



Tower Hamlets  
Homeless & Housing  
Advice Services

Newsletter of the Homeless and Housing Advice Services

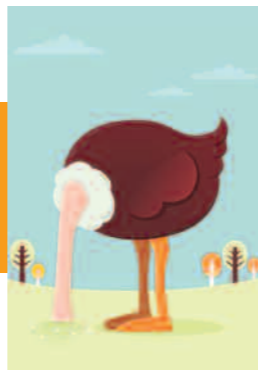
# IN TOUCH

Our rent deposit  
scheme can  
rehouse you  
speedily to a  
property of  
your choice,  
for details call  
020 7364 7474

## বাংলা টীকা

Bengali Notes

- আমাদের কাছে অস্থায়ী ঘরের নির্দেশিকার (গাইড টু টেম্পোরারি এ্যাকোমোডেশান) একটি নতুন সংস্করণ আছে যেটিতে অনেক গুরুত্বপূর্ণ তথ্য দেয়া আছে, আপনার কপির জন্য 020 7364 7474 নাম্বারে ফোন করুন
- গোপনীয়তা রক্ষা করা গুরুত্বপূর্ণ, যদি আপনি আমাদের সাথে দেখা করেন এবং কোন প্রাইভেট জায়গায় দেখা করতে চান তাহলে দয়া করে সেটি চান এবং আমরা নিশ্চয়ই সেটির আয়োজন করব।
- আপনি কি ক্রেডিট ইউনিয়নের নাম শুনেছেন, যদি আপনার খারাপ ক্রেডিট রেকর্ড থাকে তাহলে তারা আপনাকে আর্থিক সেবা প্রদান করতে পারবে এবং এজন্য তারা আপনার ক্রেডিট ইতিহাস বিবেচনা করবে না, আরো জানতে হলে 020 7729 9218 নাম্বারে ফোন করুন।



## Don't bury your head in the sand!

Is your rent account in order? Are you in arrears?

If you need help and advice with your rent arrears we want to hear from you, call the number below and ask for the Rent Arrears Team. However complicated your problems are we can give you advice. We will try to make an arrangement with you to repay any money you owe by weekly installments.

If you want help with managing your money or dealing with debts we have Money Advisers that can help you.

Call us for copies of our leaflets "Sorting out your rent arrears" and "Money Advice".

For the Rent Arrears Team  
or for Money Advice call:  
**020 7364 7474**

**Don't forget  
properties will not  
be offered to you if you are in  
rent arrears and there is no  
arrangement to repay them.**

### 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](mailto:quality@towerhamlets.gov.uk)  
website: [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk](http://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**

# Award for customer care

Homeless Services receive award for customer care



Some of the  
Homeless and  
Housing Advice  
Team

We are very pleased to report that we have just been awarded the Customer Service Excellence Award (CSE). The CSE is a government run scheme to promote high standards of customer care. We did well in many areas and scored especially highly for our willingness to open up our service to scrutiny.

The report also indicated some areas for improvement, these include how we report and monitor informal complaints and what choice we give clients in how they can contact us. We have already begun work on both of these issues, the Feedback article

(page 3) explains how we propose to monitor informal complaints, and we are looking into the use of text as a way to communicate with clients.

We have worked hard and a lot has been accomplished, but we are not standing still and will continue to listen to our clients in order to build the sort of service that meets their needs.

Help us by coming to the Homeless Service Users Panel where you can give us your views and comments, for details call Carol on 020 7364 7431.



# We are ready for YOUR feedback

We are the first service in Tower Hamlets to have an on screen process to capture your comments, compliments and informal complaints. We want to make sure all your feedback is recorded so we can monitor what we do well and where we need to do better.

The system that deals with formal complaints remains exactly the same, our new system is only designed to pick up all the smaller grumbles and concerns that are

important but often do not merit making a formal complaint.

What we have found is that clients often don't want to go to the bother of completing a form or writing a letter, so now just by telling an officer what concerns them face to face or over the phone their concern can be registered in minutes, then dealt with and monitored.

Look out for the first **Feedback Report** in the next issue of In Touch.

## Temporary accommodation

*Your questions answered*

The Temporary Accommodation Team have launched their new 12 page guide to temporary accommodation. The guide will be issued to everyone as they move into temporary accommodation. If you are already in TA and would like a copy, just call 020 7364 7474 and a copy will be sent to you.

### The information includes:

- who to call for repairs
- what you are expected to pay for
- what to do if you want to go away
- what to do if there are changes to your household
- plus information on many other issues

We hope you find the guide helpful, if you have any comments or ideas on what else we could include in the guide please let us know.

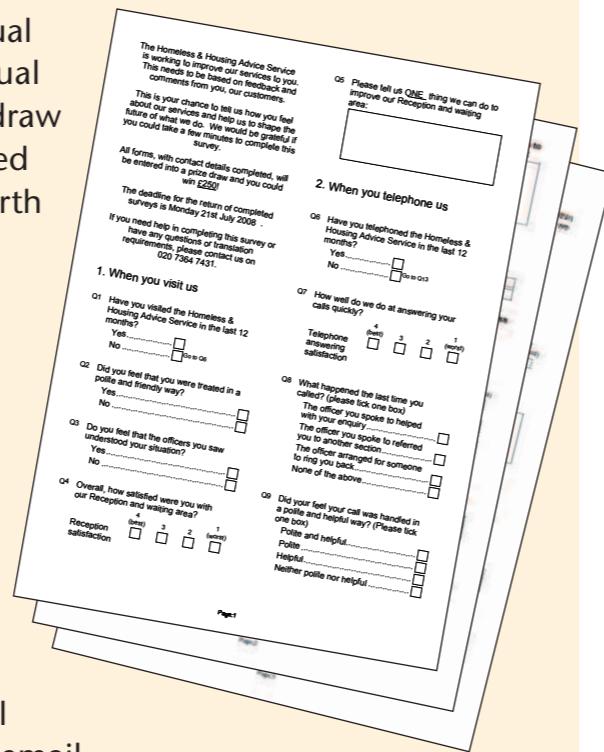
## What would you like to see in the Clients Survey 2009?

Next month we will be sending out our Annual Client's Survey. As usual there will be a prize draw of £250 for all returned forms, so it's well worth completing your one and sending it in.

What sort of questions would you like to see in the survey?

What do you think we should be asking?

If you have any ideas please let us know by calling Carol on 020 7364 7431 or email [quality@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:quality@towerhamlets.gov.uk)



# Poor credit history?

*The Credit Union can still help you*

The Credit Union is a financial co-operative owned and run by its members, people like you, and there are no outside shareholders who need to be paid from the profits. Members are encouraged to save and if you need to apply



for a loan your credit history will not be held against you in the same way as it is with the mainstream banks.

## Why not save for the day you move to a permanent home?

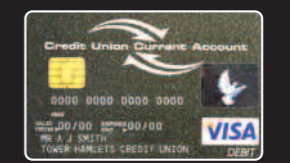
Many people in temporary accommodation will eventually move to a permanent home, this may be years away for many readers, and is bound to mean extra expense. Consider planning for the cost of the move and the new things you may need to buy. A good way to do this would be to open a Credit Union account and save a small amount every month.

## How to join:

To join Tower Hamlets Community Credit Union go to the website at [www.thccu.co.uk](http://www.thccu.co.uk) or call 020 7729 9218

**Fast, easy access to your money 24/7**  
Even with credit problems

Everyone can get a VISA Debit/Cash Card with our Current Account



Tower Hamlets Community Credit Union  
[www.thccu.co.uk](http://www.thccu.co.uk)

## Homeless Service Users Panel

– a members story



*"When I first received the letter from the Quality Team of the Homeless Service inviting me to join the Homeless Service Users Panel without hesitation I said yes. I was delighted and excited to do it and discuss with the Quality Team ways in which the Homeless Service*

*can improve as it is such a vital service to people from all walks of life.*

*I have seen the new facilities and visited it, and I would be proud to work there. The glass windows between officer and client are removed so that the client can feel more comfortable and relaxed while speaking. Facilities for clients with children improved as is time waiting to be seen by an officer.*

*In closing I can say I felt appreciated by those I met at the meetings. I have worked with some wonderful people over the years on the panel.*

*Thanks to the Quality Team for inviting me to be a part of the Panel, you are doing a great job, I hope you have many more years of success."*  
Darcus.

## CONFIDENTIALITY MATTERS

**CONFIDENTIAL**

In our reception some of our interview spaces are open booths where staff can see clients speedily.

If you visit us and want to be seen in a closed area please tell the officer, they will be happy to move to a more private location. You might also want to tell the receptionist when you book in that you want a private room, it may mean you will have to wait a little longer but your request will be honoured.