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The First of Many.....

This is the first edition of the Housing Options newsletter. Its purpose is to raise awareness of the service and homelessness in general. We're going to try and make it interesting and raise the debate on some of the key issues impacting on homeless people and services in Tameside.

We will always welcome ideas for topics and you can even use the newsletter to promote your own service or tell us a "good news" story.

Hopefully, you'll find the newsletter informative and interesting!

All change at Housing Options

In October the Housing Register service was merged with the existing Housing Options service. Both services are now delivered by New Charter Housing Trust on behalf of Tameside MBC.

The merging of the two services has created a one-stop Housing Advice service for the people of Tameside.

What does this mean?

- ✚ Existing Service Users – all those households on the Housing Register have been written to;
- ✚ Registered Social Landlords & Supported Housing providers – instead of contacting Accent from 1st October the contact number for Housing Register related issues is 0161 331 2800;
- ✚ Since early September staff at Housing Options has been visiting supported housing units and RSLs to raise awareness of the changes.

In essence the switch has been fairly seamless. Jennifer Edgar and Steve Fanshawe from the Housing Register team have transferred across to Housing Options, so that knowledge and experience is not lost to the homeless community. That team will be bolstered by creating an Accommodation Team, more of that below.

Re-shaping the housing options service

The Housing Options service is challenging itself to meet the high standard of service provision expected in Tameside. To meet this standard and adopt some of the principles behind the Enhanced Housing Options model, Worklessness and the demands of the Credit Crunch the face of Housing Options is changing.

The Housing Options service, which is managed by Howard Lomas, is now operating with 3 distinct Teams:

Customer Service Team: This is a new Team that is dedicated to providing a high standard front-of-house service. It will manage the reception and telephone access points to the service and will determine initial needs of service users. It will be headed up by Scott Winstanley, the Customer Service Team Leader.



The creation of this team will ensure we delivery a fair, consistent yet personal service to anyone seeking advice or requiring greater assistance from the service. It will be heavily involved in testing the service by involving service users in shaping Housing Options.

Prevention Team: This Team is unchanged and is made up of 6 prevention officers, and its role will be split into the 3 strands of prevention:

- Preventing homelessness by providing positive solutions to housing problems
- Prevent bed-blocking in supported and temporary accommodation by moving households onto more permanent housing;
- Preventing repeat homelessness by ensuring any permanent move is sustainable

The team has been successfully working to the prevention agenda for nearly 4 years. The move to widening the theory to move-on accommodation is a positive step-change that will help to achieve the desired outcomes of Tameside MBC's Homelessness Strategy.



Scott Winstanley (top) will be heading up the Customer Service Team and Jenni Edgar & Steve Fanshawe are welcome additions to the Team

Accommodation Team: This is a new Team to Housing Options and is where the new Housing Register process will sit. It will be a Team of 4 made up of 3 Accommodation Officers and a Supported Housing Link Officer. Its role is to secure all types of Accommodation for homeless households from Emergency Accommodation, a private sector tenancy and the more traditional solution of a Social Housing Tenancy via the Nominations process.

It will vastly improve Housing Options links with Temporary and Supported Housing providers, private landlords and Housing Associations.

We Need Your Help....

... To understand, challenge and improve the service user experience and journey at Housing Options, and the effectiveness of its signposting to other services and agencies.

In particular, to examine how the service is accessed and is this consistent across the borough of Tameside and takes account of its diverse population. Also, to examine how the service communicates with service users, prior to, at and after the initial point of access.

Where we need your input, involvement or feedback:

- ✚ Undertaking surveys and make recommendations from their findings
- ✚ Getting involved in promotional and awareness raising events
- ✚ Receive reports of performance and achievements of the service
- ✚ Shadow staff within the service
- ✚ Provide editorial advice on newsletters, leaflets, letters, posters
- ✚ To actively contribute to the development of a website
- ✚ To actively contribute to any changes to the facilities at the Housing Options Centre

Extent of involvement

- ✚ Formal gathering of the Group: quarterly
- ✚ Focus Groups (i.e. website layout): 3 to 4 half-day meetings
- ✚ One-off events: monthly – maybe only 1 or 2 attendees
- ✚ Views sought informally: as required – likely to be a monthly occurrence
- ✚ Job shadowing: once or twice per annum per user
- ✚ Or we can tailor it to your needs

You are a Service User...

We don't just think our service users are those who are homeless or require our advice, it includes you. All agencies, housing providers and other advice services are our service users. Your input is valuable to us!

We want to talk to anyone who wants to get involved or how we could tap into existing service user networks linked to homelessness. Please contact Howard or Scott on 0161 331 2700 for a chat!

BREAKING NEWS – we are talking to colleges and universities and hoping to get all service user involvement accredited towards entry to education or employment or as a credit to education already being undertaken.



"Service User involvement has to be at the heart of Housing Options"

*Colin Greenwood,
Head of Housing
Access*



"We need service users to shape our service. It's the only way to improve and adapt."

*Howard Lomas
Housing Options
Manager (above)*

Housing Options

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The Housing Options Team

Housing Options Manager

Customer Service Team Leader

Customer Service Officers

Prevention Team

Accommodation Team (0161 331 2800)

Supported Housing Link Officer

Project & Continuous Improvement Officer

Debt Advisor

Head of Housing Access (New Charter)

Howard Lomas

Scott Winstanley

Janice Corscadden

Jessica Power

Tina Dhimar

Katie Bacon

Andrea Brown

Julie Collins

Melanie Fraser

Kath Wilson

Katy Wood

Robert Clarke

Patricia Standley

Robert Taylor

Jennifer Edgar

Steve Fanshawe

Kylie Wain

Colin Greenwood

Website: Coming soon to a PC near you!

**Why not get involved in designing it: contact Steve Fanshawe
(Stephen.fanshawe@newcharter.co.uk)**

If you need any help with translation, please see a member of staff.

Si vous avez besoin d'assistance avec cette traduction prière de contacter un membre du cadre.

Se precisa de alguma ajuda com esta tradução faz favor contactat um membro do quadro.

Je li potrzebujesz pomocy w t umaczeniu, zwró si do kogo z personelu.

જો તમારે ભાષાંતર કરવામાં મદદ જોઈતી હોય તો, મહેરબાની કરી સ્ટાફના સભ્યને મળો.

در صورت نیاز به کمک، ترجمه ای، لطفاً به یکی از کارمندان ما مراجعه کنید.

যদি আপনার অনুবাদের জন্য কোন সাহায্যের দরকার হয়, মেহেরবাণী করে কর্মীদের কোন সদস্যকে বলুন।

اگر آپکو ترجمے میں مدد کی ضرورت ہو تو براہ مہربانی عملے کے کسی ممبر کو ملیں۔

 **Tameside**
Metropolitan Borough
"An excellent council"

 **new charter**
HOUSING TRUST GROUP