

REFERRAL PROCESS

Introduction

Stevenage Haven accepts referrals from all appropriate agencies that come into contact with single people who have no accommodation available to them. Stevenage Haven will give due consideration to any approach for single accommodation. Referrals can only be considered when a bed is currently available and as such a waiting list is not possible to operate. However, we will liaise and work in partnership wherever possible to assist applicants to have the opportunity of accessing accommodation with Stevenage Haven.

Who is eligible for Accommodation?

Any person over the age of 18 and who is genuinely homeless. Every client in need of shelter, who is referred through an appropriate agency, or through the organisation's Cold Weather Provision will be considered. This is subject to availability. Any agency who works in the best interest of people who are homeless can refer. Any self referrals will be given a referral form to complete and then directed to Stevenage Borough Council/North Herts District Council for housing advice and assistance.

Dealing with Enquiries for Beds

Enquiries for beds are received by telephone/fax/email from a number of different agencies. All referrals will be registered on the data base whether there is a bed available or not. This information assists us with our monitoring and statistical requirements in addition to continuous assessment of the demand for the accommodation that we provide. We also use this information to pass on to local provider forums etc. to ensure that the local need of emergency accommodation is highlighted.

If a bed is available, or is soon to be available, the referrer should be invited to complete a referral form for the prospective client. This should be as detailed as possible and should include the client's national insurance number.

Decision Making Process

On receipt of the referral form, the support needs of the client will be considered and assessed on a consistent and comprehensive basis by duty staff who will consult as to the suitability of the referral and will communicate openly with the referring agency. Although Stevenage Haven will give due consideration to all referrals, it is important that clients accepted into the project are able to abide by the Licence Agreement. It is important that where the prospective client has acknowledged drug or alcohol issues, offences of a violent or sexual nature, these issues should not pose a risk to another resident, staff member or the project as a whole. Any referral who is known to have rent arrears to Stevenage Borough Council/North Herts District Council or any other housing provider, including Stevenage Haven, will be expected to agree to address these arrears by making regular repayments as agreed between all parties before being accommodated with Stevenage Haven.

Risk Assessments

Where possible the duty manager will ask for a risk/needs assessment particularly where the client has a Probation, Community Mental Health, Drugs or Alcohol or Children Schools & Families connection, whereupon the information received will be treated with the strictest of confidence. The sharing of information between the Haven and referring agencies is to ensure that the client is given the support that is required and will not be used as a reason to exclude the application.

Accepted/Declined Referrals

The referrer should be contacted and informed of the decision usually within the same day of receiving the application and no longer than 48 hours.

Where possible it is encouraged for the prospective applicant to visit the project prior to a decision being made.

All decisions are entered on to the referral outcome form and data base.

Accepted referrals will be required to pay £54 deposit.

Signposting to alternative homeless projects will be suggested to declined referrals and, if required, reasons for not being accommodated at Stevenage Haven can be provided in writing by contacting the project manager or email referrals@stevenagehaven.org.uk and/or referrals.hitchin@stevenagehaven.org.uk

In accordance with our complaints procedure, all applicants have the right to appeal against decisions made and these must be made in writing within 14 days of the decision to the Director. A copy of the complaints procedure can be requested by contacting the project manager on 01438 354884 or email referrals@stevenagehaven.org.uk