

Tamworth Borough Council Sanctuary Scheme

Policy Statement

Introduction

Tamworth Sanctuary Scheme forms part of the 'toolkit' of options developed to assist the housing Advice Team in preventing homelessness. This discretionary scheme was originally approved by Cabinet in February 2007 and has been in operation since funded by CLG Homelessness Grant.

The Sanctuary Scheme is a victim centred initiative which aims to make victims of domestic violence and hate crimes feel safe if they choose to remain living in their homes in order to maintain education, employment and support networks. The Sanctuary Scheme therefore aims to make the home more secure by increasing the safety and peace of mind of those threatened with violence or hate crime through professionally installed security measures.

These measures may include new locks, stronger doors, grilles, gates and anti-arson letter boxes as well as the installation of a 'sanctuary' or 'safe room' in cases where the risk is considered greatest.

Each victim's situation is different so every installation is different with each one being tailored to meet the individual needs of the victim and the property.

Criteria

The following eligibility criteria need to be satisfied in order for a Sanctuary installation to be funded via the scheme:

- The victim must be resident within the Tamworth Borough
- The victim must be threatened with homelessness as a result of the violence or threats of violence as defined in legislation
- The installation must be recommended by the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Committee (MARAC)
- The risk level as calculated by MARAC must not be so high that an appropriate installation does not reduce the assessed risk to a level acceptable to MARAC
- The perpetrator must not be resident in the property that is subject to a Sanctuary installation
- The landlord, where appropriate, must give consent to the works
- The security survey finds that the property is suitable for the recommended installations
- The installation will be free of charge to all eligible applicants irrespective of tenure or other circumstances.

Risks and Mitigations

The scheme is funded from CLG Grant allocation and is cash limited. Tamworth Borough Council reserves the right to cease the scheme at any time.

Robust budget monitoring procedures are in place to ensure that the expenditure on the scheme does not exceed the available budget.

The contract with the installers is sufficiently robust as to protect TBC from unexpected or unanticipated price rises during the contract period.

Both Staffordshire Police and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service are key partners to the scheme along with other agencies represented at MARAC. No installation is approved by Tamworth Borough Council without the full agreement of the Crime Reduction Officer (CRO) and Fire Safety Officer (FSO).

In any situation where either the risk to the victim is assessed as too high by MARAC no installation will be approved

The documentation provided to the victim is explicit in the language used to ensure the victim is aware that such an installation does not provide any guarantee of their continued safety from the perpetrator.

Policy date: October 2011

Review date: October 2013

Approved by: Cabinet