Hospital Occupational Therapist or Social Worker can also refer you.

**Don’t delay – get in touch as soon as possible. This allows time to find options.**

**Is this Housing Options Service also for people with mental health needs?** Yes.

You can also get free information and advice from others. These include:

*Housing Options Scotland – Free help & advice to find the right house, in the right place. For disabled people, veterans & older people . Email:* *info@HousingOptionsScotland.org.uk* *Or phone: 0131 247 1400.*

There is also useful information online e.g.: *Housing Care.org – website* [*www.housingcare.org*](http://www.housingcare.org) *; Age Scotland –*[*www.ageuk.org.uk*](http://www.ageuk.org.uk) *search for ‘housing choices’*

**Can I go home to my current property to wait for rehousing?** Every effort will be made to find an option so that you can go back home whilst you are waiting for a move (e.g. temporary arrangements for toileting and access into your home.)

**If I do this, will my application for rehousing be affected?** Your situation will be considered on an individual basis. Your circumstances, needs and any temporary arrangements will be taken into account. You may still be considered a priority for rehousing if your current property is assessed as not suitable for your needs.

**Can I stay in hospital until I get a new property?** If you no longer have inpatient hospital needs, but your hospital stay is lengthy because of your housing situation, you may be moved to another facility or a temporary property whilst you wait. For example, a short term let in sheltered housing. You will be encouraged to widen your options so that you can move on from hospital without more delay - for example, by choosing more communities, or house types, on your HHR housing application.

**What if I don’t like the new property I get offered through the Highland Housing Register (HHR)?** You will only be offered properties which meet your assessed needs. If you need a specially adapted property and one is to be offered to you, it will be assessed to make sure it is suitable for your needs by an Occupational Therapist. If you refuse an offer but it meets your needs, we look at how reasonable the offer is. You generally get 2 reasonable offers. If it is assessed to be a ‘reasonable offer’ you will only get one more offer of HHR housing. If you refuse that, you will get no more offers for at least 6 months. Homeless applicants get 1 reasonable offer only so that they can move into settled housing and out of homelessness as quick as possible.

**If I end my tenancy/return my keys and make myself homeless, will I be given greater priority for a new property?** You are strongly encouraged not to end your tenancy and return your keys. Before ending your tenancy you are strongly recommend to discuss your situation with your landlord **and** Council’s Housing Options Service (Telephone 01349 886602). They will tell you about the implications of doing this and what will happen.

**How long will it take to get a new property?** This will depend on any points and/or priority you are awarded and the housing types and communities you have selected. Some communities are more popular, or have less housing, than others. If so, those properties generally go to households with very high points who have been waiting a long time.

**How can I increase my chances of being housed?** Demand for housing in some areas (e.g. Inverness) is very high. To maximise your opportunities, and increase your chances of being housed somewhere you want, expand your selection of communities, property types and providers. Information on demand can be found on [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk) Your local **Housing Options Service** can give you advice tailored to suit your needs. Each situation will be assessed individually, based on your current circumstances and property.

**I’m a private renter. Can my current home be adapted?** You need to ask your landlord’s permission to make adaptations. They cannot refuse consent unreasonably. Grants are available to pay for adaptations and for re-instating work done if you move out.

**Why can’t my current property be adapted until I get a new property?** If you are a home owner or private renter, you can explore options to make your property suitable with help from the Highland Council’s Scheme of Assistance. It may be that your home is unable to be adapted. For example: due to structural reasons; or due to the cost. If your home is assessed as unable to meet your needs and cannot be made so, the **Highland Council’s Housing Options Service** will support you into an alternative.

**What happens to my benefits?** The Highland Council’s Welfare Support Team can give you money advice. Phone: 0800 090 1004 or contact via the website [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk)