

# Strategic Moves

A framework for developing  
an area-based move-on strategy

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## About the Move-on Alternatives Project

This paper is one of a series produced by Starfish Consulting for the Move-on Alternatives Project (MAP). MAP was initiated by Circle 33 Housing Trust in response to the lack of move-on available from temporary supported housing in London. Its aim is to find practical and collaborative solutions to the shortage by working with a range of providers and London boroughs.

The lead agencies are Circle 33 Housing Trust, Single Homeless Project, the London Borough of Camden, and Penrose Housing Association; however many other agencies have contributed to or have been involved in the work of the project. The work is funded by the Housing Corporation and the London Housing Foundation.

The first phase of the project (MAP1) has produced the 'yourmovenext' website to enable service users to explore and pursue the move-on options available to them. A printed version is available to download for free.

Other reports in this series, which are also available from the website are:

- Models of Shared Living: the potential to develop unsupported shared housing for people leaving temporary supported housing
- Private Renting: maximising access to the private rented sector
- Facing Reality: how providers of temporary supported housing can respond to the shortage of move-on accommodation.

The next phase of the project (MAP2) will focus on the development and piloting of a common approach to the allocation of social housing for move-on, across five London boroughs. Work on MAP2 is due to start in the summer of 2003.

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## Executive Summary

The shortage of move-on accommodation from temporary supported housing in areas of high housing demand is a problem which requires a collaborative response if it is to be tackled effectively. This paper proposes a framework within which an area-based strategy for move-on can be developed.

The framework sees a key role for local authorities in developing and implementing the strategy alongside support providers, housing associations and other agencies working with homeless people. In London there is a need for strategies to cross geographical as well as organisational boundaries because of the uneven distribution of supply and demand for move-on across the London boroughs.

Suggested areas for the strategy to cover are:

- The use of social housing as move-on
- Managing service user expectations
- Initiatives to increase access to the private rented sector
- Remodelling of existing services
- Proposals for monitoring and review.

The move-on strategy should link to a variety of agendas, including:

- Supporting People
- Homelessness
- Community Care
- Delivering Choice
- The Communities Plan.

Stakeholders to be consulted and involved in the development of the strategy:

- Service users
- Local authorities
- Supporting People Commissioning bodies
- Support providers
- Move-on providers (including the local authority and housing associations).

An analysis of current demand for and supply of move-on will inform the development of appropriate solutions, and provide a baseline against which to measure the success of the strategy.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Who is this paper for?

This paper is intended for local authorities, housing associations and support providers interested in developing a strategic response to the shortage of move-on accommodation from temporary supported housing.

This paper suggests a framework within which a move-on strategy can be developed. Its contents are based on ideas developed by the Steering Committee for the Move-on Alternatives Project. The next phase of the project (MAP2) will focus on the development of a strategic approach to move-on across five London boroughs. Work will start on MAP2 in the summer of 2003 and will include testing out some of the ideas in this paper.

## 1.2 Developing a strategic approach

The Move-on Alternatives Project (MAP) is founded on an assumption that agencies must work together to find solutions to the move-on shortage. This is essential given that the agencies attempting to find move-on for their service users (primarily support providers), largely depend on the willingness of other agencies (local authorities; housing associations, private landlords) to make such housing available.

This paper proposes that area based strategies should be developed to address the shortage of move-on and that the local authority(ies) should play a significant, or lead, role in developing and implementing them.

The framework for developing a move on strategy intends to facilitate the development of a strategic approach that crosses both organisational and geographical boundaries and which:

- involves all key stakeholders in its development
- links the strategy to other key agendas, such as Supporting People
- encourages joint working between Supporting People commissioning bodies, local councils, housing associations, and support providers
- promotes the use of creative solutions - including opportunities from all sections of the housing market and remodelling of existing services where appropriate
- provides a platform for the development of strategies across borough boundaries.

The framework has not yet been tested, but has drawn on good practice from other fields. It is not meant to be prescriptive, but rather a checklist of the issues and actions to be considered in developing a move-on strategy.

## 2. Stages in developing a Move-on Strategy

The stages set out in diagram 1 below are suggested as important for developing a comprehensive area-based move-on strategy. They assume that the strategy will be developed and implemented in conjunction with all or most of the significant stakeholders in the area, and that the local authority(ies) will take a lead or significant role in this.

Diagram 1



### 3. Issues for coverage

#### 3.1 Purpose and scope of the strategy

Having established a need for a move-on strategy, it will be important to define what the strategy hopes to achieve so that success can be measured against this. Discussion of the purpose and scope of the strategy between the key stakeholders at an early stage (see section 5) can help to identify different perspectives on what the strategy needs to address. This might reveal, for instance, that alongside addressing a general shortage of move-on accommodation the strategy also needs to ensure that service users have appropriate choice and can have access to resettlement support when required.

Gathering information about the nature of demand for and supply of move-on (see section 6) can help to identify the nature of the problem to be tackled. Other information needs, and the willingness of agencies to supply the relevant data, may emerge after initial consultation and engagement with the full range of stakeholders (see section 5).

What can be achieved is likely to be heavily influenced by the commitment that key agencies are willing to make, for example, the willingness of the local authority and housing associations to commit a proportion of general stock to move-on. Discussions should take place with key stakeholders before the strategy is drafted for this reason.

If the strategy is to be credible it will be important that the aims set for it are both achievable and attractive – with clear benefits for service users and other stakeholders.

#### 3.2 Agreeing terminology

To avoid confusion and unrealistic expectations about what the strategy will cover, it will be helpful to define the use of terminology in the strategy. Examples of terms to be defined include:

<b>Homelessness or homeless people</b>	Just statutory homelessness or wider definition of homelessness?
<b>Move-on</b>	Just social housing, or is the term also used to refer to housing from private sector sources? Just unsupported housing i.e. general needs, or is the term also used to refer to second or third stage supported housing?
<b>Temporary supported housing</b>	Does this term include hostels or other forms of temporary accommodation for families or women with children?

### 3.3 Use of social housing for move-on

Little is known about the extent to which social housing is made available across London to people needing to move-on from temporary supported housing, or how this is allocated between projects and individuals.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that social housing is the primary source of move-on for most projects, and the expectation of most service users. The majority of temporary supported housing is managed by a support provider on behalf of a housing association landlord. As support providers tend to have no general unsupported stock of their own, their ability to access such housing for their service users largely depends upon agreements that they have been able to negotiate with the landlord association or the local authority in whose area they work. These agreements might be a result of deals struck as part of the project's development, or as a result of other historical links. Some projects in London also access social housing move-on through the HOMES Move-on Scheme, which enables nominations to around 100 homes annually<sup>1</sup>.

For service users this can result in a 'postcode' lottery which means that their ability to access social housing move-on, or the length of time they need to spend waiting for it, often depends on which supported housing project they live in, rather than their needs relative to other people requiring such accommodation.

In some cases, local authorities are willing to provide move-on for people who they have directly referred into a project (usually those for whom they have accepted a statutory obligation under homelessness or community care legislation) – but this approach can disadvantage those service users who are least likely to approach statutory agencies for help, but who otherwise might have priority needs.

MAP2 intends to pilot a more strategic means of allocating social housing for move-on by developing criteria which will make it clear who can or can't access social housing, and which will be used by the major providers of move-on in the pilot areas. As well as bringing clarity and consistency, it is hoped that such an arrangement can be used to give greater choice and more timely move-on to service users through the creation of a common allocation system for social housing move-on.

Pooling of social housing move-on will give greater opportunity to ensure that service users get an offer when they need it, rather than having to wait for a vacancy from a particular landlord, and that they can be housed in an area that is close to important support networks. Getting an offer at the right time in the right place can be crucial to ensuring that move-on offers are taken up and successful resettlement achieved.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information contact HOMES (details on contacts page)

The Move-on Alternatives Project regards clarity about who will or won't be able to access social housing move-on to be essential if service users are to be encouraged to consider the other move-on options available to them. Without this it is feared that some residents will refuse to consider options beyond social housing.

### 3.4 Changing expectations

Most temporary supported housing projects have been founded on the assumption that residents will stay for up to two years, after which they will move onto more independent accommodation. Most residents expect to be nominated to a council or housing association tenancy. In reality, sufficient move-on housing of this type is rarely available. The result is a backlog of residents waiting for an offer, often staying long after their need for support has ended. Stays of five years or more are now common in temporary supported housing in London.<sup>2</sup> Estimates of how much demand exceeds supply vary, but most sources confirm that the situation is getting worse rather than better.

A strategy founded on an expectation that social housing will be available to meet all of the needs for move-on in London would be unrealistic. The Move-on Alternatives Project (MAP) has recognised that a wider range of move-on sources have to be used and that, to enable this, the expectations of service users and front-line staff will need to change.

Another paper in this series<sup>3</sup> considers ways of encouraging more realistic expectations about move-on amongst service users and front line staff.

### 3.5 Increasing access to private renting

As well as determining who will get access to social housing move-on, it will be important to create realistic choices for those who will not. With 95% of service users on housing benefit<sup>4</sup>, most residents will be unable to afford even low cost home ownership, leaving private renting as the main alternative to social housing.

Another report in this series<sup>5</sup> provides information on how to increase access to the private rented sector.

### 3.6 Remodelling existing services

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<sup>2</sup> Based on feedback from frontline workers with a variety of London agencies, May 2002

<sup>3</sup> 'Facing reality: how providers of temporary supported housing can respond to the shortage of move-on accommodation' MAP 2003. Available from [www.yourmovenext.co.uk](http://www.yourmovenext.co.uk)

<sup>4</sup> Core supported housing bulletin January 2001 National Housing Federation

<sup>5</sup> 'Private Renting: maximising access to the private rented sector' MAP 2003. Available from [www.yourmovenext.co.uk](http://www.yourmovenext.co.uk)

If a wider range of move-on sources begin to be used and temporary supported housing projects achieve faster throughput, more efficient use will be made of the places available. Providers and local authorities may want to take this opportunity to consider whether further changes are needed to existing services to ensure that they continue to meet priority needs in the light of the changed circumstances, or whether there is a need to remodel.

Local authorities should work with providers to explore the need for and options for change, taking account of the impact upon service users, the provider organisation, and other linked services.

### 3.7 Monitoring and review

The strategy should set out how the impact of its implementation will be measured upon service users, services and the efficient use of resources. The aims of the strategy, if stated clearly enough, can become the criteria against which success can be evaluated e.g.

- greater throughput to temporary supported housing projects in accordance with their aims and objectives;
- no reduction in rates of successful resettlement compared to those achieved under previous arrangements;
- equality of outcomes for service users from black and minority ethnic (BME) groups;
- a system of allocating social housing move-on that is perceived to be fair, transparent and clear by service users and stakeholder organisations;
- improved timeliness of social housing move-on offers;
- greater choice for service users qualifying for social housing move-on.

The evaluation should aim to distinguish between different service types and client groups, and those pursuing different move-on options, and enable identification of the relative outcomes for BME service users.

Consideration should be given at the outset to how change will be recorded. Ideally monitoring should enable comparisons between service users' preferences, actions, and outcomes before and after implementation of the strategy. However baseline information may not be available for all of these measures. As a minimum, the strategy should be able to measure the impact upon demand and supply, as information on these should have fed into its development (see 6.2).

## 4. Linking to other relevant agendas

There are a number of agendas that have a direct or indirect interest in the resolution of move-on shortages and to which the move-on strategy should link, as set out below:

### 4.1 Supporting People

The funding changes that are due to occur with the introduction of Supporting People in April 2003, will increase the amount of interest in and scrutiny of supported housing at the local authority level. Under the changes, local authorities will become responsible for funding and monitoring services which were previously funded from housing benefit and other comparatively remote sources.

Providers of temporary supported housing will have a direct and contractual funding relationship with the local authority in whose area they operate, and will be subject to a performance and value for money review every three years or so.

Local authorities are expected to administer Supporting People funding in accordance with local strategic needs and priorities, as agreed by the Supporting People Commissioning Body (which will also include local authority housing and social services, health and probation). Funding for new services will be limited, and the SP Commissioning Body will want to ensure the most efficient use of resources in accordance with those priorities.

Providers who consistently fail to achieve intended throughput to their temporary supported housing projects, may not be seen to be offering value for money. As such they can reasonably expect to be subject to closer scrutiny, and may even risk a reduction or withdrawal of funding.

As well as these threats for providers under Supporting People, there will also be greater opportunities to work in partnership with the local authority to ensure that problems like the shortage of move-on, which are hampering the efficient use of resources, are tackled jointly.

### 4.2 Homelessness

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires every local housing authority to carry out a homelessness review, develop a strategy for their area to prevent and respond to homelessness, and provide accommodation and/or support for people who are or may become homeless.

The Homelessness Review should establish current and likely future levels of homelessness and consider what resources are available locally to help prevent homelessness or provide housing or support to those who are or who are threatened with homelessness. The strategy is required to set out how the authority intends to prevent homelessness and provide housing and support, where required, for those people who are homeless or who are threatened with homelessness.

Guidance from ODPM<sup>6</sup> recognises that hostels and other supported housing will be an important part of the homelessness strategy in most areas, and that such accommodation will be required for homeless people. There is an expectation that providers will be involved in the formulation of the strategy from the beginning.

The guidance also recommends that the strategy should set out plans to make the best use of private housing, including schemes to help homeless and other low income people to access private rented housing, and to improve standards in the private rented sector.

There is much emphasis from Government on the prevention of homelessness, and a greater willingness amongst local authorities to consider funding new initiatives that promise savings at a later stage, for instance, advice and mediation services which help to prevent homelessness, or initiatives to increase access to the private sector which free up places in temporary supported housing for homeless people.

### 4.3 Community Care

The aim of all community care programmes is to enable people to achieve the greatest level of independence possible for them as individuals within the community. High proportions of people with community care needs live in temporary supported housing, for instance, people with a mental health problem or learning disability, substance misusers, young people leaving care.

Social services and health authorities should have an interest in ensuring adequate throughput to temporary supported housing in order to ensure that people are enabled to return to a more independent and secure form of housing where appropriate, and in order to free up places in supported housing for other people, who might otherwise have to live in more institutional forms of accommodation.

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<sup>6</sup> Homelessness Strategies: a good practice handbook' ODPM 2002

## 4.4 Delivering Choice

The Government's Housing Green Paper proposed a more customer centred approach which gives applicants more choice over the social housing offered to them – including those being housed under homelessness legislation. The paper laid down 'best-practice' principles that encourage local authorities and housing associations to consider pooling properties as a means of offering greater choice, and of ensuring that applicants are aware of what housing is available and their chances of getting it.

Move-on strategies can also incorporate the same principles by developing a common approach to allocating social housing for move-on, which is applied by all or most providers, and which incorporates a pooling approach to offer more choice to those entitled to social housing. By creating clarity about who will or won't qualify for social housing move-on the strategy can also ensure that residents are able to make realistic choices about their next housing move.

## 4.5 The Communities Plan

The Government's plan for building sustainable communities<sup>7</sup> includes proposals for pooling of resources for investment in housing at the regional level. London will be one of nine regions with its own plan for delivering sustainable communities.

A new London Housing Board will be established with representatives from the Government Office for London, the London boroughs, the Housing Corporation, the Greater London Authority, English Partnerships and other relevant bodies. The board will be responsible for devising a regional housing strategy and priorities for investment from a single housing pot for capital resources taken from the Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme (ADP) and the local authority Housing Investment Programme (HIP).

These changes provide an important opportunity for local authorities and other agencies to work together to develop regional solutions to the shortage of move-on.

## 4.6 Other agendas

Other agendas which may have an interest in the efficient use of temporary supported resources and improved outcomes for service users include:

- social inclusion and sustainable communities
- health
- crime reduction
- education
- employment.

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<sup>7</sup> 'Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future' ODPM 2003

## 5. Identifying and consulting with Stakeholders

### 5.1 The importance of wide ownership of the strategy

A number of agendas (as set out in Section 4) are widening the range of stakeholders interested in move-on. By creating a strategy that involves all key stakeholders, a comprehensive approach can be developed that brings a wider range of resources to bear. This can include a more focused and co-ordinated use of existing resources as well as new resources. Through effective joint working and pooling of resources, gaps in provision can be plugged, unnecessary duplication can be removed, and the chances of overall success increased.

### 5.2 Developing a strategy across local authority boundaries

The uneven spread of supply and demand for move-on housing in London means that it is particularly important to develop approaches that cross geographical boundaries as well as organisational boundaries.

A very high proportion of temporary supported housing in London is in central London boroughs such as Camden and Westminster, which also have the most acute pressures on their general housing stock and highest private sector rents. In addition, the majority of those housed in temporary supported housing in central London are from other boroughs or from outside London. In these circumstances, it is unrealistic to expect those boroughs to be able to meet all the move-on needs generated by temporary supported housing within their area.

More thought needs to be given to how boroughs across London can be encouraged to participate in a strategic approach which helps to tackle this imbalance between supply and demand. MAP2 aims to develop and pilot a collaborative approach to move-on across a number of London boroughs.

## 5.3 Identifying the stakeholders

Diagram 1 below identifies the key stakeholders for a move-on strategy and the potential benefits for them. Other stakeholders might include: private landlords and lettings agencies; independent housing advice agencies; agencies running rent deposit or lodgings schemes; other voluntary sector groups working with homeless people.

Potential benefits for key stakeholders from a more strategic approach to move-on

**Service Users:**

- greater clarity & consistency in allocation of social housing move-on
- more timely move-on
- more choice
- reduced risk of social exclusion
- freeing up of supported housing for new service users
- end of the 'postcode lottery'

**SP commissioning bodies:**

- more efficient and effective use of Supporting People resources
- better outcomes for service users
- support for delivery of Supporting People strategy
- support for development of regional and sub-regional strategies

**Central Government:**

- more efficient & effective use of SP resources
- improved outputs & service user outcomes from SP programme
- support for delivery of homelessness & other key Government agendas
- greater collaboration at local & national level

**Local Authorities:**

- more efficient & effective use of move-on
- more efficient allocation process
- more strategic & transparent means of allocating social housing to move-on
- supporting delivery of homelessness & community care strategies
- promotion of social inclusion

**Move-on providers:**

- a more strategic & transparent means of allocating social housing to move-on
- more efficient allocation process
- greater co-ordination of move-on offers and support packages
- avoidance of tenancy breakdown

**Support providers:**

- more transparent means of allocating social housing
- greater clarity about move-on options for service users & projects
- help in accessing wider range of move-on
- help with changing service user expectations
- support for remodelling & change

Diagram 2

## 5.4 Consultation methods

As well as consultation on the draft strategy, it is likely to be beneficial to carry out initial consultation with some of the key stakeholders *before* the strategy is drafted.

This initial consultation might be through informal one to one discussions with major stakeholders, such as Housing Allocation Managers within the local authority or housing associations with a large stock of housing in the borough. It might also take place in the form of facilitated meetings or workshops, for instance, at the local homelessness or supported housing forum.

Such consultation can be useful for:

- scoping the problem from the perspective of different stakeholders (including service users)
- gaining a comprehensive picture of what the strategy needs to cover
- gathering ideas for and/or testing support for proposals
- assessing the extent to which key agencies will be willing to participate in the development and implementation of the strategy.

Gathering feedback from service users will be an important part of the consultation process, but it may be difficult to get service users to separate the wider strategic decisions that need to be taken from their own move-on needs and expectations. Local authorities will be required to consult with service users on their Supporting People strategies and it may be appropriate to use the same events to consult on the move-on strategy given the overlapping interests between the two agendas. There is little existing guidance to local authorities on how to engage service users and involve them meaningfully in strategic decision making and planning, and further guidance would be welcome.

## 6. Gathering Information

It will be important to base the strategy on a sound understanding of the scale of the move-on shortage in the area being covered. This will involve gathering information on both the nature and scale of demand for and supply of move-on.

### 6.1 Demand

An important source of information on temporary supported housing resources will be the supply mapping databases established for Supporting People (see 4.1). These databases hold comprehensive data on most (but possibly not all) supported housing projects in a local authority area, from which details can be extracted for accommodation based projects which do not aim to provide a permanent home for their residents. Details can be analysed by a number of characteristics including: number of flats or rooms; primary and secondary client groups, household types; age range of residents; and whether the service caters for a specific BME or cultural group.

The supply database categorises services according to target duration of stay, and crude estimates of move-on demand can be calculated from these categories. These initial projections could be refined through follow up questionnaires to providers. Such a survey can gather information on target lengths of stay, the extent to which move-on needs are currently met, and user needs and preferences for different types of move-on accommodation.

However sensitivities around this aspect of provider performance should be appreciated. If a survey is carried out by the local Supporting People authority, some providers may be nervous that information they provide will be used against them in future service reviews and may therefore underestimate their move-on needs so as to achieve greater fit with their performance in securing it for their service users.

### 6.2 Supply

Local housing authorities normally have a fairly accurate picture of the social housing stock in their area. The CORE<sup>8</sup> returns completed by housing associations for all new lettings identify the previous housing situation of new tenants. The National Housing Federation can analyse local CORE data for a small fee to identify which housing associations are providing general needs lets to people moving on from supported housing and how much. The Housing Strategy section of the local authority should be able to comment on the extent to which there would be capacity to increase supply from general needs social housing, or conversely, any factors likely to lead to a reduction in future years.

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<sup>8</sup> Continuous recording of lettings (CORE). For more details contact the National Housing Federation (see contacts page) or visit [www.core.ac.uk](http://www.core.ac.uk)

As well as social housing sources it will be important to consider the extent to which suitable accommodation might be obtained from other sources – for instance private rented accommodation or low cost home ownership (LCHO). Local housing authorities will normally have information on all LCHO opportunities in their area. Most local housing advice centres can give a realistic picture of potential supply from the private rented sector for people on benefits or low incomes, and the barriers which need to be tackled to increase access to private renting. Supported CORE statistics record income levels for new residents of supported housing provided by housing associations, and the figures for temporary supported housing can be isolated from these.

### 6.3 Outcomes

Most supported housing providers should already be recording details of where people currently go to when leaving their accommodation. The proposed format for the monitoring of Supporting People funded services<sup>9</sup> includes the collection of information on the move-on destination of users of short term services.

Where such information is available, it is important to collect it at outset as it will give a baseline against which to evaluate the success of the strategy in improving outcomes for service users. Very few providers are likely to have details of how long residents have remained in the accommodation into which they have moved, due to the difficulties in maintaining contact with residents after they have left.

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<sup>9</sup> ‘Service Performance Monitoring Form and Record Keeping Workbook’ ODPM 2003 available from [www.spkweb.org.uk](http://www.spkweb.org.uk)

## 7 Concluding remarks

This paper has suggested a framework which local authorities, housing associations and support providers can use to help develop a move-on strategy.

MAP2 will provide an opportunity to test out some of the ideas in this framework, and we will update the framework based on the experiences of that project. We also hope that it will be useful for other organisations keen to begin tackling move-on in a strategic way.

We would like to hear about your experiences and ideas for tackling the current shortage of move-on and related issues.

If you want to be kept up to date on the progress of MAP2 or have a contribution that you can make, please contact a member of the Steering Committee below or visit the website at [www.yourmovenext.co.uk](http://www.yourmovenext.co.uk).

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Tel: 020 7520 8660

Information about the HOMES move-on scheme can be obtained from:

H.O.M.E.S.  
Head Office  
242 Vauxhall Bridge Road  
London SW1V 1AU  
Tel: 020 7963 0200  
Fax: 020 7963 0249

[www.homes.org.uk](http://www.homes.org.uk)

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Documents issued as part of the implementation of Supporting People can be downloaded from [www.spkweb.org.uk](http://www.spkweb.org.uk)

The information collected through CORE returns and bulletins can be viewed at [www.core.ac.uk](http://www.core.ac.uk)

Customised analysis of CORE data can be commissioned for a small fee from:

Housing Figures

175 Grays Inn Road

London WC1X 8UP

George Marshall tel: 020 7843 2266, email [georgem@housing.org.uk](mailto:georgem@housing.org.uk)

Paul Redfern tel: 020 7843 2268, email [paulr@housing.org.uk](mailto:paulr@housing.org.uk)