



CIO no 1162434

Housing Toolkit

A comprehensive resource for (existing and proposed) housing projects that accommodate destitute people who are seeking asylum, refugees and other migrants.



www.naccom.org.uk

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Feedback, corrections and suggestions:

If you have any ideas that you think would improve this publication, we would like to hear from you, including omissions and errors. We aim to regularly update both the online version of the toolkit and supporting online Members' Library resources.

Please email: development@naccom.org.uk

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About NACCOM

Background

NACCOM is a national network of organisations providing accommodation and support, primarily for destitute people seeking asylum.

NACCOM is committed to bringing an end to destitution amongst people seeking asylum, refugees and migrants with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) living in the UK. The NACCOM network now has 62 full members (who collectively provided over 364,000 nights of accommodation in 2017/18) and 42 Associate Members (in support of NACCOM's aims). The network is very diverse with Members providing accommodation via hosting schemes, through night shelters and through different forms of housing. Some members may run two or more different accommodation models depending on their capacity, resources and prevailing opportunities.

To find up to date information on NACCOM's strategic plan together with details about events, member projects, and much more go to www.naccomm.org.uk.



Introduction

Who should read this guide?

This guide is primarily for charities, groups or individuals who are either considering the provision of housing as part of their offer to people seeking asylum, refugees and other migrants, or are already delivering housing to one or more of these groups but want to improve, develop or diversify their current provision.

Assumptions we have made in writing this guide

We are making the general assumption that the reader(s) of this guide have gone through a process of agreeing the values that underpin your work, what you want to achieve and who the people are that you want to help in the provision of housing. It is also assumed that this process will have involved an assessment of the resources you already have available (including, for example, people and finances, etc.) and those that you might still need.

You may be familiar with the term **SWOT analysis**, which is an exploration of an organisation's **Strengths and Weaknesses**, as well as the **Opportunities** that present themselves (such as the offer of a house) along with the **Threats** (or challenges) that have to be overcome in achieving your goal.

There are plenty of other management tools that you can use, but the important point is that your organisation has achieved some clarity on where you are now and where you want to be in the future. All of this would have an impact on the type of housing provision that you might embark upon and the beneficiary group you might decide to focus your support upon, and indeed whether you should become a provider of housing as an accommodation option in the first place.

Whilst we have included a number of top tips and pointers that relate to the “**visioning**” stage of a project's development, we felt that it was not appropriate to try and explore in more detail such strategic assessment processes in what is a largely technical document such as this. However, NACCOM, as part of its **Network Development** offer, has dedicated staff with over 30 years' collective experience in the setting-up and ongoing development of accommodation projects, including housing. As well as helping with the technical and implementation matters that form the focus of this housing toolkit, NACCOM staff are available to help both existing and proposed projects through the wider evaluation process to determine which accommodation model is best suited to your local circumstances - be that housing, hosting, night shelter or a combination of the three.

What do we mean by housing?

For the purpose of this guide, housing refers either to the provision of a room in shared accommodation, be that in a house or flat; or the provision of self-contained accommodation such as a bedsit, flat or house. The accommodation may be owned or managed by, or leased or rented to, the charity or project providing the accommodation for; a) the free charitable provision of temporary accommodation to people who have been refused asylum and others with NRPF and/or; b) the provision of rented accommodation to refugees and other migrants who may or may not have recourse to public funding but who do have the legal right to rent here in the UK.

What do we mean by landlord?

By **landlord** we mean anyone including an individual property owner, agent, charity or project which is managing or making a house or flat available with or without the payment of a rent.

What's included?

The information in this guide has been put together from the collective experience of a number of NACCOM projects, some of which have many years' experience of delivering housing.

We don't profess to have all the answers and are aware that we cannot cover everything in a document like this. We have looked to provide clear guidance on acceptable housing standards and the relevant legislation that directs best practise.

Things do however change with time and it is the responsibility of the reader to check for the most up-to-date guidance and if in doubt speak with your local authority.

The majority of NACCOM projects are looking to accommodate unrelated individuals in shared houses rather than families, and this will be the core focus of the toolkit.

The chapters in this toolkit include setting up and running a housing project, technical stuff such as specifications, health and safety, fire risk assessment and income from housing. We have also included in chapter 6 a comprehensive glossary of terms and links to where to go for further information.

Throughout the toolkit we have provided a number of case studies covering a range of different NACCOM housing projects.

In addition, we have highlighted our **Top Tips** and **Recommendations** along with links to useful resources throughout, including documents from the library on the **NACCOM website**¹.

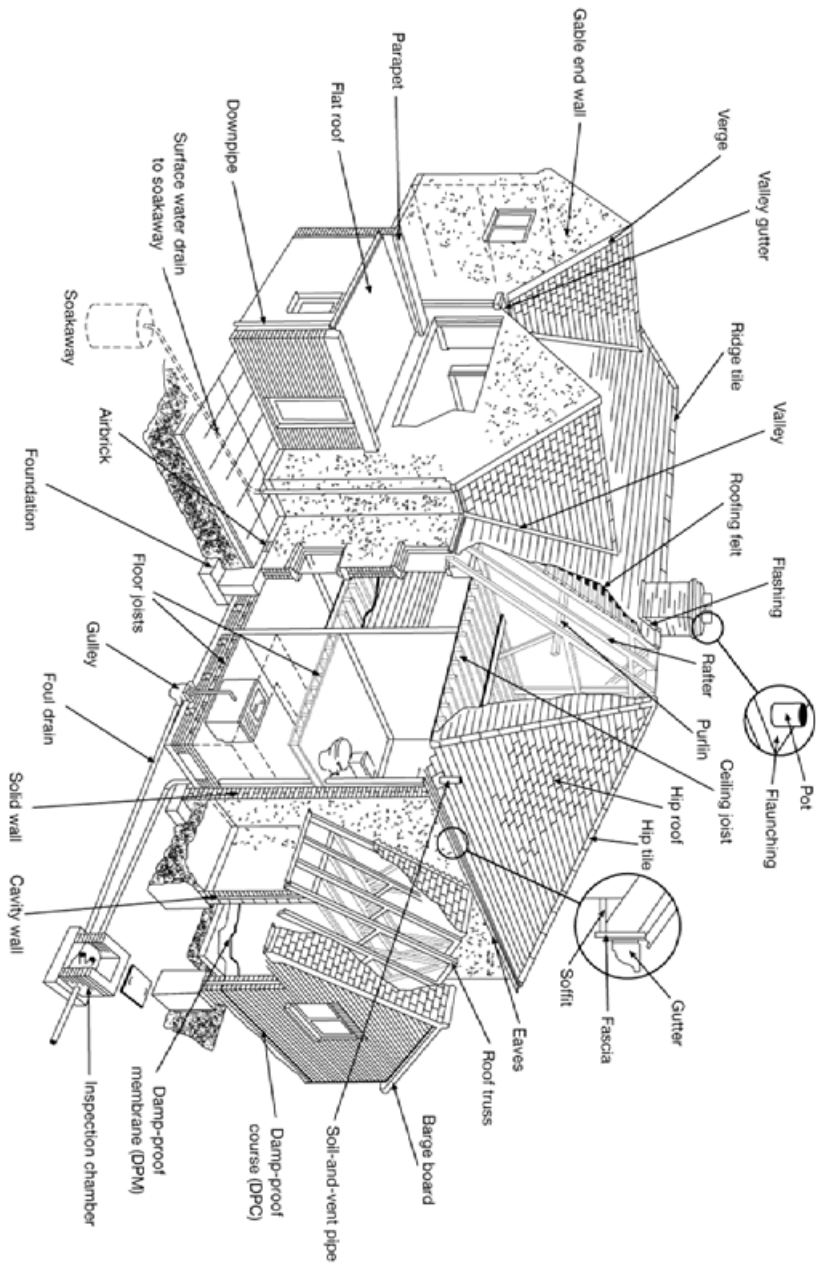
For more information on how to set up and run a hosting scheme, see our **Hosting Toolkit**, which is also available to download from our website.

We are always keen to hear about your new ideas, and are aware of several projects that are currently at an early stage of development and couldn't therefore be included in this toolkit.

Please contact us at development@naccom.org.uk if you have an idea for a project or have a question, or need help with any aspect of housing or an accommodation related matter.

¹<http://www.naccom.org.uk>

Typical house terminology



(Credit RICS)

Setting up a housing scheme

Is it legal?

There are many things to consider when setting up a housing project and one of the first questions we often get asked is “Is it legal” to accommodate people who have been refused asylum? The answer is yes, there is nothing intrinsically illegal about housing someone who is left destitute with NRPF, and no one who has accommodated a person who has been refused asylum through a NACCOM project has ever been prosecuted for doing so. As long as the individual is not charged rent or expected to work for their bed and the room is provided to meet charitable objectives then the Right to Rent legislation does not apply.

The “right to rent”

So, if it is legal the next question is often “what about the Right to Rent”? Right to Rent is what the government has chosen to call the law introduced by the 2014 Immigration Act (and rolled out in England from 1st February 2016) that requires landlords to check the documents of all new “tenants”. The law aims to make sure every rent-paying adult tenant has the right to live and rent accommodation in the UK before a tenancy agreement is granted. There are no plans at present to extend this to Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland.

NACCOM has produced a **Right to Rent briefing note**², which can be downloaded from our website. More information can also be found at the government’s **check your tenant’s right-to-rent page**.³

Please note that in March 2019 a High Court judge stopped the further roll out of Right to Rent in the UK, claiming it was leading to discrimination. The Home Office was given right of appeal, which was pending at the time of publication of this toolkit.⁴

²<https://nacom.org.uk/members-area/library-submission/briefings/>

³<https://www.gov.uk/check-tenant-right-to-rent-documents>

⁴<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-47415383>

Top tips and considerations

The following tips and considerations are designed to help you begin to think through whether or not setting up a housing scheme is right for your charity or project.

- ✓ **Talk to NACCOM:** If you are unsure about any aspect of property acquisition, development or management then please contact NACCOM's Network Development Team at development@naccom.org.uk
- ✓ **Plan and Reflect:** Know your limits! Have a clear vision of what you want to achieve, who the people are you want to help, what resources you already have, what is still needed and what the core values are that underpin your project and how you will go about its implementation.
- ✓ **Research:** Ask the question 'What are the gaps in local provision?' Talk to your local homelessness team and talk with other refugee/asylum seeker (RAS) charities.
- ✓ **Marketing:** How will you publicise your housing project? Are you ready to communicate with your community?
- ✓ **Fit for purpose:** Getting the house right will save money in the long run. Ask the question 'Is this the right property in the right location?' and 'What alterations and approvals are needed to ensure the house is fit for the intended purpose?'
- ✓ **The highest standard:** Aim for the highest quality that meets the highest standard in both the accommodation provided and in your service. In the long term this will reduce costs, minimise voids and maximise income.
- ✓ **Team:** Look after and invest in your staff and volunteers, as they are key to a successful project. Recruit the right people with the right aptitude to look after both tenants and properties.
- ✓ **Who will you accommodate?** Do you plan to house asylum seekers, refugees or others? Do you plan to house unrelated singles, families or both? If you plan to rent are you looking at supported housing and exempt rents (see Chapter 6 Glossary for an explanation) or simply charging Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates with a top up? These questions can affect house set up and management costs.
- ✓ **Support work:** How will you support those you are housing to;
A) manage their tenancy; B) apply for Housing Benefits, Jobseekers' Allowance/Universal Credit etc. if they are refugees or others with the right to rent or; c) achieve positive move-on if they are people seeking asylum?

- ✓ **Cost Management:** How will you manage utilities, voids, debtors, repairs and maintenance, and the payment of rent to property owners etc?
- ✓ **Partnering:** Do you have the right skill set within your organisation to run a successful housing project? Or could you partner with a specialist housing charity/housing association such as The Boaz Trust have done (**see Case Study 2 on page 22**)?
- ✓ **Relationships:** Invest time in relationships; tell your story; get to know local churches/faith groups as well as local registered social landlords (RSLs)/housing associations, business people, philanthropists and grant-making trusts. Building relationships and trust can open doors to both property and investment.
- ✓ **Be realistic:** Some members are earning income from housing which has enabled them to cross-subsidise rooms for those with NRPF. (See Chapter 4 Income From Housing as well as worked examples of earned income in the **NACCOM Funding Toolkit⁵**).
- ✓ **Maximise grant opportunities:** Continue to look for grants to allow you to build capacity and develop your model. Plan ahead and don't leave applications to the last minute.
- ✓ **Be flexible and open to opportunity:** For example, the provision of housing for local authority-funded clients needing Care Act or Children's Act provision can provide an income and cross subsidise other work (**see Case Study 4 on page 34**).

Where to find properties

NACCOM members have over the years been very creative in the sourcing and funding of houses. The list below highlights some of different ways members have sourced properties:

Recommendation: Take a look at the 4 case studies throughout the toolkit and the members' directory on the NACCOM website for information on the full range of housing projects.

- Rent-free or below market rent properties including church manses, vicarages and inherited properties. Examples include **Manchester-based Boaz Trust⁶**.

⁵<https://nacom.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/NACCOM-FundingToolkit-No-Crop-Marks.pdf>

- Landlords with voids who may lease at below market rents for a guaranteed income. Examples include Tyneside-based **Action Foundation**⁷ and **Abigail Housing**⁸ in Leeds.
- Social investors who purchase property and lease to the local group for a % fee typically of earned income. Examples include UK-wide Green Pastures, who have worked with a number of members including **Boaz Trust**⁹ and **Nottingham Arimathea Trust**¹⁰, and **Commonweal Housing**¹¹, who work with Praxis Community Projects in London.
- **Individual investors** who purchase property which is then renovated to an agreed standard before being managed on their behalf by a NACCOM member for a flat rate or % fee. Examples include Teesside-based **Open Door North East**¹² which has successfully built its portfolio with this approach, even offering a project management service for first-time investors.
- **Student Landlords** As per individual investors, but existing landlords such as student landlords looking for alternative letting agents due to a fall in demand. Examples include **Open Door North East**¹³ and **Abigail Housing**¹⁴.
- **Housing Associations/Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)** who are rationalising their stock or willing to off-load difficult-to-let properties due to bedroom tax, or are simply interested in supporting the refugee charity's work and enter into service level agreements for the provision and management of housing stock. Examples include Boaz Trust who work with **Arawak Walton**¹⁵, and **Hope Projects**¹⁶ in Birmingham who work closely with **Spring Housing**¹⁷.
- **Community Land Trusts (CLTs)**¹⁸ and community-led housing initiatives. **Open Door North East** manage a number of **Middlesbrough CLT's**¹⁹ portfolio.
- **Private Finance/Mortgage and Trust Grants** Hull-based charity **Giroscope**²⁰ buys and renovates empty properties in Hull to provide secure and affordable accommodation to those in need. Initially started with a mortgage, it raises capital from existing properties to reinvest. Other examples include Open Door North East, which has secured grant funding from charities such as **The Quaker Housing Trust**²¹.

⁶<https://www.boaztrust.org.uk/pages/7-accommodation>

⁷<https://actionfoundation.org.uk/projects/action-letting/>

⁸<https://www.abigailhousing.org.uk/about/refugee-project/>

⁹<https://www.greenpastures.net/partner/boaz-trust>

¹⁰<https://www.greenpastures.net/partner/arimathea-trust>

¹¹<https://www.commonwealhousing.org.uk/projects/no-recourse-to-public-funds>

^{12 & 13}<https://www.opendoornortheast.com/index.php/what-we-do/refugee-housing>

¹⁴<https://www.abigailhousing.org.uk/about/refugee-project/>

¹⁵<https://arawakwalton.com/>

¹⁶<https://hope-projects.org.uk/about-hope/#our-partners>

¹⁷<https://springhousing.org.uk/>

¹⁸<http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk/>

¹⁹<http://www.middlesbroughclt.org.uk/>

²⁰<https://giroscope.org.uk/housing/>

²¹<http://www.qht.org.uk/>

Is this property right for your project?

The following checklist is designed to help you decide whether to take on a property. It is not exhaustive however, and some questions will clearly have a much greater significance than others depending on your local circumstances.

Top tips

- ✓ Remember to gather as much information as possible as early as possible
- ✓ If you are buying or taking on a property that will require refurbishment, consider appointing a Building Surveyor to produce a **Home Buyers Report**²² as this will highlight key issues that might need to be addressed and help you to plan what is essential and what can be dealt with at a later date.
- ✓ A full housing project checklist can be downloaded from the NACCOM online Members' Library.

The initial assessment

- Will the property need to be registered as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) and what are the costs?
- Does the local authority operate a selective licensing scheme whether or not the property requires an HMO license?
- Is the building's size, internal layout and condition, including the number and size of bedrooms, right for your proposed use? There are rules that govern minimum room sizes that apply to both HMO and local selective licensing schemes.
- Where is the property located and are there likely to be any community cohesion issues?
- How far is it from support services and what is the local public transport like?
- What are the likely running costs and who will be liable to pay these?
- Who will manage the property?
- What lease or management agreement will be in place with the property's owner?
- Who will provide support to those who will live in the property?
- Who will be responsible for organising and paying for repairs and maintenance?
- What are the costs of any upgrades required to meet licensing, fire and other safety requirements? Who will be paying for these?
- How long is the property being made available for?

²²<https://www.ricsfirms.com/residential/moving-home/surveys/rics-consumer-guide-home-surveys/>

Who will access the accommodation?

It is important to give careful consideration to your criteria for accommodating people:

- Will you only be accommodating single people who have been refused asylum, or;
- Do you intend to accommodate a wider client group including perhaps refugees and/or other migrants paying rent as part of a cross-subsidy model?
- What is the current and potential demand in your area?
- From what geographical area will you take referrals?
- Do you plan to work with both men and women?
- Do you plan to work with families with children with recourse to public funds, or/and NRPF families whose housing is being paid for by the local authority under Section 17 of the Children's Act?

Planning and building control

There are various standards and permissions that have to be adhered to when renovating or making changes to a building, including when the designated use of that building is being changed, for example from an office to a house. You may need to apply for **Building Regulations**²³ depending on the scope of the improvements you need to make.

You may also need to apply for **Planning Permission**²⁴ (including Conservation Area consent) for alterations/extensions or for change of use of a building.

Failure to follow the correct procedures for both planning permission and building regulations can be costly both in time and money and even lead to prosecution.

Top tip

If in doubt contact your Local Council Planning and Building Control teams for initial informal advice. Please note that whilst these teams might be located in the same departments, both permissions may be required and both require separate applications, so do always check.

²³<https://www.gov.uk/building-regulations-approval>

²⁴<https://www.gov.uk/planning-permission-england-wales>

House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) and landlord licensing

We believe that all NACCOM member projects should aspire to the best possible standards in the quality, safety and management of all houses provided, whether or not a license is required.

A **House in Multiple Occupation**²⁵ is any residential property occupied by three or more people sharing facilities like a bathroom and/or kitchen who form two or more households. A household is either a single person or members of the same family living together.

From 1st October 2018 **Mandatory HMO Licensing** became law nationally for all HMOs where there are five or more occupants comprising of two or more households. In addition, new mandatory licensing conditions have been introduced prescribing amongst other things national minimum sizes for rooms used as sleeping accommodation.

Selective Licensing is a scheme which aims to improve the standards of property management in the private rental sector. All private landlords operating within a designated area are required to obtain a license from the council for each property which is rented out.

Additional Licensing is a discretionary scheme that can also be adopted by a council to help to deal with the problems associated with HMOs that are not already covered by mandatory licensing.

HMO, Selective and Additional landlord licensing exists to ensure that residential accommodation within the private rented sector is safe, well managed and of good quality. It is important to properly investigate the local requirements and costs of applying of any scheme operating in your local area.

Room Sizes

The new HMO rules prohibit the letting of a room to a single adult where the usable floor space is less than 6.51sqm (4.64sqm for children under 10) and 10.22sqm for a room occupied by two adults. Rooms under 4.64sqm cannot be used at all for sleeping. The floor area of a bedroom under a height standard of 1.5m is not included in the calculation.

Top tips

- ✓ Check the sizes of all rooms before taking on a house to make sure that they meet the required minimum standard.
- ✓ Check with your local authority for any local guidance on HMO standards and what additional or selective landlord licencing might be in place.

²⁵<https://www.gov.uk/renting-out-a-property/houses-in-multiple-occupation-hmo>



Case Study 1: Abigail Housing (Leeds and Bradford)



Abigail Housing is a charitable company dedicated to providing support and homes to refugees in Leeds and people seeking asylum in Bradford who find themselves destitute and homeless.

In **Bradford, Abigail Housing's destitution-project**²⁶ has five shared houses accommodating 19 people with NRPF seeking asylum:

- Two have been provided through **Green Pastures**²⁷
- One is from the Leeds Anglican Diocese on a peppercorn rent
- Two are privately owned; one with very low rents and one donated.

The work in Bradford with people with NRPF seeking asylum includes casework and strong partnership working with the British Red Cross, Refugee Action and other agencies with the aim of achieving effective move-on and re-engagement with the asylum legal process. The aim is to accommodate someone for no longer than 12 months, but will continue to house if the individual's asylum case is still active.

In **Leeds, Abigail Housing's refugee-project**²⁸ accommodates 66 refugees in 18 properties leased from private landlords, which are all used to support refugees:

- Five are ordinary shared accommodation houses where individuals either work and pay a single room rate or are in receipt of the shared accommodation rate through Universal Credit payments
- Nine are shared houses providing shorter-term "supported living" (it usually takes 12 months to two years for an offer of social housing to be made) for which the council pays the charity 2.3 times more than the minimum shared accommodation local housing allowance rate per person because of the support provided. This is called "Exempt Accommodation", a term used in Housing Benefit and Universal Credit to describe supported accommodation where the rules that normally limit the amount of rent covered by a benefit award do not apply
- Two are 1-bedroom houses and two are 1-bedroom properties rented out to singles and small families.

Abigail Housing works closely with Leeds City Council Housing Options Team who hold a weekly surgery in their office carrying out homelessness assessments and helping people with any issues around bidding for properties.

²⁶<https://www.abigailhousing.org.uk/about/destitution-project/>

²⁷<http://www.greenpastures.net>

²⁸<https://www.abigailhousing.org.uk/about/refugee-project/>

The work in Leeds is more or less self-funded due to the additional income received for the **"Exempt Accommodation"** houses. Any surplus produced in Leeds helps to cross-subsidise the work in Bradford, which is otherwise funded from grants and donations.

“

I come 2014 in UK to seek asylum ... unfortunately, my claim wasn't successful. After my claim was refused I was forced to leave Home Office accommodation and left with nowhere to live ... I was destitute. Luckily ... Abigail Housing helped me, whilst I was gathering evidences and preparing fresh claim. I stayed ... almost 2 years since coming to the UK...(Abigail)... was the only place I lived comfortably with peace of mind. Management, staff and volunteers, the list is endless they were so kind and helpful, ... Abigail was like home away from home... tears on my face is the time I say goodbye. I thank all ...and wish you all the best.

”

Dannah, Abigail Housing resident



Running a housing project

In addition to getting the building right, there is a lot more that goes into running a successful housing project. In this chapter we look at the key considerations to be taken into account when running a housing project.

Policies and procedures

It is important to have robust policies and procedures in place to cover the roles and responsibilities of both staff and volunteers including safeguarding and the health, safety and wellbeing of all involved, including those who will be accommodated.

Anyone acting in a paid or voluntary capacity on behalf of your organisation and residents residing in the accommodation need to know what is expected of them and what they can expect from the organisation.

Recommendation: We recommend that you look in the NACCOM online Members' Library for guidance on safeguarding and examples of policies and procedures, along with information about house inductions and rules for occupiers.

Insurance

Different types of insurance will be required depending on the nature of your project and how it is set up:

- You will need **buildings insurance** (or the owner of the property will need buildings insurance) that is suitable for the type of accommodation you are providing.
- You may also wish to include **contents insurance** as this will cover carpets and furniture in the case of a fire or other damage.
- You will need **public liability insurance** and if you are employing staff, you will also need **employer's liability insurance**.
- We would also recommend that you include cover for your **board of trustees**, especially if you are not a CIO (Charity Incorporated Organisation) or Limited Company.
- As a charity/CIO it might be possible to get a group policy that covers all of the above.

Top tip

A number of NACCOM projects have good relationships with brokers who understand the sector. If in doubt why not ask a specific question via NACCOM's online **Members' Forum**.

How long will you accommodate people for?

Most housing projects will have the goal of providing residents with a safe place to live whilst they are helped to explore their options and seek support with finding a more permanent solution which, for many, will be resolving their immigration status. However, a project that is accommodating refugees or other migrants for which a rent is charged may be happy for the resident to stay for as long as they like.

Each project will need to decide how long they are prepared to accommodate residents for. Some of the main considerations are:

Having a clear (but flexible) end-date for accommodation

This helps both staff and volunteers and focuses the person being accommodated on the need to find a long-term solution. Having no end date in mind causes uncertainty and can lead to dependency. It also limits the number of people that the project could potentially help.

Most housing projects will have a trial period with each new placement

This allows an assessment to be made of the person's suitability for longer-term housing and allows referrals to be made to other specialist advice and legal services. Most projects will extend the time someone with NRPF is accommodated in increments up to a year, depending on the progress being made by the individual to achieve positive move-on.

Residents know that you are serious about the stated end-date

Don't be afraid to ask the question, "what will you do" or "where will you go if we have to ask you to leave?" Be prepared to discuss alternatives such as community hosting or perhaps facilitating a move to another city where there are friends or family connections.

Have regular conversations and formal reviews with all residents

Also talk as a team (staff and volunteers) as this makes it easier to manage move-on, especially when difficult decisions have to be taken.

Top tips

- ✓ It's also important to have access to good legal advice and client support. Without that, move-on is very difficult.
- ✓ Having support workers who can liaise with solicitors and help residents explore possible options is also valuable. They don't have to be from the same organisation as the housing scheme. A partnership with another organisation can work just as well.

Referrals

All accommodation projects, whether they are providing hosting, a night shelter or housing, need a referral mechanism that is manageable and understood. The following are key considerations:

- Who will refer people to your project? Some NACCOM projects run their own drop-ins, where they can get to know prospective clients. This can help in prioritising bed spaces. Many will have other organisations referring into the project. Generally speaking it is best not to have too many referral agencies, as standards can vary greatly and monitoring becomes more difficult
- Prioritise agencies already working actively on client case work and who are in a position to make some assessment of how long an individual's case might take to resolve
- The main criteria for a referral agency should be, firstly - how well they know the client, and secondly, their ability to professionally complete the referral forms
- Referral forms need not be lengthy, but should include all the relevant information needed for making an informed decision of suitability for being accommodated. Referral form templates are available in the NACCOM online Members' Library
- Beware of taking anyone without a properly completed referral. You need to know as much information as possible on who you may be accommodating and be comfortable with any medical or psychological issues prospective residents may have.

Top tip

It is important to have disclosure agreements with referral agencies and that either the referrer or the housing project is able to complete a risk assessment before a person is accommodated.

Vetting residents

Hopefully the referral form and referral agency will tell you all you need to know, but if you want to make sure that the prospective client does not have a criminal record in the UK then the best way of doing this is to seek an **Information Sharing Agreement** with the police to provide up-to-date checks on prospective clients. A number of NACCOM projects including Action Foundation and Night Stop North East already do this and usually get a response within 24 hours. All requests are done with client consent and through Certified Information Security Management (CISM), which involves a secure email service. These checks are looking for violent and sexual crimes rather than other offences such as shoplifting.

Deciding who to accommodate

Deciding who to accommodate, particularly when there are limited bed spaces, is a difficult process. Most housing projects will look at a combination of **vulnerability** and **move-on** potential. Some projects will have a roundtable discussion with the referral agency, staff and volunteers using a scoring sheet to help inform the discussion.

Occupancy agreements

Whether you are renting rooms out to individuals or a whole house to a family, or whether you are providing rooms for free to unrelated individuals with NRPF, you will need to issue each person you accommodate with some form of **occupancy agreement**.

If the person will be paying a rent for their flat/house or room in a shared house, then the usual form of agreement will be an **Assured Shorthold Tenancy Agreement**. In certain circumstances such as in the provision of emergency or short-term hostel accommodation, a **License Agreement** may be more appropriate. If the accommodation is shared and the occupiers are a mix of both individuals with NRPF and individuals able to pay rent then a license agreement (rent payers) and an **Occupancy Agreement** (NRPF) that echoes the terms of the **License Agreement** is more appropriate.

It is important that **Assured Shorthold Tenancy and License Agreements** are properly drawn up and are legally binding. There are some excellent online resources and tools to help draw up an agreement (see **Chapter 5 Glossary And Sources Of Additional Information page 36** for useful links).

If a prospective resident has NRPF then no formal legal tenancy/license agreement can be issued and an **Accommodation Agreement** needs to be drawn up. Such an agreement is not legally binding but typically echoes the contents of a License Agreement. It sets out the general terms and conditions by which the person with NRPF

is being accommodated, including what they can expect from the charity/project and what the charity/project expects from them, such as attendance at monthly review meetings etc. in return for the provision of the room. Such agreements will typically be time-limited while the resident is helped to re-engage with the asylum legal process.

Examples of **Occupancy Agreements** can be found in the NACCOM online **Members' Library**²⁹.

Vetting staff and volunteers

A robust Safe Guarding Policy and Procedure should set out in detail how you will approach the vetting of staff and volunteers. Whether you need to carry out enhanced or basic Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks or not will depend on the job/volunteer role and whether any of those accommodated are classed as a vulnerable adult under the relevant legislation. The term '**vulnerable adult**' describes people "***over the age of eighteen, towards whom the state has specific safeguarding responsibilities, because of their age or mental capacity, or because they are receiving certain types of health and social care***". If in doubt you should use the **Government DBS eligibility tool**³⁰ which also lists the types of work (paid or voluntary) for which DBS checks should be done. More guidance on DBS and safeguarding can be found in the NACCOM online Members' Library.

A DBS check will only disclose criminal activity in the past, which is why two **character references** are also important.

Record keeping

You will need to consider what records are needed for best practise and for legal reasons and how these are best kept, both in relation to those who are accommodated and also for the day-to-day management of properties. **Excel spreadsheets** are the most commonly used tool. Some NACCOM members who have developed larger accommodation projects use a database or Client Relationship Management (**CRM**) system, and financial management packages such as **Sage** or **Xero**.

Housing coordinator/Support worker

Having a paid member of staff or a volunteer to manage your houses or to undertake support work for people who are accommodated is essential. It's important that you decide what the key duties, functions and responsibilities are for any post/s required to help ensure the smooth management of the project and the appropriate care and support of all those accommodated.

²⁹https://naccom.org.uk/doc_topic/housing/

³⁰<https://www.gov.uk/find-out-dbs-check>

- There are examples of various forms and examples of both staff and volunteer job descriptions in the NACCOM online **Members' Library**²⁹, which can be adapted to meet your needs.
- The Members' Forum is also a useful place to ask specific questions and get answers from other member organisations.

Top tip

It's important that you decide what the key duties, functions and responsibilities are for any post/s required to help ensure the smooth management of the project and the appropriate care and support of all those accommodated.

²⁹<https://nacom.org.uk/doc-topic/housing/>



Case Study 2: The Boaz Trust (Manchester)



The Boaz Trust runs a cross-subsidy model that houses 39 single adults with NRPF and 34 refugees in 20 houses all located in Manchester and Salford. In addition, the charity runs a hosting scheme (up to three spaces at any one time) and winter night shelter (12 spaces per night). The Trust's property portfolio is made up of rent-free and low-rent privately owned property, as well as property owned and leased from the social investor **Green Pastures**⁹ and property owned by a local housing association/RSL, **Arawak Walton**¹⁵.

Awawak Walton has:

1. Provided two houses for a lease fee, which has enabled the Boaz Trust to then rent the same houses out as shared accommodation (to refugees who have leave to remain in the UK) for a higher yield.
2. Entered into an agreement with the Boaz Trust to manage all their housing maintenance and collection of refugee rents. This strategic management arrangement has freed up Boaz Trust staff and volunteers to do what they do best in supporting their NRPF clients to achieve positive move-on, and their refugee tenants to integrate and take steps into employment, education and independent living with successful tenancies.

The Boaz Trust employs a full-time Housing Manager, a full-time Client Services Manager and four Support Workers (3.0FTE).

People who have become homeless at any stage of the asylum process can be referred to the charity through an online referral system. In 2018 referrals were made from over 50 different organisations including local council housing teams, the NHS, social services and local voluntary sector organisations. Once a referral has been received, the client support team will liaise with the referrer, following up any queries and arranging an initial assessment and introduction meeting with an interpreter as and when appropriate.

The aim of all Boaz Trust accommodation and support is that clients will be able to move into longer-term accommodation. For people who have had their asylum applications refused, accommodation and support is offered for a period of up to 12 months.

⁹<https://www.greenpastures.net/partner/boaz-trust>

¹⁵<https://arawakwalton.com/>

²⁰https://naccom.org.uk/doc_topic/housing/

Due to the challenge of finding affordable accommodation (private rented or social housing) and then sustaining a tenancy, clients who have been granted refugee status may sometimes require a longer period of accommodation and support before they are able to move on.

To find out more about Boaz Trust's financial model refer to the section on Income From Housing (page 22 to 25) in **NACCOM's Funding Toolkit**⁵.

“

If not for Boaz, I would be homeless and outside. Thank God I never had to sleep outside . . . The best thing Boaz does is giving somewhere to stay. I moved to a Boaz house. The thing I like the most was the people - they were so good to me, and looked after me. It's not the same as staying with a friend. You have a key. And when you have your own key, your own place, you feel more free to go and come whenever you want. It's different, so different than before, you can do what you want and you are free.

”

Sita (Guinea), Boaz Trust resident

Photo Credit: Boaz Trust



⁵<https://nacom.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/NACCOM-FundingToolkit-No-Crop-Marks.pdf>

Specifications, Health and Safety, and Fire Risk Assessment

The law is clear that landlords have legal responsibilities to ensure the health and safety of tenants by keeping the property safe and free from health hazards.

Section 3(2) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA) makes provision for relevant health and safety legislation to apply to landlords to ensure a duty of care is shown to their tenants with regard to their health and safety.

There are many different choices of product and materials that can be used in renovating, decorating and equipping a house which is intended to be used to provide shared accommodation. In this chapter we give our recommendations on some common fixtures and fittings found in all houses as well as setting out in detail those key health and safety considerations.

Top tips

- Always aim for the best possible standards, don't cut corners and never compromise on health and safety.
- Always ask the question "Would I be comfortable and safe living in this house?"
- Try and get more than one quote for improvement works.
- If you are unsure about project managing the refurbishment of a house then consider partnering with someone who does; perhaps a local housing charity or an RSL such as the Boaz Trust has done in Manchester? (**See Case Study 2 on page 22**).

Fixtures and fittings

In addition to items such as smoke alarms, fire-doors, CO² detectors and emergency lighting, which are covered in detail later in this chapter, the following is a list of **key recommendations** regarding fixtures and fittings to be used within shared accommodation. A more extensive check list can be downloaded from the NACCOM online **Members' Library**²⁹.

²⁹https://naccomm.org.uk/doc_topic/housing/

- **Windows:** A change of windows may be required because of their condition or because they don't facilitate a good means of escape. Remember also that good quality double-glazed windows will also improve the energy efficiency of a house and reduce condensation. Windows should ideally be bottom or side openers to facilitate a means of escape.
- **Exterior doors:** Should ideally be fitted with Euro-locks with a thumbscrew on the inside to facilitate ease of escape.
- **Bedroom doors:** Should ideally be fitted with Euro-locks or deadbolts (Yale 82 or similar) with a thumb screw locking mechanism on the inside and key operation on the outside. This ensures residents cannot be locked out and ensures easier access in an emergency.
- **Decoration:** Keep it clean and keep it simple, for example by using white/cream satin paint to timber work and magnolia vinyl matt/silk on walls. Also use a good quality kitchen and bathroom paint to avoid mould.
- **Kitchens and bathrooms:** Generally aim for one kitchen per 4/5 residents and preferably two bath/shower rooms and toilets with sinks.
- **Extractor fans:** Ensure a good extractor fan is fitted in both bathrooms and kitchens and that these are vented outside of the property.
- **Towel rails:** Consider installing large towel rails rather than radiators in both kitchens and bathrooms as these help with the drying and airing of clothing.
- **Electric showers:** Fit electric showers as these ensure residents can still have a shower if there is ever a fault with the boiler.
- **Furniture:** Should be strong, functional and comfortable. Consider quality second-hand items that meet fire regulations.
- **White goods:** Aim for one washing machine, two fridge freezers, one microwave and one cooker per 4/5 occupiers. If you have space, fit a tumble dryer.
- **Carpets and floor coverings:** Aim for a balance between longevity and comfort. Carpet bedrooms, landing and stairs but consider a vinyl/hard surface to kitchen, hall, and living room.
- **A home, not just a house:** Don't forget those finishing touches, which can help make a house feel more like a home - a colourful rug, some pictures on the walls, a TV with built in Freeview, bins, shelves, mirrors and the all-important notice board!

Fire safety obligations

- Health and safety and risk management are integral considerations for any well-run charity or project, and the setting up and management of a house is no different.
- Be very clear as to what your legal responsibilities are and ensure that you have the knowledge and resources to exercise that responsibility.

Landlords (owner, project/charity manager or agent etc.) have certain legal obligations when it comes to fire safety, for the protection of their properties and the safety of people who live in them.

Legislation requires that landlords carry out Fire Risk Assessments in all areas of their properties.

Top tip

We would encourage those looking to provide housing to read the **Local Authorities Coordinators Regulatory Service**³⁰ (LACORS) Housing Fire Safety Guide to ensure they understand their legal responsibilities both to carry out a Fire Risk Assessment, and make sure their property has adequate and appropriate fire safety provision.

Fire risk assessment

A person (or a competent person acting on their behalf) must carry out a **Fire Risk Assessment** for each property they are responsible for.

The objective is to identify and evaluate all fire risks to which '**relevant people**' (anyone legally allowed on the premises) are exposed to and to reduce the likelihood of fire, limit the spread of fire, and ensure that people know about a fire and can escape from the building.

Further guidance examples of Fire Risk Assessments, as well as blank templates, can be found in NACCOM's online **Members' Library**²⁹.

²⁹https://naccom.org.uk/doc_topic/housing/

³⁰<https://www.rfa.org.uk/docs/LACORSFESguideApril62009.PDF>

Fire alarms and emergency lighting

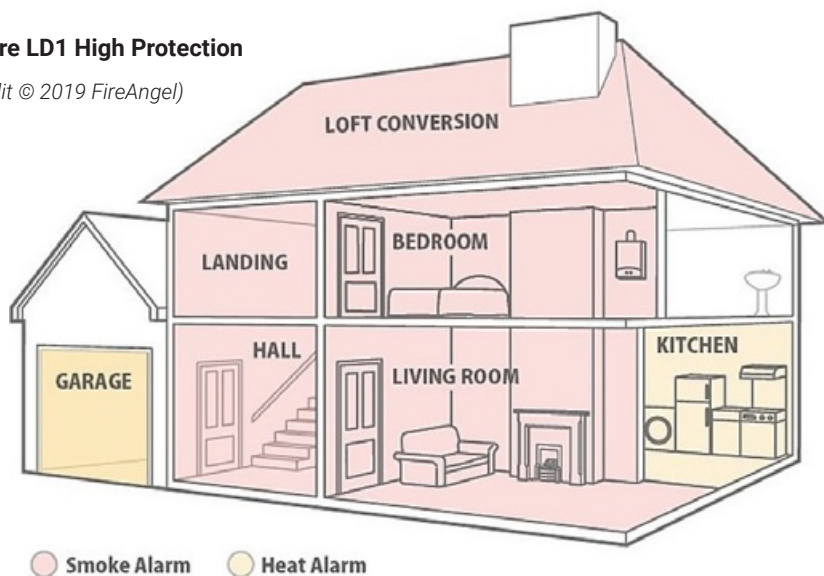
It is essential that the right number and design of smoke alarms (including heat detectors in kitchens) are installed in residential properties. Properly completed **Fire Risk Assessments** will highlight, amongst other things, the number and position of smoke alarms and required emergency lighting.

It is recommended that an integrated hard-wired mains smoke alarm system is installed. These are graded from LD1 high protection to LD3 low protection.

Recommendation: It is recommended that an LD1 hard-wired mains smoke alarm system which covers all rooms in a house or flat including bedrooms is fitted in shared accommodation.

Figure LD1 High Protection

(Credit © 2019 FireAngel)



There are some good online resources available, and while we are not making any commercial recommendation the following guide from **Fire Angel**³¹ is excellent.

Emergency Lighting

Fire Risk Assessments are likely to lead to recommendations for the installation of emergency lighting, particularly on stairwells and means of escape routes.

³¹<https://www.fireangel.co.uk/blog/your-guide-for-smoke-alarm-positioning-to-meet-building-regulations>

Emergency lighting³² needs to include a battery back-up, which needs regular monthly inspection.

Top tip

We recommend that emergency bulkhead lighting is fitted to all stairwells and corridors that afford a means of escape.

Fire doors

Fire doors are a legal requirement in many premises, including flats and houses of multiple occupancy. Fire doors stop an active fire from spreading further by sealing off part of a building from smoke whilst stopping a fire spreading to other areas.

Fire doors are constructed from materials designed to resist fire for a certain amount of time. The most common types have either a 30-minute or a 60-minute resistance and are between 44mm (FD30) and 54mm (FD60) thick. Fire doors are thicker than standard doors and for this reason a standard door frame will either have to be replaced or altered.

Recommendation:

- We recommend that fire doors are fitted to all bedrooms, kitchen, living room and means of escape routes.
- It is vital that fire doors are fitted in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendation by a competent tradesperson. Generally speaking a 2.5/3mm even and maximum gap is allowable between the door and the frame
- When fitting fire doors remember to include the essential "fire door furniture" including fire rated hinges, signage, self-closures and intumescent strips and pads to create a smoke seal around the frame in case of a fire.

In addition to fire doors, firebreak walls may also be required along corridors and means of escape. This might include boarding over stud walls and under stairs with fireproof plasterboard, before reskimming and decorating.

Gas and electrical safety

Landlords have a legal duty to ensure that any gas or electrical installation and equipment provided, is safe before anyone occupies the property and remains safe whilst the property is occupied.

³²<https://www.firesafe.org.uk/emergency-lighting/>

Gas safety

Gas appliances, pipework and chimneys/flues must be maintained and in a safe condition. Gas appliances owned by the landlord, which are provided for residents' use, must be checked annually by a **Gas Safe Registered Engineer**³³ who will produce a Gas Safety Certificate which must be displayed in the property. Any issues raised by the engineer must be rectified before residents move in.

Recommendation:

- It is recommended to have the boiler, plumbing and electrical system professionally checked before other refurbishment works take place, as this can help reduce costs.
- It is recommended that all gas fires are either disconnected or removed from shared accommodation as these pose a high safety risk and are also expensive to run.
- It is recommended that a copy of all certificates are displayed on a notice board within the property with the originals carefully filed at the project office.
- A full annual service of the boiler is recommended at the same time as the gas safety certificate is produced.

Electrical safety

The charity Electrical Safety First has a wealth of excellent online resources including a **Landlords Guide To Electrical Safety**³⁴. It has also produced a very useful app which can be downloaded: **Home Electrical Safety Check**³⁵ smartphone app.

Whilst only a legal requirement for HMOs, we recommend that a qualified electrician inspects each property and produces an **Electrical Safety Certificate** as this process will highlight any underlying problems and a schedule of any improvements required before residents move in. Electrical Safety Certificates are usually required every five years but may be required to be renewed sooner should there be changes in the regulations or changes are made to the electrical installations within the property.

Electrical equipment/Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)

Most house fires are started by faulty electrical equipment. Any electrical appliance provided must be safe and must have at least the CE marking which is the manufacturer's claim that it meets all the requirements of European law. All portable appliances must then be tested (**PAT** tested) annually or in accordance with the product recommendations. Test records must be kept and updated as equipment is renewed.

³³<http://www.hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic/faqlandlord.htm>

³⁴https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/media/1607/landlords-guides-england_wales-2016.pdf

³⁵<https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/guidance/safety-checks-around-the-home/visual-checks/>

Recommendation:

- It is recommended that plug-in electrical fires and fan heaters are banned as these carry a high safety risk and are very expensive to run.
- If you are renovating or rewiring a property, consider fitting fuse spurs to each ring main in bedrooms so that plug-in fires cannot be used.

Residual Current Device (RCD)

RCDs are important life-saving devices which are designed to prevent fatal electric shocks if someone should touch something live. RCDs also provide some protection against electrical fires.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that an RCD is fitted and preferably as an integral part of the consumer unit (fuse box).

Residents induction

It is important to remember people can have vastly different experiences of gas and electricity, depending on where they grew up.

Recommendation:

- For this reason we recommend that gas and electrical safety in the home forms a key part of your induction when residents move in.
- The induction should ideally include do's and don'ts and what to do in an emergency.

Legionella testing

Legionnaires' disease is a potentially fatal form of pneumonia caused by the inhalation of small droplets of contaminated water containing Legionella. All man-made hot and cold water systems have the potential to provide an environment where Legionella can grow.

According to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) the practical and proportionate application of health and safety law to landlords of domestic rental properties is that whilst there is a duty to assess the risk from exposure to Legionella in order to ensure the safety of their tenants, this does not require an in-depth, detailed assessment.

The risks from hot and cold water systems in most residential settings are generally considered to be low provided toilets are flushed and water in pipes is run regularly.

For more information on Legionella and a Landlords responsibility go to the **HSE website**.³⁶

Carbon monoxide poisoning

Carbon monoxide kills. It is mandatory to fit a carbon monoxide alarm in any room in a house where a solid fuel appliance or gas appliance is installed. The Government has produced a very useful guidance booklet on **smoke and carbon monoxide alarms for landlords and tenants**.³⁷

Annual safety checks should take place on each appliance and flue to ensure tenants are adequately protected against fire and carbon monoxide poisoning. If a gas boiler is fitted this will form part of the annual gas safety check.

Recommendation:

- We recommend that a visual inspection of the property, including its electrical and gas installations and portable appliances, takes place whenever there is a change of resident and in accordance with any planned monthly inspection schedules.
- It is also recommended that fire and CO2 alarms are tested monthly and that in addition to the annual Gas Safety Check by a Gas Safe Registered Engineer, a qualified electrician should undertake an annual check of all hard-wired smoke alarms.

³⁶<http://www.hse.gov.uk/legionnaires/legionella-landlords-responsibilities.htm>

³⁷<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/smoke-and-carbon-monoxide-alarms-explanatory-booklet-for-landlords/the-smoke-and-carbon-monoxide-alarm-england-regulations-2015-qa-booklet-for-the-private-rented-sector-landlords-and-tenants>



Case Study 3: Open Door North East

(Middlesbrough / Teesside)



Open Door North East (ODNE)³⁸ provides housing to people seeking asylum, refugees and other migrants in Middlesbrough and Stockton-on-Tees. ODNE housing is a cross-subsidy model providing accommodation for approximately 20 people seeking asylum with NRPF and 91 refugees and other migrants in 36 houses.

The charity started with a single rent-free house before expanding, initially by renting and sub-letting to refugees who were low priority clients with the local authority homeless team. ODNE developed its model by working with ex-student landlords and first-time investors who were looking to buy, renovate and provide good quality shared accommodation to refugees, whilst supporting the charity's core work with people with NRPF.

- ODNE now owns three houses bought and renovated to a high standard with financial gifts from individuals and grant funding from the **Quaker Housing Trust**²¹
 - Two other houses are privately owned but provided rent free
 - Two more houses are managed for a local church
 - One house has been provided rent free by **North Star Housing Association**³⁹, which has also supported ODNE housing in other ways
 - The remaining 28 houses are privately owned and managed for a % fee of gross income (typically 10 to 15%) as a social letting agency focussing on providing affordable accommodation to refugees and other migrants including families
- Operating as a social letting agency reduces financial risk and gives greater flexibility in responding to the local refugee/migrant housing market.

ODNE brings in income through the provision of accommodation for families with children under Section 17 of the Children's Act or for hospital leavers with NRPF under Care Act provision.

The project employs a full-time Housing Manager and a full-time Support Worker and a 0.6 part-time Housing Inspection and Maintenance Officer. The project almost covers its staff costs but does require some grant support.

³⁸<https://www.opendoornortheast.com>

²¹ <http://www.qht.org.uk>

³⁹ <https://www.northstarhg.co.uk/about-north-star/news/north-star-helps-local-charity/>

Refugees leaving Home Office-funded accommodation on Teesside are referred through LASSLO, NASS Housing Provider as well as partners and friends. NRPf clients are referred either via the British Red Cross and other local charities or through self-referral through ODNE's weekly male and female drop-ins. Priority is given to both those with identifiable move-on potential and those who are most vulnerable. People with NRPf are generally accommodated for up to one year.

To find out more about Open Door North East's financial model refer to the section on Income From Housing (page 22 to 25) in NACCOM's **Funding Toolkit**.⁵

“

It is a long time since I felt I belonged anywhere and I feel so much better now. Now I have somewhere to live I can concentrate on my case without worrying where I will sleep. I feel less tense and more positive about the future. I didn't realise how lonely and sad I felt without a sense of belonging but now I have a home the feeling is priceless.

”

Frances, Open Door North East resident

Photo Credit: Open Door North East



⁵<https://naccomm.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/NACCOM-FundingToolkit-No-Crop-Marks.pdf>



Case Study 4: Praxis Community Projects in Partnership with Commonweal Housing

Praxis Community Projects is based in London, which has a uniquely challenging housing market. Praxis provides holistic services to migrants (including refugees, people seeking asylum and EU and non-EU nationals), including legal advice, accommodation and wrap-around support, and access to support and skill-based groups.

In 2015 a joint NRPF project was started with Commonweal Housing to address a small part of the escalating humanitarian crisis, through an innovative and new cross-subsidy model of shared accommodation that seeks to meet several critical housing needs simultaneously.

£2.3 million of social investment was secured from a range of funders to purchase seven properties providing a combined 18 bed spaces in the Greater London Boroughs of Croydon and Redbridge. These properties were then leased to Praxis, which provides day-to-day housing management, specialist immigration advice, access to support and skills-based groups and other wrap-around support to those accommodated. During the first three years of the project, Praxis also had access to a three-bed house leased at below-market rent from a supporter.

Praxis makes these properties available to local authorities, who pay Praxis to use them to accommodate destitute migrant families whom the local authority has a duty to provide housing for under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989. This allows the local authorities to accommodate families in good-quality, supported accommodation instead of B&Bs and hostels.

Income received from these properties enables Praxis to finance the project and provide a number of free bed spaces to destitute female migrants with NRPF, thus protecting them from homelessness. This “free accommodation” is sourced from within the portfolio, either as individual bedrooms within properties shared with migrant families, or in a separate house subsidised by the project. Accommodation is offered to those meeting specific criteria (low needs, able to share) and assessed as having a good chance of resolving their immigration status. A key component of the project is access to immigration advice (by an OISC level 2 Praxis advisor) to help those accommodated (both families and single women) to resolve their immigration status, achieve access to public funds and move on.

Referrals into the project come from nine local authorities for families and Praxis and the British Red Cross for the single person destitute places.

Praxis employs one full-time Housing Manager and one part-time Support Worker. Residents also have access to an out-of-hours emergency line, which is provided by Praxis staff on a rota.

Praxis is currently exploring a similar approach in the provision of accommodation to individuals leaving hospital who have NRPF funded under the Care Act.

To find out more about the project and read the final 3-year project evaluation report follow the link to www.commonwealhousing.org.uk/NRPF.

“

Everyone is polite, we have security here, are like one big family...we understand each others' pressures but we are polite and calm. - Praxis resident

”

“

Praxis has been a light for me. It got me from a deep hole, a pit...I used to live in fear but when I went to Praxis House it stopped. - Praxis resident

”

Income from housing

No two NACCOM housing project models are the same and throughout this toolkit we have chosen four different case studies to illustrate this.

What our case studies all show is that despite regional variations in the housing market, NACCOM members have been successful in generating income from housing that has:

- allowed for the cross-subsidy of bed spaces for people left with NRPF, whilst at the same time providing much needed housing for refugees and migrants who have the right to rent.

Or in the case of Praxis Community Projects in London (who have developed their innovative housing solution in partnership with Commonweal Housing):

- allowed for the cross-subsidy of bed spaces for women with NRPF through the provision of accommodation paid for by local authorities where there is a statutory duty to provide under Section 17 of the Children's Act 1989.

In April 2019 NACCOM launched a **Funding Toolkit**⁵, which includes a section on **income from housing** together with some worked illustrations of how a housing project might generate income while at the same time cross-subsidising some provision for those left with NRPF.

We have also produced some spreadsheets to help projects explore cross subsidy. Contact development@nacom.org.uk for more information.

- Income from housing has reduced some NACCOM members' reliance on grant income and helped to increase the sustainability of members who are providing housing;
- It has also allowed some NACCOM members to grow and take on more houses and increase their provision of accommodation to those left with NRPF.

Membership of NACCOM

If you are starting an accommodation scheme for destitute asylum seekers, there are real benefits in becoming a member of NACCOM. Membership fees are deliberately set to be affordable to all.

Full membership is open to any organisation that is committed to providing accommodation for destitute asylum seekers. They may in addition provide accommodation for refugees and others with no recourse to public funds. It entitles members to:

- Assistance with capacity building across a range of accommodation services, including hosting schemes, housing projects and night shelters.
- Support with evaluating destitution services (if there is capacity this service may be extended to associate members).
- Voting rights at Annual and Extraordinary General Meetings.

Associate membership is open to any individual or organisation that is in support of the aims of NACCOM. Associate memberships will not convey voting rights at Annual and Extraordinary General Meetings.

All Members – full and associate, are entitled to:

- Reduced rates at NACCOM meetings, events, training sessions and Annual Conferences
- Access to expert advice and resources (please note there may be a small charge for printed material)
- Access to the Members' Area (including a Forum and Library) of our website.

To find out more about membership and to make an application please go to <https://naccom.org.uk/get-involved/membership/>

Glossary and further resources

Care Act

Under the **Care Act 2014**, local authorities must: carry out an assessment of anyone who appears to require **care** and support, regardless of their likely eligibility for state-funded **care**. The focus of the assessment must be on the person's needs and how they impact on their wellbeing, and this can include the provision of housing.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-2014-part-1-factsheets/care-act-factsheets>

Children's Act

Section 17 of the **Children Act 1989** states that it is the general duty of every local authority to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need; and so far as it is consistent with that duty, to promote the upbringing of such children by their families. Support under Section 17 can include cash payments and the provision of housing paid for by the local authority

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/section/17>

Commonweal Housing

Investigate, test and share housing solutions to social justice. If you have an innovative idea to provide housing but need social investment to make this happen then speak to Commonweal Housing.

<https://www.commonwealhousing.org.uk/>

CLT/Community Land Trusts

Community Land Trusts are a form of community-led housing, set up and run by ordinary people to develop and manage homes as well as other assets important to that community. They are a potential source of property, support and partnership.

<http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk/>

Ethical Property Foundation

Offers an advice service for small organisations entering into leases with landlords.

<http://www.ethicalproperty.org.uk>

Exempt accommodation/exempt rents

Exempt accommodation is a term used in **Housing Benefit** (Local Housing Allowance) and **Universal Credit** to describe **supported accommodation** where the rules that normally limit the amount of rent covered by a benefit award do not apply. The usual meaning of "exempt accommodation" is where the accommodation is provided by a landlord in the social or voluntary sector and the benefit claimant is provided with **care, support or supervision** by the landlord or by someone acting on the landlord's behalf.

Green Pastures

Buys properties for churches and charities so that they can accommodate the homeless in their area. They also provide all the paperwork, expertise and on-going support so that a charity can operate a successful housing project.

<http://greenpastures.net>

HMOs and HMO licensing

Houses of Multiple Occupation. There are lots of excellent online resources on HMOs and HMO licensing. We recommend that you start with the following links:

- <https://www.gov.uk/renting-out-a-property/houses-in-multiple-occupation-hmo>
- https://scotland.shelter.org.uk/get_advice/advice_topics/renting_rights/houses_in_multiple_occupation_hmos

Housing Decision Tree For Groups Looking To Operate Viable and Successful Housing Projects For Refugees And Those With No Recourse To Public Funds

This guidance was produced by Mark Goldup (HGO Consultancy Ltd) in 2014 for NACCOM to help its members who are providing accommodation for destitute migrants who have no recourse to public funds and who are considering using the provision of accommodation for refugees as a mechanism for generating a surplus to help fund a wider housing project.

https://nacom.org.uk/doc_library/housing-toolkit-decision-tree-mark-goldup/

Decision Tree Executive Summary with Flow Chart (for the above)

<https://nacom.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Decision-Tree-Executive-Summary.pdf>

Housing Rights Website

This website aims to give recent arrivals and housing advisers up-to-date information about entitlements to housing, based on a person's immigration status. There are links to pages relevant to both England, Wales and Scotland.

<https://www.housing-rights.info/index.php>

Information Sharing Agreements

An **information sharing** protocol or **agreement** provides a framework for the secure and confidential obtaining, holding, recording, storing and **sharing** of **information** between participating partner agencies or organisations. Under the **General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)** and the **Data Protection Act 2018** all organisations handling personal **data** must ensure they have comprehensive and proportionate arrangements for collecting, storing, and **sharing information** in place.

https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1068/data_sharing_code_of_practice.pdf

Landlord Today

A useful online resource that provides news and views on the private rental sector. It also contains some useful links to resources including a new free tenancy agreement tool.

<https://www.landlordtoday.co.uk/breaking-news/2018/2/new-free-tenancy-agreement-tool-launched-for-diy-landlords>

Local Housing Allowance (LHA)

LHA is the way that housing benefit is calculated and paid to tenants of private landlords. Under Local Housing Allowance rules the maximum benefit you can get depends on the number of bedrooms needed by you and the people in your household.

- https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/benefits
- https://scotland.shelter.org.uk/get_advice/advice_topics/paying_for_a_home/housing_benefit/local_housing_allowance

Management of HMOs and managerial duties

Before granting a licence, the local authority must be satisfied that the owner/landlord and/or any managing agent of the property (which might be your charity or project) is fit to hold a licence and that the property meets the right standards.

There are government regulations that place a number of duties upon the manager of an HMO. A licence will not normally be granted unless these duties are met and cover such things as; appropriate fire safety measures, the provision and testing of equipment and appliances and display of key information to residents etc. A full list of responsibilities can be found at:

http://england.shelter.org.uk/legal/housing_conditions/houses_in_multiple_occupation/management_regulations

Models of Accommodation and Support For Migrants With NRPF

This report was produced for Housing Justice, NACCOM and Praxis by Ceri Hutton and Sue Lukes and highlights a range of projects across the UK, which have developed innovative practices and also identifies some of the elements of best practice in relation to these models.

<https://naccomm.org.uk/resources/>

National Housing Federation (NHF)

The voice of housing associations in England. The NHF has a Refugee and Migrant Group that brings together people from across the country who have an interest in improving housing and services for refugees, those seeking asylum and migrants. A useful place to start if looking for an RSL to work in partnership with.

<https://www.housing.org.uk/get-involved/shaping-our-sector/refugee-network/>

A woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a white apron over a dark top, is serving food from a large metal tray. She is looking down at the food. In the background, another person is partially visible, also wearing an apron. The setting appears to be a community center or a food bank.

No Recourse to Public Funding (NRPF)

NRPF is a condition imposed on someone due to their immigration status. Section 115 Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 states that a person will have 'no recourse to public funds' if they are 'subject to immigration control'.

<http://www.nrpfnetwork.org.uk/information/Pages/who-has-NRPF.aspx>

Quaker Housing Trust

The Quaker Housing Trust is a channel through which social housing projects can get advice, support, loans or grants that would be difficult to find elsewhere.

<http://www.qht.org.uk>

Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)

RSL is the technical name for social landlords that in England were formerly registered with the Housing Corporation, or in Wales with the Welsh government. The vast majority of RSLs are also known as Housing Associations. Housing Associations are independent, not-for-profit organisations that provide homes for people in housing need. They may or may not be registered charities. They are now the UK's major providers of new homes for rent.

Residential Landlords Association

This is a membership organisation (for those providing rental accommodation) that provides expertise, support and a full range of tools and guides including how to prepare a tenancy agreement.

<https://www.rla.org.uk/index.shtml?ref=menu>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/current-registered-providers-of-social-housing>

Shelter UK

From homelessness to home-owner, Shelter provides the complete range of housing advice for everyone.

<https://www.shelter.org.uk>

Self Help Housing (SHH)

This is an excellent initiative set up with funding from the Tudor Trust to raise the profile of self-help housing, showcase what's happening already, put projects in touch with one another, help develop new projects and increase the resources available for self-help housing projects.

<https://self-help-housing.org/about/>

Photo Credit: Hogar Salim

Thank you for reading.
Please get in touch via the contact details below
if you want to find out more about our work.
Please note hard copies are available via the NACCOM office (details below).

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