

## Fair Finance

Nobody likes to be short-changed, but when it comes to borrowing money many people are short-changed everyday.

Fair finance was set up to do something about this. They have been trading since 2005 as a community business and are registered with the FSA.

They offer affordable loans and advice to people with money worries. They also run courses on managing your money, loans and what to do if you have debts.

If you have a client with money worries you might want to suggest Fair Finance.



**Fair Finance**  
47 Ben Johnson Road  
Stepney, E1 4SA  
020 7780 1777

Open weekdays  
9am to 5:30pm  
info@fairfinance.org.uk  
www.fairfinance.org.uk  
020 7254 1976

## Sign video interpretation now available

We no longer have to worry about locating a sign interpreter when deaf clients use our service as we have recently installed a state-of-the-art sign video system. We now have fast and easy access to sign interpretation whenever our reception is open.

The system links us to a trained sign interpreter who signs directly with the client by video screen and camera. It is extremely easy to use and we recommend it to any of our partners who have busy receptions where this facility may be called for.



Paulina St John our reception manager and the sign interpreter on screen.

Get **NETWORK** direct to your email



Have your copy of Network sent to you direct by email. Send your details to:

quality@towerhamlets.gov.uk

## We want to hear from you!

Please send us your letters and ideas – all welcome.

### NETWORK

#### Contact details

Carol Johnson at the Quality Team  
**telephone:** 020 7364 7431  
**e-mail:** quality@towerhamlets.gov.uk

### H&HAS

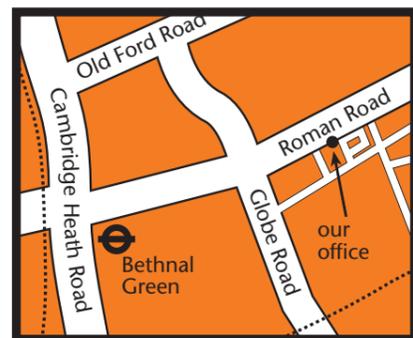
#### Contact details

H&HAS  
Albert Jacob House,  
62 Roman Road,  
Bethnal Green,  
London E2 0PG  
**telephone:**  
General Enquiries  
**020 7364 7474**  
**e-mail:** homeless@towerhamlets.gov.uk  
**web site:** www.towerhamlets.gov.uk

### How to find us

#### Bus Stops:

Roman Road: 8, D6  
Cambridge Heath Road:  
106, 254  
**London Underground:**  
Bethnal Green



Tower Hamlets  
Homeless & Housing  
Advice Services

The Partner's Newsletter  
**NETWORK**

# SORT

Street Outreach Response  
Team is launched

Tower Hamlets now has its own street outreach response team – **SORT**. They were launched in July and will be run by Thames Reach who are passionate about making this service a success.

Their mission is to end street homelessness and address the needs of rough sleepers. SORT aim to do the following:

- Work closely with local organisations
- Offer client centred care
- Be creative and innovative

- Welcome feedback
- Respond speedily to referrals

For more information about the new team and contact details:

**Main number:** 0870 383 3333 for enquiries and referrals

**Email:** towerhamletssort@thamesreach.org.uk

**Address:** 122-126 Backchurch Lane, London E1 1ND

**Out Reach Services Manager:**

Petra Salva  
Petra.salva@thamesreach.org.uk  
020 7702 5633



Left to right: Petra Salva (Services manager), Jon Faxen, William Norman, Mohammed Shaibur Rahman (TH Co-ordinator), Sophie Tomlinson, Tom Vincent (Team manager)

## Join the E P@nel

**We want you and your staff to join our new E Panel.**

We aim to use the panel to consult you on our service, but it will also allow us to keep you up to date with information useful to your staff and clients.

Please ask as many of your staff as possible to join up so we can speed-up communication and consultations.

To join the Homeless and Housing Advice E Panel email: [quality@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:quality@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## Bidding made easy with two new terminals in reception

Our clients have been telling us they want terminals in our reception so they can bid for properties. In response to this we have installed 2 new customer terminals for their use. We

want to offer other information on the terminals as well, so if you provide a service or have information that our clients might find useful to access on our reception terminals please let us know.



*“I have been bidding for years ... when will I get an offer?”*

Clients often ask how long it will take for them to get an offer of permanent accommodation.

This is a very difficult question to answer and it often depends on what area and floor level people are bidding for. Generally, bidding for the more popular the areas or the lower floor levels can mean much longer waits.

The table below shows the number of people waiting and the number of properties let. The table is restricted to Community

Group 2 which is where the vast majority of homeless clients are registered when accepted for rehousing.

In total there are 22,624 people on the Tower Hamlets waiting list at present and in the year 2008 to 2009 a total of 2,142 properties were let to all the 4 Community Groups. This information can be found on [www.homesekers.com](http://www.homesekers.com)

	Numbers waiting June '09 Community Group 2	Number of homes let April '08 to March '09 Community Group 2
1 bed/bedsit	661	454
2 bed	768	500
3 bed	903	201
4 bed	331	21
5+ bed	78	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>2741</b>	<b>1181</b>

## Is rent arrears preventing your client from bidding successfully?

If your client wonders why their bids are not successful, the first thing to ask them is if they have rent arrears. Arrears will mean that any successful bid they make will not be offered to them so it's vital they sort out any arrears they may have. They need to call the Rent Arrears team and make an arrangement to repay any debt, call 020 7364 7474.

## Try a Rent Deposit Offer?



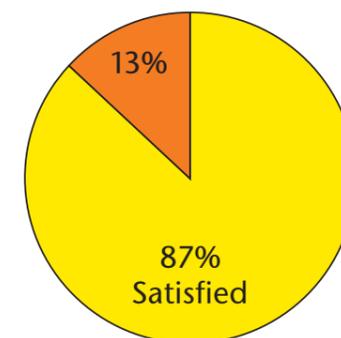
The rent deposit scheme is open to all our clients even if they have been accepted for rehousing years ago. The scheme offers speedy rehousing to affordable private properties. Clients can choose a property in any area and the team sort out the deposit rent in advance and all the other arrangements around moving. For more information call the Rent Deposit Team on 020 7364 7474 . email: [rentdeposit@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:rentdeposit@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## We have audited our interviewing

In March this year we asked over 400 clients who had just been interviewed at our offices how their interviews went.

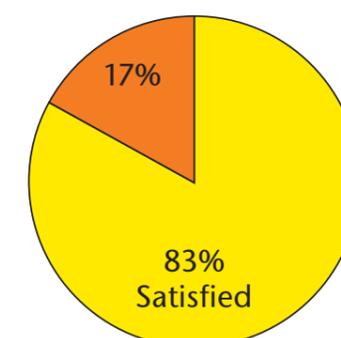
We asked about politeness, helpfulness, fairness and understanding as well as waiting times. Here are some of the results:

### How satisfied were our clients with our helpfulness and politeness?



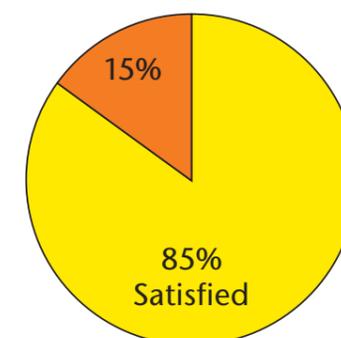
Satisfied 87%, Not satisfied 13%

### How satisfied were our clients with the privacy of the interview?



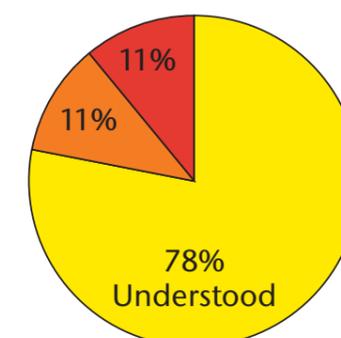
Satisfied 83%, Not satisfied 17%

### How satisfied were our clients with the fairness of the interview?



Satisfied 85%, Not satisfied 15%

### Did clients understand the decision or information they were given during the interview?



Yes 78%, Partly 11%, No 11%

We were pleased to have scored so well on the interview audit but recognise there is still room to improve. Since the audit, every mem-

ber of staff has had training in customer care and we hope to see some improved results when we carry out the audit again later in the year.