

COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS, COMPLAINTS

What you have been saying

We have just produced our first quarterly Feedback Report that looks at what negative and positive feedback you have given us.

Positive feedback in the form of ideas or compliments are always welcome. Most of the compliments that we have received have been about our staff, for example:

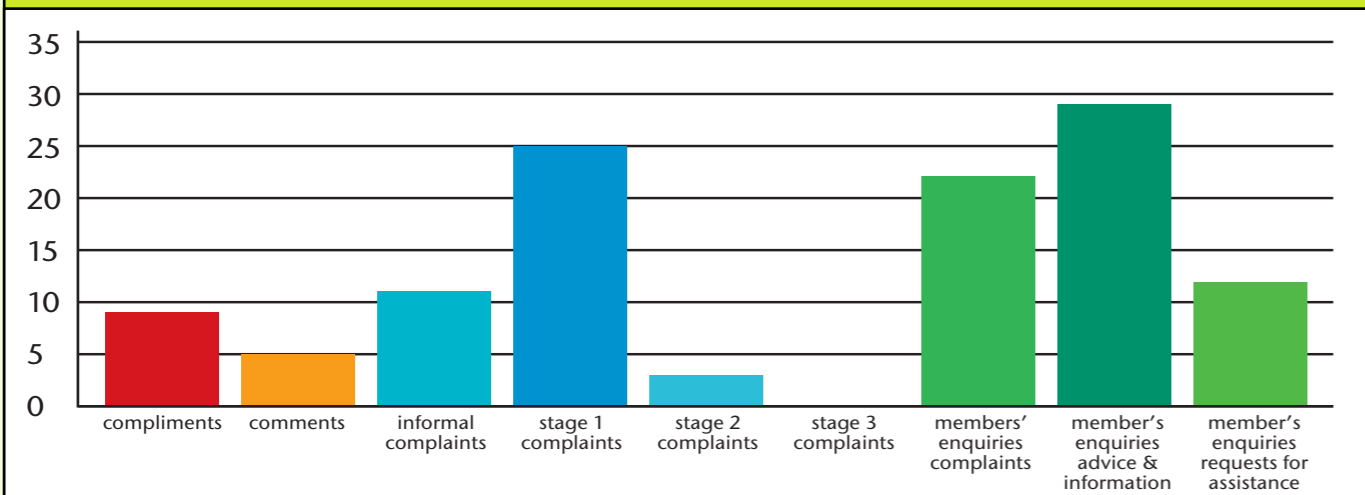
"We think you are doing a very good job, you are all polite...."

"Your worker is very kind and generous...."

On the negative side complaints have been received mainly concerning both staff and temporary accommodation.

All this information will be discussed with the staff who teams will be looking at how to improve performance. We will also be showing the report to the next Homeless Service Users Panel, if you would like to come along and discuss the results please call us for an invitation, see contact details below. Many thanks to everyone who has given us feedback, we will continue to report on what you are saying in these pages.

Breakdown of types of feedback received – November '09 to March '10



CONTACT DETAILS

Carol Johnson, In Touch,
Albert Jacob House, 62 Roman Road,
Bethnal Green, London E2 0PG

Telephone: 020 7364 7431

e-mail: quality@towerhamlets.gov.uk

website: www.towerhamlets.gov.uk

Office opening times: 9.30am to 4pm

অনুবাদের জন্য ফোন করুন:
如需要譯本, 請致電:
turjumaadaha soo wac:
Muốn có bản dịch gọi:

020 7364 7479

**FOR LARGE PRINT,
AUDIO, BRAILLE,
OR ANY
TRANSLATION CALL
020 7364 7479**

Service Restructure

Over the next few months you may notice some changes in the way the service is organised. We are in the process of making some alterations that we hope will help us provide a more streamlined service for our clients. We will report more about this in the next issue of **InTouch**.

Importantly our main enquiry number will remain the same, so for all General Enquires call **020 7364 7474**.



Tower Hamlets
Homeless & Housing
Advice Services

InTouch

Newsletter of the Homeless and Housing Advice Services



April 2010

20% reduction in the amount owed in rent arrears

The past year has seen a drop of 20% in the amount of rent arrears that are owed by people living in temporary accommodation. Our Rent Arrears Officers have been working hard to reduce the arrears and are determined to keep up this good work and reduce the amount owed still further.

Rent arrears benefit no one, families are saddled with debt that won't go away, and the Council has to use

vital funds compensating for the lost income.

We are very appreciative of the majority of our clients that make sure their rent is paid on time. We want to reassure them that the minority who fail to pay are not forgotten.

Remember this service will continue to collect the arrears even when clients leave temporary accommodation. If you have arrears call 020 7364 7474 for advice now.

The Money Advice Team

If you have rent arrears, debts such as gas or electricity bills or problems managing your money, contact the Money Advice Team for help. They work as part of the Homeless and Housing Advice Service and would



be happy to help you. Call Mark or Karuna on **020 7364 3558**

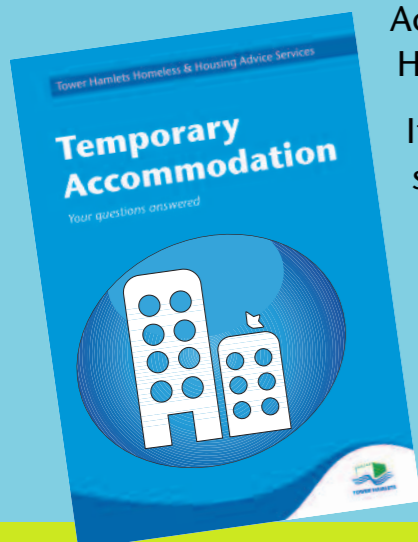
For all your General Enquires call 020 7364 7474

Repairs – what you need to know



When you need a repair done in your temporary accommodation you need to call the managing agent responsible for your property. Your managing agent's number will have been given to you when you signed for your tenancy, and will also be on page 2 of your Temporary Accommodation Handbook.

If you are not sure who your agent is please call the General Enquiry Line on 020 7364 7474.



Complaining about repairs

The vast majority of repairs are completed in time and to a high standard, but if you are not happy with the time a repair has taken, or the way it has been done, you can get help by calling the Homeless Service with your complaint. We will be happy to help you get the job done to agreed standards.

Don't forget, to report a repair call your managing agent, but to complain about the repair service call us on

020 7364 7474

Broken windows

If you break a window you will be expected to pay for the repair. Just like tenants of any social landlord, you have to pay for any accidental damage.

This includes broken windows, caused by you or your visitors.



Keep a lid on condensation



*When cooking, bathing or drying clothes,
Follow these tips from someone that knows,
Stop the condensation, damp and mould,
By opening a window even in the cold.*

*Leave radiators free of washing that is wet,
Ventilate the rooms when dryers are set,
Keep lids on pans to help with the steam,
Wipe your walls often - you know what I mean.*

*Freshen up your home and start today,
Keep condensation and damp at bay!*

Be a good tenant and neighbour

We all know what it's like to be occasionally disturbed by noise from our neighbours.

Some common problems are loud music or TVs turned up too high and loud talking at night in open areas.

Everyone wants to live in as peaceful an environment as possible, but problems such as these can often escalate, causing stress and difficulties with neighbours.

Under the tenancy agreement for your temporary accommodation, you are obliged to make sure that no disturbance is caused to others by your family or any of your visitors.

The vast majority of households cause no disturbance to others at all, but unfortunately, every year we have to

evict a certain number of families from temporary accommodation due to Anti Social Behaviour and this often includes an element of noise nuisance. If a family are evicted, it is likely that they would be deemed Intentionally Homeless and would not be assisted if they made a further application for housing.

We all need to be aware of others and be good neighbours.

If you have neighbours that are causing you problems with noise or any other form of antisocial behaviour you can get help and advice from:



Tower Hamlets Anti Social Behaviour Unit
Tel 0800 917 5918

http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgs/51-100/98_anti-social_behaviour.aspx

CONDENSATION AND DAMP

Many clients complain about condensation and damp in their properties. To prevent this, try and limit the build up of moisture in the air by following these basic rules:

- 1 Never dry clothes on radiators or in front of heaters, dry them outside or in the bathroom.
- 2 Cook with the pan lids on, open the windows and close the kitchen door.
- 3 When filling the bath, put the cold water in first and close the bathroom door.

Remember, every day each occupant of your home creates 1 pint of moisture in the air. Washing up creates 2 pints and drying clothes on a radiator can produce an astonishing 9 pints! Ventilate your home every day to allow the moisture-laden air to escape.



Keep condensation and damp in your home at bay!

SPA The Single Point of Access Employment Team

The SPA team are dedicated to helping our clients with families in temporary accommodation find work and training. They are our very own employment specialists based at our offices at 62 Roman Road E2.

If you are considering seeking work or training and want some expert help that is tailor-made to fit your needs – SPA is waiting to hear from you, complete the enclosed contact card now!

ESOL Classes English for speakers of other languages

SPA Employment Team is organising ESOL classes for families in Temporary Accommodation – if you are interested call SPA

How to contact SPA

Tel: 020 7364 3049



Register with SPA and join our weekly programme of events.



Dear Intouch....

My name is Mohammed Aminul Islam and I am a resident of Tower Hamlets. I have been unemployed for about a year now and until recently I had almost given up hope of finding employment. Since October 2009 I have been involved with the Tower Hamlets SPA team. I was contacted by one of the advisors Zahara one morning and was asked if I was looking for work and that she could help me look for work. I made an appointment and met with her within a few days.

Since then Zahara helped me brush up my CV and aided me with filling up online applications and sending CV's and covering letters to several employers and also introduced me to another advisor Philip. Together they have given me so much dedication and such a personally tailored service that I really can't find the words to describe the level of help and encouragement that I have received.

It's hard enough to find work and this economic climate really doesn't help either. My advice to other residents, who are currently in temporary accommodation and unemployed, is that you really should get in contact with the SPA team as soon as possible and I Promise you that you will receive the help you need to make your search for work much more effective.

I was also given the opportunity to volunteer at the Homeless unit (Albert Jacob House) for two weeks thanks to Zahara and the Quality Team. My experience there was fantastic. I am currently doing some work experience as an account manager which was organized by Philip and Zahara and if I can demonstrate my suitability for the position the employer has said that I will be employed.

I have a really positive attitude now and look forward to the future again. If you want to receive the help and advice I received get in contact with the SPA team. I have registered with 5 different recruitment agencies and I can assure you that you won't find this level of help from anyone else it's a free service so what have you got to lose!

Mohammed Aminul Islam

Want some help with confidence, motivation and goal setting? SPA have Life Coaches ready to help you

SPA can now offer you "Career Move" personal coaching sessions. These one-to-one sessions are available to all job-seekers living in temporary accommodation that have children or pregnancy in the family.

The project is currently working alongside SPA and is supporting clients to make positive changes to their lives and help them overcome the barriers that can prevent them from finding work.

The Career Move coaches look at confidence, motivation and goal setting, as well as providing clients with an opportunity to see how employment and

training opportunities fit into their bigger picture, future aspirations and goals.



Career Move Coaching Sessions

Drop in on our Job Club Friday 10:30am – 1:00pm

Our Job club is running in the Homeless Reception Area. Come along, do a job search, and apply for vacancies and training. SPA advisers will be there to help and guide you, we look forward to seeing you.

Women into the Fire Service

Women get your Career in gear! The London Fire Brigade is recruiting women as they are currently under represented. Start a career by joining the industry. For information on how to register contact the SPA Team.



Career Move coaching sessions

Tuesday 10:00am – 4:00pm

Make some positive changes to your life with Career Move Coaching Sessions. The sessions are free. To book an appointment or have a chat about the sessions call the SPA Team.

CV & Interview Technique Workshops

Wednesday 11:00am – 2:00pm

This is an opportunity for registered clients to become skilled with:

- Dealing with interviews
- How to write great CVs, Covering Letters, and Personal Statements

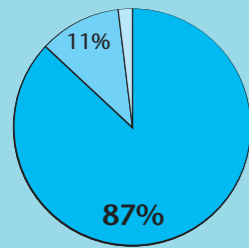
Drop in or call for details.

OUR RECEPTION SURVEY RESULTS

Our 2010 reception survey has again returned some positive results.

The vast majority of clients are happy with how they are dealt with by our receptionists, what our reception is like and by the cleanliness of the reception and toilets.

This year we also wanted to find out how useful clients would find it if we used text and email to communicate with them. Over half of respondents thought this would be a good idea and as a result of this the Quality Team is working on introducing text messaging and ensuring email addresses are collected.

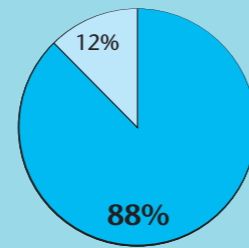


How polite are our receptionists?

Good and very good 87%
OK 11%
Poor and very poor 2%

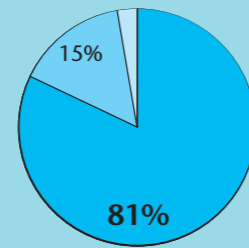
USE OF OPEN COUNTERS

We know clients prefer to be interviewed without screens. 88% of people interviewed on open counters were happy with the way their privacy was protected, however 12% of clients felt it was not private enough. Our goal is for all our clients to be satisfied with the way their privacy was protected so we will be working on this with frontline staff to ensure everyone is aware they can be interviewed in a private room and that privacy matters to us.



Was privacy protected during interviews on open counters?

Yes 88% No 12%



Overall, how did clients rate our reception and judge the Homeless and Housing Advice Service?

Good and very good 81%
OK 15%
Poor and very poor 4%



Car-free zone The facts

If you bid for a property in a 'car-free zone', you will **not** be allocated a parking space and you are **not** allowed to apply for a parking permit from the Council. It is very important that you check to see if a property you are interested in is within a car-free zone. Remember it is unlikely to be possible to withdraw an offer because of parking issues. If possible, place your bids online, as more information is often available on properties.



Decoration Packs replace grants

Until recently, tenants moving into a permanent property could apply for a Decoration Grant. This has now been replaced by a Decoration Pack, which must be applied for within three months of moving in. Once you have picked from the colour chart, you will be provided with enough paint, and the necessary equipment to decorate. Contact your Neighbourhood Housing Office for more information and an application form when you have bid successfully and signed for a permanent tenancy.

বাংলা টীকা

BENGALI NOTES



আর্থিক পরামর্শ

আপনার যদি বকেয়া ভাড়া এবং আর্থিক সমস্যা থাকে তাহলে হোমলেস সার্ভিসে অবস্থিত মানি এ্যাডভাইস টিমের থেকে সাহায্য নিন।
0207 364 3558 নাম্বারে ফোন করুন।

মেরামত

আপনার ম্যানেজিং এজেন্ট যেভাবে মেরামত কাজ করেছে তাতে যদি সন্তুষ্ট না হন তাহলে জেনারেল এনকোয়ারি লাইনে 0207 364 7474 নাম্বারে ফোন করুন।

নিজে একজন আদর্শ প্রতিবেশী হোন

আমাদের সকলের উচিত অন্যকে বিরক্ত না করা এবং তাদের সুবিধা ও অসুবিধার ব্যাপারে সতর্ক থাকার মাধ্যমে নিজে ভাল প্রতিবেশীর মত কাজ করা। যদি আপনার প্রতিবেশী নিয়ে ঝামেলা হয় তাহলে এ্যান্টিসোশ্যাল বিহেভিয়ার ইউনিটকে 0800 917 5918 নাম্বারে ফোন করুন।

কনডেনসেশান এবং ড্যাম্প

নিচে উল্লেখিত সোজা নিয়মগুলির অনুসরণ করে আপনি কনডেনসেশান এবং ড্যাম্প কমাতে পারেন:

- কখনও রেডিমেটারের উপরে কাপড় শুকাবেন না
- পাতিলের উপরে ঢাকনি দিয়ে রান্না করুন
- গোসলের সময় আগে বাথে গরম পানি ঢালুন
- প্রতিদিন আপনার ঘর আলো বাতাস চলাচলের জন্য খোলা রাখুন

গাড়ী মুক্ত এলাকা

আপনি যদি এমন একটি বাড়ীর জন্য বিডিং করেন যেটি একটি গাড়ী মুক্ত এলাকাতে অবস্থিত তার মানে আপনি কোথাও পার্ক করতে পারবেন না এবং আপনি বারা থেকে পার্কিং পারমিট কিনতে পারবেন না। সুতরাং বিড করার আগে এদিকে খেয়াল রাখুন।

ঘর সাজানোর জন্য অনুদানের বদলে সরঞ্জাম

আপনি যখন আপনার স্থায়ী ঘরে উঠবেন তখন আর ডেকোরোটিং গ্র্যান্টের (ঘর সাজানোর জন্য অনুদান) জন্য আবেদন করতে পারবেন না। এর পরিবর্তে আপনাকে আপনার ঘর সাজানোর জন্য রং এবং অন্যান্য সরঞ্জাম দেয়া হবে।

কাজ খুঁজতে সাহায্য দরকার?

আপনি যদি কাজ অথবা প্রশিক্ষণ খুঁজতে সাহায্য চান তাহলে হোমলেস অফিসের অবস্থিত স্পা (SPA) টিমের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন। তারা আপনার আত্মবিশ্বাস ও উদ্দীপনা সংক্রান্ত সমস্যা মোকাবেলার জন্য একজন লাইফ কোচের কাছেও সুপারিশ করতে পারে। স্পাকে (SPA) 0207 364 7479 নাম্বারে ফোন করুন।

যেকোন ধরনের অনুসন্ধানের জন্য
জেনারেল এনকোয়ারি লাইনে
0207 364 7474 নাম্বারে
ফোন করুন।