

Working with Housing Associations

Workshop Notes

Intros and Project Details

Heather Petch: Funded by Joseph Rowntree Foundation to find projects where the Hope Projects scheme could be replicated.

The following NACCOM member groups reported on their accommodation capacity.

PRAXIS, London: Working with Metropolitan Housing Association. Currently have one property, aiming to increase that.

Hope Projects, Birmingham: Operational since 2007, they currently have 8 properties

Nottingham Arimathea Trust: They now have 2 properties from Framework Housing Association (in addition to their other properties).

Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre: They have 7 properties, one of which is designated for destitute asylum seekers.

Open Door North East, Middlesborough: They have 15 houses accommodating 42 refugee and 17 destitute asylum seekers.

ASSIST Sheffield: ASSIST has two houses and a hosting scheme, and accommodate 15-20 destitute asylum seekers at any one time.

Jon Lord, Chief Exec. of Bolton at Home, reported that they have 40 properties currently leased to Serco for asylum accommodation. They also have 40 properties housing refugees from the Gateway Programme, and a further 30 housing other refugees. They are planning to accommodate some destitute asylum seekers in the Serco houses when Serco is able to find other properties.

Comments from Participants:

Paul Birtill: There will always be some need for charitable funding

Jean Demars: We are looking at possible social investment (10 year investments?), so that we could have a scheme that rents properties to the general public and also accommodates destitute asylum seekers on a ratio of 2/1.

Heather Petch: JRF are looking to work with other trusts to support the asylum and refugee sector.

Jon Lord: Housing Associations have expertise in repairs, and have the capacity to offer their repair service to NACCOM member groups, as well as other services. Housing Associations that are in partnership will always take repairs seriously due to their liabilities. Before entering into partnership, check their track record.

Santok Odedra: Arimathea Trust has a Service Level Agreement with a H.A. to repair their vicarage.

Hannah Laing – The Coventry Refugee & Migrant Centre uses H.As to do major repairs, and a maintenance person to do minor repairs.

Paul Birtill – 2 things to consider: What is the tipping point, at which you need to do your own major repairs? And how do you make those initial H.A contacts?

Sarah Taal/ Adrian Randall- The way in to H.As is often through personal contacts, like people on the board of trustees or management group.

Heather Petch: For small scale projects there are often ‘quirky’ arrangements through personal relationships, but the larger the project, the more clarity there has to be in arrangements.

Jean Demars: Want’s in it for the Housing Association?

Heather Petch: You can’t make a business case for partnerships (for the H.A)

Jon Lord: You need to find those H.As that work with the marginalized.

Heather Petch: Those connections can then be your advocate with larger H.As.

Jean Demars: ‘Guardianship’ is an option – taking on other buildings to rent out

Paul Birtill: The sort of properties that would be ideal to use are those in regeneration areas, and larger properties lying empty because they have been lost Supporting People funding.

Jon Lord: Now is the time to seize the moment in terms of larger properties, as H.As have a problem knowing what to do with them.

Heather Petch: Offering short-term use and flexibility is a good selling point.

Paul Birtill: The way in is through Refugee Housing, developing the relationship with the H.A, then moving towards accommodating the destitute.

Heather Petch: Canopy Housing in Leeds have an innovative scheme. Refugees help to renovate properties in exchange for a room in the property. This has integration value.

Check out selfhelphousing.org

Homeless Link is looking to support the Refugee and Asylum sector.