

CLIENT SELECTION GUIDELINES

Eligibility for Selection (Please refer to Eligibility Criteria Statement).

In order for a possible client to be eligible to reside at London Housing Trust, there are certain criteria that have to be met. In summary:-

Age: The Referral must be at least 18 years of age or older.

Ethnicity: The Referral can be of any ethnic origin, as London Housing Trust is an Equal Opportunities project, but must be eligible for benefits.

Support Needs: This is a LOW to MEDIUM support project. Therefore the Referral must have LOW to MEDIUM Support Needs, in order to be suitable for the project. People with NO or HIGH support needs are unsuitable in this project. Please remember that there is no overnight staff in these projects.

Benefits: In order to stay here residents must be eligible for Housing Benefit, so that HB and if eligible. Housing Benefit will pay for the tenancy related support and My Social Enterprise will cover the support costs. Clients on any kinds of benefits are eligible.

Working: A referral is still eligible if they are working but the rent here is quite high so depending on what the referral is earning, they could find that they lose almost all of what they are earning in rent if they move here. As a result most of the referrals that are taken are people who are not working at all.

Key working: Residents must be prepared to work with the key working support services provided at the project. If potential residents feel that they have no need for key working / support services then London Housing Trust is inappropriate.

Room Sharing: Upon arriving at the project the referral may have to share a room. They may start off in a two bedded room, progress from there into a single room. Single rooms are offered to residents on basis of their admission date.

Self Catering: This is a self catering project. Residents can be given help to learn to cook and shop but they must be prepared to self cater.

Exclusions: This is a non judgemental project. However referrals cannot be accepted if there is a history of committing any form of Sexual Offences, Arson, a recent history of violence or a recent history of drug misuse.

Vacancies

When there is a vacancy it must first be logged with the Local Council for seven days. When phoning the Council to inform them of a vacancy please make sure that the **Vacancy Register** is filled in so that other staff is aware that the necessary phone call has been made, and so that London Housing Trust has a record of when the phone call was made and who received it.

Referral Interviews will be carried out for each vacancy. After all referral Interviews have taken place, the most suitable referral will be accepted. In the event of more than one person being acceptable, then priority will be given to the one who has links in the

area. If there is not a person with links to the Borough, then the person with the lowest support needs will be offered the place as long as they meet our criteria.

In the event of no referrals being suitable, then the first person that is suitable and interviewed will be accepted.

In the event of a referral being received from the council Homeless Persons Unit, a referral interview will be made. Every attempt will be made to take the referral where possible, providing that the referral is suitable and wishes to come to London Housing Trust. However it will be subject to the process outlined above, but it will be given priority above all others including others who have come from the local area.

The Initial Referral

The initial referral can be made by an agency or it can be a self – referral. Either is possible as long as the client concerned meets the eligibility criteria for London Housing Trust (see **Eligibility Criteria Statement**).

Referrals can be, and indeed in most cases are, made by telephone. Upon taking the initial phone call staff will discuss the referral to assess it for suitability. This means that staff will ask about the referring agent e.g. type of agency / project etc. (if they do not already know), the age of client, his gender, the level of his support needs, a brief explanation of his situation, what area it is that he is coming from, and what Borough it is that is referring him. If upon discussion staff feel that this referral is suitable and there are vacancies then a **Referral Interview** can be booked. All referral interviews must be conducted by two members of staff where ever possible, for equal opportunity and fairness, and so when booking a Referral Interview, please make sure that you choose a time when there are two members of staff present, even if this means that there will be a delay before any referral interviews take place.

In circumstances where there are no vacancies at the time, but there is likely to be one coming up, staff will also discuss the referral for its suitability as it is possible that an interview can be booked for a place on the waiting list.

The Referral Interview

Training in Referral Interviews

Only staff who has been trained in carrying out Referral Interviews will do the interview. Staff is trained in doing referral interviews by sitting in on at least four and shadowing the staff doing them. Once you have completed the in house training for the referral interviews, you will be given a certificate signed by the Project Manager, to say that you have completed it.

If when the phone call is taken a referral is considered suitable, then a Referral Interview will be booked. Only staff which has been trained in carrying out Referral Interviews will do the interview. So the interview will be booked at a time that is suitable to the client and when there is someone to do the interview. Staff is trained in doing referral interviews by sitting in on at least four and shadowing the staff doing them. As a guideline it is expected that the Referral Interview will take about an hour.

At the Referral Interview, the potential resident will be asked to give a brief history, to explain their current situation and how they came to be in that situation. This is recorded on the Referral form under the section '*Clients Current Situation*'. This does not need to be an extensive Case History.

Staff will work through the Referrals Form, with the potential resident, filling it all in. It is very important that this is filled in at the Referral Interview stage as the project must have completed Referrals Forms for every interview that takes place even if upon interviewing it becomes evident that the referral is unsuitable. As referrals that are taken but that are considered unsuitable must be kept on file.

Staff will then explain about the project and discuss the working of the project and the rules with the potential resident. This will include about self catering, sleeping arrangements, service charges etc. This will include a discussion about and an explanation of the key working process, so that the potential resident can make an educated decision about whether they are prepared to work with this or not. As this project recognises that not everybody will find this suitable or even indeed helpful to him. However to be resident at London Housing Trust clients have to co-operate with key working as this is the major co-ordinating mechanism for the support services that the project provides.

As part of the Referral Interview Process referrals will be shown around the project by the member of staff conducting the interview. It is not expected that they will shown a bedroom unless there is a vacancy.

The Acceptance Process

Upon conclusion of the Referral Interview, the referral will be told about the outcome of their interview in person if this is possible. However where there remain other interviews to be carried out, this will not obviously be possible.

In every case the potential resident will be given an **Interview Outcome Statement** explaining what will happen next. Where it is not possible to tell the referral at the end of the interview, staff will feedback the outcome to the referring agent and the client as soon as they are able to, this must include the reasons for not accepting the client if applicable. Staff must make sure that they get permission to do this during the referral. If the referral is accepted then they will be told when they can be admitted when they are informed about the outcome of their referral interview. If a decision cannot be made about the referral at that moment in time, then staff must not forget to fill in the back page of the referral form when they know whether or not they can accept that referral. If the referral is informed about the outcome of their referral interview in person, then staff must be sure to inform the referring agent and then sign the back page of the referral form to confirm that they have done so.

If the referral is not accepted, staff must make sure that the referring agent is informed and that the back page of the referral form is filled in with an explanation as to why the referral was not accepted.

Upon finishing the Referral Interview, please ensure that the Referrals form is placed in the relevant folder, either 'Referrals Not Accepted', 'Referrals to be considered' or 'Referrals Accepted'. Please make sure that Referrals Forms are only put in the 'Referrals Accepted' folder if they definitely have been, i.e. not if you think that they might be.

At the Referral Interview it is very important that staff remind potential residents that if they are accepted then they must bring what ID they have and their National Insurance Number to the Admissions Interview as they will have to produce both with their Housing Benefit form.

Admissions Process

Training in the Admissions Process

Only staff who has been trained in carrying out Admissions Interviews will do the admission. Staff is trained in doing admissions interviews by sitting in on at least 4 and shadowing the staff doing them. On completing the in house training in the Admissions Process you will be given a certificate signed by the Project Manager saying that you have completed it.

At the Admissions Interview staff will start by going through the Referrals Form and checking that it is complete. Then staff will run through about the project again with the client and check that they understand how the project works and about key working. Staff will then go through the *House Rules*. There are two copies both of which need signing by both parties. One copy is then kept as a record in the client's file,

and another is kept by the client themselves. Staff will go through the *Licence Agreement* with the client. There are two copies of this that need signing and dating by both parties. One copy is filed and the second goes with the client's application form for Housing Benefit. The client will be given a copy of *London Housing Trust's Equal Opportunity Policy* and the client will be asked to fill in the *Equal Opportunity Form*. Staff will then go through the *Resident's Welcome Pack* with the resident, the *Complaints Procedure*, and the *Residents Protection from Abuse Policy Statement*. Finally the client's Housing Benefit form will be filled in by staff, and the need for this form to be taken down to local Council at the Town Hall as either that day or the following day, depending on the time will be explained to the client. Staff will also explain to the client about the need for a blue receipt to be returned to the office when they have handed the form in.

Once the admission has been completed then the client can be shown his room, and the *In and Out Board* must be explained, and the name of the new client must be put on the In and Out Board.

All clients have the right to appeal the decision if they have not been accepted for London Housing Trust. If they wish to do this they can request that the information be considered by the Project Manager (or another project worker if this is not possible). Help to do this can be given by the referring agency.

Signature of Staff Member:

Date: