

SERVICE EXCELLENCE AND CHOICE

Golden transfer

RESIDENTS IN AFFORDABLE housing often request a transfer when their circumstances change. They may need to move closer to a new job, or move into larger accommodation as their family expands. However, due to scarcity of supply, they may be on a waiting list for many years.

WE BELIEVE THAT good tenants should be rewarded with speedier transfers. We have therefore opened up 10% of our properties for the Golden Transfer scheme. Any Council tenant with a clear rent account for the previous 12 months, no record of any other breaches of their tenancy agreement and no anti-social behaviour record, will be placed in priority band A under this scheme.

ONE OF OUR tenants wanted to move closer to her place of work, but because she was in a lower band on the waiting list, with higher priority cases above her, chances were slim. She would bid for a new home through our choice based lettings agency LOCATA, but never with any success.

SHE HAD ALWAYS paid her rent on time, and her neighbours loved having her around. Following the introduction of the Golden Transfer scheme, **she was rewarded** with a Band A listing. She has **now found a suitable** two-bedroom home in the north of the borough, closer to work.



Overcrowding

A MOTHER OF three boys lived in a two-bedroom flat on the 12th floor of a tower block in Northolt. As her boys grew older, she became concerned that they had little access to outside space. They were also struggling to concentrate on their homework due to a lack of quiet space in the home.

THE WOMAN ASKED Ealing Homes for a transfer in 2004. By 2009, she was still bidding for a three-bedroom property via LOCATA. She became frustrated with living in the tower block, and decided to find a private home with a garden for the good of her children.

SHE APPROACHED THE Housing Initiatives Team and discussed her need to be near to the children's schools and to the rest of her family in Northolt.

HAVING DISCUSSED ALL available options, the team found a newly-refurbished, three-bedroom home with a garden on a private street, 10 minutes walk from the children's school, local shops and the railway station.

THE FAMILY WAS able to move in within four weeks of viewing the property, and was given assistance with their removals.

THEY ARE SETTLED and happy in their new home. The boys can now play in their own garden and do their homework without distraction.

NEW SUPPLY

Good practice: Harrogate Youth build

HARROGATE YOUTHBUILD IS an innovative project helping to transform the lives of vulnerable young people through education, job opportunities and a new home.

THE PROJECT ENTAILS the purchase of empty properties for refurbishment by 16–24-year-old trainees, who may be known to the police, have a drug history or be socially excluded.

THE TRAINEES ATTEND college once a week and work with contractors to refurbish empty properties that Harrogate Borough Council plans to bring back into use. A trainee who completes a project receives a tenancy to one of the homes that he or she worked on.

THE SCHEME NOT only encourages independence and responsibility, but gives vulnerable young people the personal skills and self-belief to help them make a success of their lives.

EALING WILL LOOK to follow Harrogate's lead and introduce a similar scheme in the borough.

