

DEC
2015

Tower Hamlets Housing Options Services
Network Partners Newsletter



Housing Options Service



Awarded the Gold Standard Challenge

N
E
T
W
O
R
K

The National Practitioner Support Service (NPSS) is a new service set up specifically to develop and administer this framework for providing continuous improvement in front line housing services through the development and delivery of the **Gold Standard Challenge**.

The challenge is a local authority, sector led peer review scheme designed to help local authorities deliver more efficient and cost effective homelessness prevention services. The challenge follows a 10 step continuous improvement approach that starts with a pledge for local authorities aspiring to '*strive for continuous improvement in front line housing services*' and culminates in an application for the Gold Standard Challenge.

For further details go to; <http://home.practitionersupport.org/>

The Housing Options Service are very pleased to announce that were awarded the **Gold Challenge award** in July 2015. **The Service passed with flying colours and got 78% - apparently one of the highest scores of all the reviews conducted to date.**

Reviewers commented on many things but they were particularly impressed on the willingness and enthusiasm of officers to participate, explain and engage.

Part of the remit was for the reviewers to identify three top areas of excellence.

These were

- HOST
- The walk in service, reception and seeing experienced officers at the first point of contact
- No Wrong Door



Janet Slater 'Service Manager of Options and Assessments' said

'Can I extend my thanks to all who participated in this and who contributed at the eleventh hour in getting some of our identified shortcomings up to speed before the review commenced. The score reflects how we impressed Tim and Mark with every element of this Service (there were 12 in all) and all aspects of the customer journey. Our partnership working was also praised as was our range of partners.

As you know, we never stand still in this Service and always look to improve and build on what we have achieved. Over the next few weeks we will feed back the finer details of each element and the recommendations for improvements / amendments/ areas for consideration and discuss with the appropriate teams.

Thanks again and WELL DONE!



FAREWELL COLIN CORMACK



In June we said goodbye to the Service Head of the Housing Options Service Colin Cormack.

Colin had over 40 years experience working for Tower Hamlets and will be truly missed.

WELCOME JACKIE ODUNOYE

Jackie Odunoye has been appointed as Colin Cormack's replacement and is now the new Service Head of the Housing Options Service.

IMPORTANT DATE FOR YOUR DIARIES



THE NEXT TOWER HAMLETS
LANDLORD / AGENTS FORUM WILL
BE TAKING PLACE ON
FRIDAY 19TH FEBRUARY 2016
AT ALBERT JACOB HOUSE, 62 ROMAN ROAD,
LONDON E2 0PG.
FURTHER INFORMATION WILL BE SENT OUT SOON

NO WRONG DOOR UPDATE



You may be aware that the Council's Housing Options service is being transformed to offer more help to those threatened with homelessness or needing housing advice. Instead of being able to simply offer advice on housing options, staff are working closely with other agencies so as to be able to offer information on a comprehensive range of services that help with problems that often cause homelessness or housing difficulties. This includes money advice, debt counselling, landlord and tenant mediation, specialist legal advice, help in accessing education and training, help in seeking work, access to child care and our Children's Centres.

Our Housing Options staff can make referrals to other agencies to ensure clients get the help they need, and some support services are now operating from Albert Jacob House.

The idea of this programme – called No Wrong Door – is to ensure that our customers can access all the services they need to help resolve their housing problems from one point of contact rather than having to navigate their way through lots of different agencies themselves. No Wrong Door provides a coordinated service so that for example, helping with debt management may mean there is more money to pay for housing costs, or getting into training and employment can mean that the benefit cap does not apply.

If you'd like to know more about the help that is available please talk to your housing officer and ask to talk to somebody about No Wrong Door or call 0207 364 7272 or email

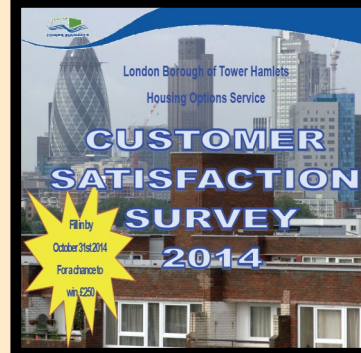
homeless@towerhamlets.gov.uk

CONGRATULATIONS



to

Rujina Aktar



who won our prize draw and received
£250.00 shopping vouchers for
completing the 2014 Tower Hamlets
Housing Options Customer Survey.



Let us help you.

Just ask Mo

Ask Mo (My Options) is a new online tool that provides quick, easy, 24-hour access to help and information about housing in Tower Hamlets. It can also help to point you towards other support and services available to you, including:

- debt management
- job opportunities and training
- child care options
- money management
- legal advice
- help with utility bills



To visit our Ask Mo website, please go to:
<https://towerhamlets.ehodirect.org.uk> or

[click here](#)

CALLING ALL LANDLORDS

The Council is looking for properties for homeless households and is now able to work with individual property owners.

The Council's Rent Guarantee Scheme offers competitive rents for property owners who wish to work directly with us.

Other attractive terms include:-

- **No risk of rent arrears; the council pays you even if the tenant doesn't pay us**
- **No risk of housing benefit claw back – again, the council takes that risk**
- **No fees**
- **Compensation if malicious damage is caused**
- **No long-term contractual tie-in**
- **The council will undertake and pay for any repossession action**
- **Minimal void periods and no marketing costs**
- **A tenancy support service especially at the beginning of the tenancy**



The Council has another scheme which provides generous one-off, non-refundable cash incentives where landlords are willing to grant tenancies to people we nominate. More details are available on application.

If you are interested in working directly with the Council please check the terms of any agreement you may currently have with a Managing Agent to ensure you can do so.



For more information and advice, please call;

Mohon Miah on 0207 364 7298 or email him on

mohon.miah@towerhamlets.gov.uk

2015 Tower Hamlets

Rough sleepers street count

Tower Hamlets' Annual Street Count took place on Thursday 26th November 2015.

The final Count figure was 12 which is 7 up from last year but certainly much lower than our neighbouring boroughs of Newham (28), Hackney (22) and the City of London (48). The increase in our Count figure indicates that there is still a lot of work to be done as this is just a snapshot of a total number of over 200 rough sleepers met on Tower Hamlets streets each year.



ALBERT JACOB FC VS BOOTH HOUSE



Albert Jacob FC gave a respectful performance against a 'young' and 'vibrant' Booth House (Salvation Army) team.

Having started the game 11 players v 10 players in Booth Houses favour, the first half Booth house raced to a 4-1 lead. Second half with 11 v 11 was a much closer encounter and the final score was 9-7 to Booth House.

Very well played to those who took part and we look forward to the rematch when the teams will hopefully be evenly match. Booth House really enjoyed the game and said 'it was good to interact with staff from the Housing Options Service'.



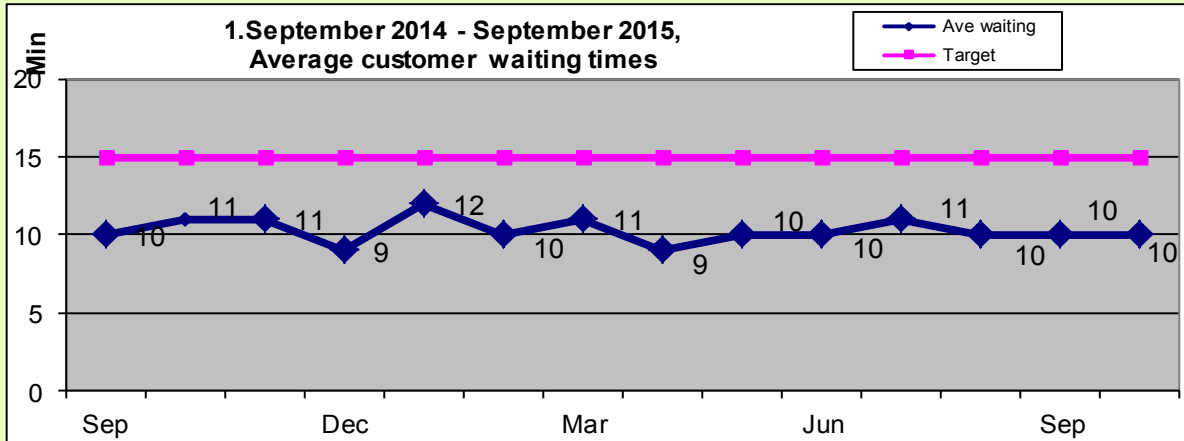
The Housing Options Service Statistics

See below the Housing Options Service statistics .

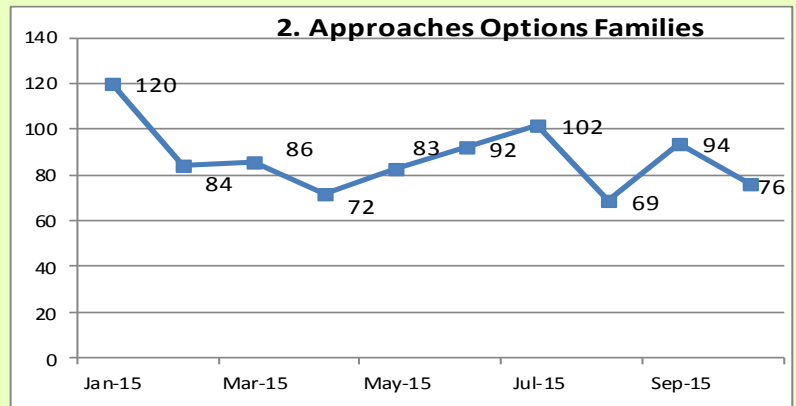
These stats include;

1. Average monthly customer waiting times

- Our target is for our customers to be seen within 15 minutes, which we are achieving.

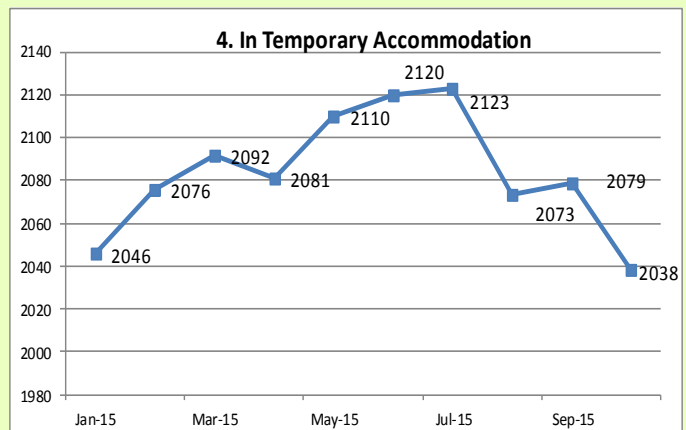
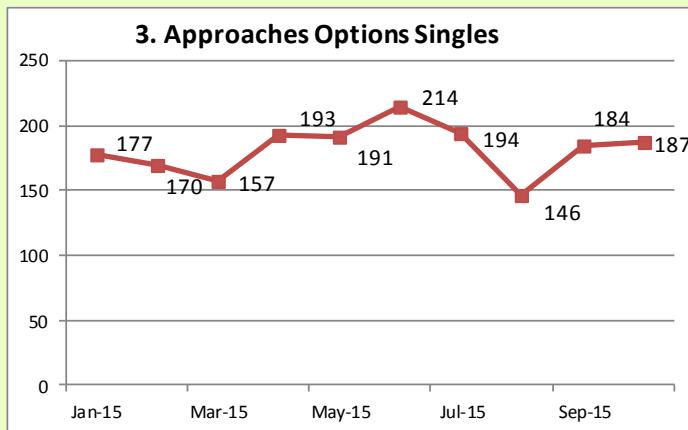


2. Monthly Approaches made to our Housing Options Service Family team.



3. Monthly Approaches made to our Housing Options Service singles team.

4. Current Tenants in Temporary Accommodation property.



Training With Aspiration

(TWA) are a training agency that helps people on benefits become trained and ready for work.

They offer courses in ICT, business, media, health and social care, travel and tourism, plumbing, electrical maintenance and accountancy.

The courses are based at various venues and are well organised with a high standard of training provided. There is also help to get work at the end of the course.

If you are interested in TWA call 07704 018 511 or email Alec Brown at alecb@twa-careers.co.uk for more information, alternatively ask officers in the Families Options Team about the scheme.



BRIDGING THE GAPS BETWEEN
TRAINING, RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

24+ ADVANCED LEARNING & CAREERS

Nationally recognised qualifications for learners aged over 24 years



TWA-CAREERS | DURU HOUSE | 101 COMMERCIAL ROAD | LONDON | E1 1RB

- BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
- ICT PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE
- CREATIVE MEDIA
- HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE
- TRAVEL & TOURISM
- PLUMBING & GAS
- ELECTRICAL MAINTENANCE
- ACCOUNTANCY LEVEL 3 & 4

CALL YOUR REPRESENTATIVE TODAY

FIND OUT HOW TO RECEIVE FINANCIAL SUPPORT THROUGH THE NEW ADVANCED LEARNING PROGRAMME

ALEC BROWN 07704 018 511
alecb@twa-careers.co.uk



FREE Training Courses

Available now at Free2Learn, Hackney

FREE TRAINING COURSES

- CCTV Operator SIA Training
 - Door Supervision SIA Training
- Both courses include fully paid SIA License

- Forklift Counterbalance
- Includes fully paid Forklift License

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible you must be:

- Over 19 years old
- Currently receiving JSA, ESA or Income support
- A UK or EU resident for 3+ years

GAIN QUALIFICATIONS

As part of your training programme you will also achieve accredited qualifications.

ENROL NOW!

Find out more www.free2learn.org.uk/training
Or call to register for free training 020 8525 9430 (Ext 1000)



020 8525 9430



info@free2learn.org.uk



www.free2learn.org.uk



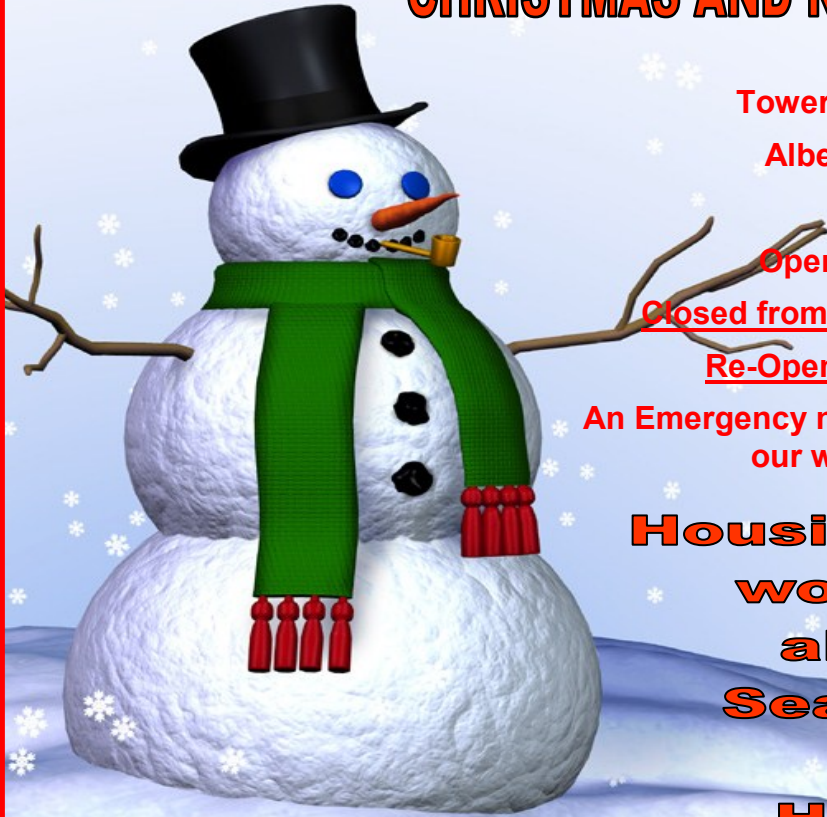
Free2LearnUK



Free2Learn
263 Mare Street
Hackney
London E8 3NS

NOTICE BOARD

HOUSING OPTIONS SERVICE CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR OPENING TIMES



Tower Hamlets Housing Options Service,
Albert Jacob House, 62 Roman Road,
London E2 0PG

Opening hours over the New Year are;

Closed from Thursday 24th December 2015 at 4:00pm

Re-Open Monday 4th January 2016 at 9:30am

An Emergency number over this period can be obtained from
our website, www.towerhamlets.gov.uk

**Housing Options Service
would like to wish
all our Partners
Seasons Greetings
&
Happy New year**

**NEXT EDITION
OF
NETWORK
IS DUE;
MARCH 2016**

The best way to contact the
Housing Options Service
is via our generic email box at
homeless@towerhamlets.gov.uk

All previous editions of the
Network Newsletter can be found on our
website
click on the link below to view.
[http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/
ignl/housing.aspx](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ignl/housing.aspx)

CONTACT ME

If you have any stories or
information you wish to have published in the
Network Newsletter please contact me

**Jamie Jackson
Business Support Team
Housing Options Service
Albert Jacob House
62 Roman Road
London E2 0PG
Tel: 0207 364 7262**

Jamie.jackson@towerhamlets.gov.uk