

Ashkirk Referral Initial Assessment and Allocation

1. Policy Scope

The policy deals with the referrals, initial assessment, and allocation of accommodation for the Family Wraparound Service at Ashkirk. It aims to ensure that:

- Everyone who applies or is referred to the Service for housing and wraparound services are assessed in accordance with the criteria for the scheme
- Housing and wraparound services are provided to those in the greatest need

Ashkirk Referrals Assessment and Allocations will be in line with all relevant regulation and legislation including but not limited to:

- Housing Act 1996
- Homelessness Act 2002

2. Policy Standards

Standard 1: Service

The Family Wraparound service will provide temporary, supported accommodation for families who are aged 18 years and over from the City of Sunderland or who have a local connection.

The accommodation provided may be at Ashkirk located at Lakeside Village, Sunderland, SR3 3DT or at one of the projects cluster units within the City of Sunderland boundary.

Standard 2: Referrals

All referrals will be submitted via City of Sunderland's Housing Options Team (HOT). Direct referrals can be taken on behalf of HOT and will be submitted to HOT for recording and routing back.

Where information is incomplete following initial referral, the information required will be sought from HOT within 24 hours of receiving the referral.

We will complete a needs and risk assessment with the prospective family, which forms the second stage of the referral process.

Standard 3: Assessment

We will carry out needs and risk assessments at Ashkirk based in Lakeside Village, Sunderland, however if this is not possible suitable arrangements will be made with the family for this to take place at an alternative location.

We will assess each referral against the Referral Assessment Criteria.

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latest version.**

We will base assessment and acceptance on a number of factors including homeless status (in line with criteria set out in Part VII, Housing Act 1996) and housing related support needs.

We will advise HOT of the outcome of the referral.

We will advise HOT if the referral does not meet the Referral Assessment Criteria and provide a reason why.

We will offer a Right to Appeal to all unsuccessful applicants.

Standard 4: Allocation

Where possible we will pre-allocate a property up to 5 days prior to the property becoming available.

We will review all waiting list referrals at the time of pre-allocation to check and determine if the service is still required.

We will consider all current and waiting list referrals against the Pre-Allocation Criteria.

We will award pre-allocation status to the applicant awarded priority need. HOT will be advised that a property has been pre-allocated to that referral. Pre-allocation does not, however, guarantee an offer of accommodation. Until an offer of accommodation is made, a pre-allocation can be superseded by a newly received referral of higher priority need. HOT will be advised of this.

An offer of accommodation will be made to the pre-allocated referral, where possible, at least 24 hours prior to the property becoming vacant.

Wherever possible, we will provide initial accommodation at Ashkirk Homeless Core Unit. Families may then be offered cluster accommodation depending upon support needs.

A Risk Assessment will be carried out with regard to any risk family may pose – either to themselves, their children or to other people e.g., staff and other residents. (Further information outlined in Risk Assessment & Management Policy Ashkirk)

Project Workers will familiarise themselves with information gained through the referral and application process regarding the family to enable a more detailed assessment to be undertaken as part of the support planning process.

Standard 5: Appeals

We will provide a Right to Appeal to all unsuccessful referrals. Appeals can be made in writing to the Assistant Director of Supported & Specialist Housing, Bernicia HQ, Oakwood Way, Ashwood Business Park, Ashington NE63 0XF

Standard 6: Training and Awareness

Bernicia will ensure that all those involved Ashkirk initial assessment and allocation either directly or indirectly are provided with appropriate training in the application of this and the relevant supporting documents. All training and awareness raising activities will be logged.

Version Number: V6.1

Effective From: March 2026

Applicable To:

- Bernicia – Care & Support

Associated Documents:

The following resources support the Ashkirk Referral Initial Assessment and Allocation policy and Bernicia colleagues to deliver referrals, assessments and allocation of accommodation at Ashkirk:

- Referral Assessment Criteria Compliance Note
- Pre-Allocation Criteria Compliance Note
- Ashkirk Need Assessment and Support Planning Policy
- Ashkirk Need Assessment and Support Planning Procedure
- Ashkirk Risk Assessment & Risk Management Policy
- Ashkirk Risk Assessment & Risk Management Procedure

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion: A Desktop Review Form was completed in March 2026. Please contact the Governance team if you require a copy.

Approved By: Executive Director of Communities

Policy Author: Assistant Director, Supported & Specialist Housing

Policy Owner: Executive Director of Communities

Next Review: March 2028

Reference Number: POL-0112

Change Control

Version Number	Effective Date	Amendment made by	Version approved by	Description of changes
V6.0	March 2026	Assistant Director, Supported & Specialist Housing	Exec Dir of Communities	Policy transferred to new template. No other changes.
V6.1	June 2026	Policy & Gov Advisor	Exec Dir of Communities	Additional PCN's added to associated doc list and job title changes.

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