

## ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORT UNIT ASSESSMENT & APPEALS PROCEDURE

All applicants for the Scheme have the right to appeal if their application is turned down.

### **WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT**

Once the Accessible Transport Unit have received all the documents as requested in the application form your application will be assessed using the criteria, and you will either be:

1. Approved for the service, and sent a confirmation letter.
2. Asked to provide further information to enable us to assess your application. This could be by attending an interview with an officer from the Accessible Transport unit.
3. Offered a mobility assessment. This will be because the written information provided by you on your application, is not enough for us to reach a decision. The mobility assessment is to ensure that your application is assessed fairly.
  - Mobility Assessment clinic are held on Fridays. Each assessment lasts approximately 30 minutes. The assessor is an independent, professionally qualified Occupational Therapist.
  - We will write to you with an appointment date and time if an assessment is needed.
  - You will normally be informed of the decision regards your application, within 5 working days of the mobility assessment.
4. Refused the service. The reason for the refusal will be given to you in writing.

→ **If you are refused the service you are able to appeal this decision:**

### **Stage 1 Appeal**

If your application for the service is refused, we will send you a copy of this appeals procedure and an appeal form for your use. There are two appeals options at stage 1.

#### **Option 1 - You can appeal in writing within 28 days of the date of the refusal letter**

- a. You should complete the appeal form and include with your appeal any information that you believe to be relevant. For instance, any further information about your mobility impairment, diagnosis, prognosis, and medication, and why you feel you need the service. This can be a letter or a report from your GP, or other medical professional, or a letter from relatives or a carer. **The information you provide needs to be dated, current and relevant to the eligibility criteria.**
- b. We will acknowledge your appeal within 5 working days of receipt.
- c. Where appropriate, we will try to obtain supporting medical evidence from your GP or other professional.

- d. The Accessible Transport Unit (ATU) Senior Operations Officer will review additional information provided against the Scheme's eligibility criteria. After considering your appeal the Unit will either:
  - Approve you for the service, and send you a confirmation letter.
  - Refuse the service, and write giving our reasons.
  - Offer you a mobility assessment
- e. If you have already had a mobility assessment you will need to follow the **Stage 3** process detailed below.
- f. You will be told of the decision within 5 working days of your appeal.
- g. We will keep you informed of the progress of your appeal. If the appeal timescale cannot be met you will be sent a 'Holding Letter' explaining the reason, e.g. we are awaiting further information from a professional.

**2. OR you can appeal and request a mobility assessment; the appeal must be within 28 days of the date of the letter refusing the service.**

- a. An appointment for a mobility assessment will be sent as soon as an appointment with the assessor becomes available. Clinics are held on a Friday.
- b. The assessor is an independent, professionally qualified mobility assessor.
- c. You will normally be informed of the decision within 5 working days of the mobility assessment.

**Stage 2 Appeal**

- a. If you have been refused the service after your first appeal and still consider that you meet the eligibility criteria, you can appeal a second time and request a mobility assessment. You should appeal within 10 working days of the date of the letter refusing the service.
- b. If you have already had a mobility assessment you will need to follow the **Stage 3** process detailed below.
- c. An appointment for a mobility assessment will be sent as soon as an appointment with the assessor becomes available. Clinics are held on a Friday.
- d. The assessor is an independent, professionally qualified mobility assessor.
- e. You will normally be informed of the decision within 5 working days of the mobility assessment.

**Stage 3 Appeal**

- a. If you are refused the service after a mobility assessment, you have the right to further appeal if you still consider that you meet the Scheme's eligibility criteria. You should appeal within 10 working days of the date of the letter refusing the service. Your appeal will be heard by the Council's Appeal Sub Committee; this panel is made up of 3 Council Members. You can attend in person or have your case examined based on the paperwork submitted.

- b. An appointment for the appeal date will be sent as soon as a time is available.
- c. You will normally be informed of the panel's decision within 5 working days of the assessment unless the panel requires further evidence from a professional dealing with you. In this case a holding letter will be sent to you.
- d. The decision of the panel is final.

**Note**

*Assessments will focus on likely walking distances, mobility impairment and other criteria defined by legislation. It will include a review of all paperwork and information.*

**RE APPLICATIONS**

1. Anybody turned down for this service can apply again without prejudice 6 months after the date of the final decision notification.
2. Anyone turned down for this service who becomes eligible through one of the **automatic qualifying criteria** within the 6 month period, can apply, if the supporting documentation/ evidence is produced.

**General Information**

Documents used for the application process, and the Scheme will be written in plain English.

**COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS**

If you wish to make a comment or a complaint about the quality, nature or delivery of services by the Accessible Transport Unit (ATU) in relation to the application process you can either:

- (a) Discuss your concerns with a member of ATU staff.
- (b) Use the procedure as shown in the 'complaint or compliment leaflet' which is available from all Council offices.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMEN**

If you feel that the council has not applied its policy in a correct manner you may bring this matter to the attention of the Local Government Ombudsman.