

Procurement Plan for Devon & Torbay

Procurement Summary

1. Family Services

We intend to invite bids for **4,500** New Matter Starts (NMS) for the provision of face-to-face Family advice within the procurement area (PA) of Devon & Torbay.

Current access to Family legal services is primarily focused in Exeter and in the other key population centres of Barnstaple, Bideford, Torbay (Torquay, Paignton and Brixham) and Newton Abbot. In these areas we consider supply to be adequate although in the more rural parts of the PA, we have historically been less successful in placing services.

Given the rural nature of much of Devon, to ensure client access to the full range of Family services across the PA we will advertise these tenders as **Service Specification B**.

- Providers will be able to tender for either the full range of private Family work and / or public law children work.
- Providers will need to have a permanent presence in access point(s) tendered for.
- Where providers wish to undertake private Family work, they must tender for and undertake a minimum of **75** Legal Help cases per year.
- Those wishing to undertake only public law children cases must commit to undertake at least **5** certificated cases per year.

2. Family & Housing (Combined Service)

We will set aside a small proportion of the available NMS in Housing for providers wishing to deliver a combined Housing and Family service.

There has historically been some client demand for this combination of services in the PA and the providers that have undertaken this work have delivered a significant amount of certificated work that compliments the existing social welfare law services in the Procurement Area.

There will be a total of **200** Housing NMS made available across the procurement area for providers wishing to deliver Family and Housing services together.

Providers wishing to undertake Housing as part of this service combination will be required to tender for and undertake a minimum of **50** NMS in Housing per schedule year.

3. Social Welfare Law Services

We will invite tenders for **4,400** NMS across the Social Welfare Law (SWL) categories of Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits advice, **110** in Community Care and **220** in Employment.

As with Family, most services in SWL categories are located in the main towns. Although the number of SWL providers is smaller than the number of Family providers, amongst those providers that currently deliver SWL services, the market is well developed with clients already having access to authorised litigators for the most part.

We wish to maintain client access to this level of service and we will therefore advertise these tenders as **Service Specification A**.

Housing, Welfare Benefits and Debt will be tendered together as a bundle of services and providers will be required to both tender for and provide services in all three categories.

- Providers may bid to deliver Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits either as a single legal entity or as part of a consortium.
- Providers delivering Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits will need to have a permanent presence in the access point(s) tendered for.
- Providers delivering Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits will be required to undertake a minimum of **100** NMS in each category per schedule year.
- Providers delivering Community Care will be required to undertake a minimum of **20** NMS per schedule year.
- Providers delivering Employment will be required to undertake a minimum of **30** NMS per schedule year.
- Community Care and Employment providers will be required to have a part-time presence in the PA.
- As tenders are invited under Service Specification A, we will require providers to employ an authorised litigator in order to conduct Housing and / or Community Care services.

In the categories of Debt, Housing and Welfare Benefits, the allocation of NMS is divided within the procurement area as follows:

PA	Debt	Housing	Welfare Benefits
Devon and Torbay	2,460	860	1,080

4. Access

Some communities face real challenges in accessing face-to-face services. Historically, access to services has been focused in Exeter, Barnstaple, Bideford, Torbay (Torquay, Paignton and Brixham) and Newton Abbot.

Although some outreach has been available, access to face-to-face advice still remains a problem in some areas due to the rural nature of Devon and poor public transport links.

We will therefore make NMS available for particular access points within the PA. Providers (other than those delivering Community Care and Employment – see above) will be required to have a permanent presence in the access point(s) in which they deliver services.

Access Point	NMS allocated for Family	NMS allocated for Debt	NMS allocated for Housing	NMS allocated for Welfare Benefits
South Hams Teignbridge Torbay	1,690	1,170	410	510
Exeter	1,430	500	180	220
East Devon Mid Devon North Devon West Devon Torridge	1,380	790	270	350

5. Budget

Current spend in this area is higher than that which we would expect to spend in Family services according to the Indicative Spend Budget Model. It is therefore unlikely that we would wish to actively increase the provision of Family services and matter starts will be carefully managed with the aim of remaining within the level of current spend.

Current spend in this area is lower than that which we would expect to spend in SWL Legal Help according to the Indicative Spend Budget Model. Therefore, the total number of NMS available in this area will be increased from that which is currently being delivered to enable an increase in access to services which moves closer to that suggested by the Model.

6. Current Supply (September 08 – August 09)

Category	No. of Providers	NMS opened	Certificates issued
Family (public)	44	5,006	968
Family (private)	63		1,497
Debt	9	2,761	5
Housing	10	696	80
Welfare Benefits	5	688	1
Employment	4	217	0
Community Care	2	109	0

		Current SWL Services						Current Family Services	
	Total Providers	Providers delivering 5 core SWL cats	Providers delivering 4 core SWL cats	Providers delivering 3 core SWL cats	Providers delivering 2 core SWL cats	Providers delivering 1 core SWL cat	Providers delivering Housing & Family	Providers delivering 5+Public law certs	Providers delivering family private only
Solicitor	64	0	2	2	0	4	3	28	20
NFP	5	0	0	3	1	1	0	0	0