

Draft – Cambridgeshire Housing Reciprocal Agreement

Memorandum of Understanding

1. Rationale/Scope

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is to define the objectives and management arrangements of the working partnership between Cambridgeshire Specialist DA Services (with Standing Together/DAHA/Safer London as supporting partners) and Local Authorities or Registered Providers with regards to coordination of the Housing Reciprocal Agreement.

The Cambridgeshire Housing Reciprocal agreement is a voluntary collaboration between local authorities and registered providers which allows tenants with a social tenancy at risk of harm from domestic/sexual violence and other Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strands¹, to move to another local authority area and keep a social tenancy. In some instances when assessed as safe to do so the reciprocal may also be used to relocate a perpetrator of abuse, for instance on release from prison. The referring Local Authority or registered provider then owes an equal size property to another household at risk in Cambridgeshire through a centralised system. In some instances, at the originating LA/RP leads discretion, households can apply through the reciprocal who don't have a social tenancy but are in priority need/due to receive one, as long as the LA/RP agrees to owe a social housing property to the centralised system in return.

The Cambridgeshire Housing Reciprocal should be utilised where local authorities or registered providers are unable to manage the risk of harm to a person fleeing violence or abuse within their own stock.

2. Partner Organisations

This MoU is between:

- Cambridgeshire Specialist DA Services
- [LA/RP.....].

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Cambridgeshire Specialist DA Services is accountable for:

- Making reciprocal referrals for survivors of domestic/sexual violence or other VAWG (or in some instances perpetrators) in social housing across Cambridgeshire who need to move Local authority area
- Ensuring applicants are aware of the remit of the housing pathway
- Providing specialist IDVA or outreach support to all applicants throughout their relocation and linking to local services in the new area.
- Regular communication with the Local Authority & Registered Provider Housing Reciprocal named leads.
- Issuing an Application Reference Code (ARC) for newly accepted cases that will be shared with Local Authority and registered provider partners.
- Using the ARC in all partnership communications for security purposes.
- Requesting sign off from named leads and informing the Named Leads of the outcome of the referral.
- Monitoring and tracking referrals and keeping all partners up-to-date with progress.

¹ Sexual Violence, Sexual Exploitation including prostitution and Child Sexual Exploitation, Modern Slavery/Trafficking, Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), So Called 'Honour Based Violence and Stalking

[LA/RP.....] is responsible for:

- Identifying named leads within the Local Authority Housing Team or Registered Provider and informing Cambridgeshire Specialist DA Services of any changes in staffing.
- Inviting Cambridgeshire Specialist DA Services or supporting partner representatives to multi-agency panels/meetings as relevant.
- Integrating referral into the Reciprocal into existing local referral pathways
- Ensuring previous tenancy is ended when a move is completed and costs associated with this.
- Open communication and pro-active troubleshooting to reduce risk.
- Local authorities: Uphold statutory duty of care for each individual from the Local Authority that is actively engaged with the Housing Reciprocal, including temporary or emergency accommodation if needed whilst awaiting a reciprocal move.

4. Governance

The Senior Manager/representative of Cambridgeshire Specialist DA Services and the Senior Manager/representative of [LA/RP.....] are responsible for ensuring that the terms of this MoU are upheld.

In the first instance, the named leads will work together to take a pro-active approach to resolve conflicts but where a resolution cannot be reached, the conflict will be escalated to the Chief Executives/Directors at the earliest instance.

5. Authorisation

The signing of this MoU is not a formal undertaking. It implies that the signatories will strive to ensure that their respective organisations deliver the responsibilities as stated in the MOU, to the best of their ability.

Signed on behalf of Cambridgeshire Specialist DA Services

Signature

Date

Signed on behalf of [LA/RP.....]

Print Name _____

Signature

Date