

Procurement Plan for Dorset

Procurement Summary

1. Family Services

We intend to invite bids for **1,670** New Matter Starts (NMS) for the provision of face-to-face Family advice within the procurement area (PA) of Dorset.

Currently access to services is centred around Weymouth and the south east of the PA. Across the rest of the PA, access to services is more limited and in the area around Christchurch we have previously been unable to attract permanent family provision.

We wish to encourage client access to Family advice services across the PA and will therefore advertise these tenders as **Service Specification B**.

- Providers will be able to tender to deliver either the full range of private Family work and / or public law children work.
- Providers will need to have a presence in the PA as required for the access point(s) tendered for.
- Where providers wish to undertake private family work they must tender for and undertake a minimum of **50** Legal Help cases per year.
- Where providers wish to undertake only public law children cases they must commit to undertake at least **5** certificated cases per year

Access Point	NMS allocated for Family	Presence Required
East Dorset (North, Dorset East Dorset and Christchurch)	350	Permanent
West Dorset (Purbeck, West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland)	1,320	Permanent

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 & Family service.

There has previously been little demand for this combination of services and we therefore intend to invite bids for **100** Housing NMS made available across the PA 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 intend to place tenders for **1,340** NMS across the Social Welfare Law (SWL) categories of Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits advice, **100** in Community Care and **100** Employment.

We have historically had difficulty in placing SWL services in this PA. For example Housing advice is currently available only through Tolerance and outreach from a neighbouring PA.

As we wish to encourage the provision of permanent and integrated face-to-face SWL services we will advertise these tenders as **Service Specification B**.

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 50 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 B**, the requirement to employ an authorised litigator in Housing and/ or Community Care will not be an essential criterion. However, where a competitive process is necessary to decide between bids, as part of the selection process we will prefer providers who can provide the best access to an authorised litigator. We will also consider alternative arrangements but providers are advised that this may score lower in the ranking.

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
Dorset	730	360	250

Access Point	NMS allocated for Debt	NMS allocated for Housing	NMS allocated for Welfare Benefits	Presence Required
East Dorset (North Dorset, East Dorset and Christchurch)	480	210	100	Permanent
West Dorset (Purbeck, West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland)	250	150	150	Permanent

4. Access

There are some potential access issues within Dorset as the area has a number of geographically distant market towns, a relatively large rural population and does not have a widely available public transport system, particularly across the more rural parts of the PA. To maintain access to services across the whole PA, we have identified access points within the procurement area where we would want to secure services. 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.

We have historically experienced difficulty in securing Family services in Christchurch. Tenders to deliver Family services in the East Dorset access point will be preferred from providers who can deliver a service in Christchurch.

5. Budget

Current spend in this area is lower than that which we would expect to spend in Family 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.

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)	15	1,512	331
Family (private)	18		463
Debt	3	876	0
Housing	0	249	13
Welfare Benefits	2	177	0
Employment	0	30	0
Community Care	0	2	0

	Total Providers	Current SWL Services						Current Family Services	
		Providers delivering 5 SWL cats	Providers delivering 4 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	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	3
NFP	3	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0