

HORIZON HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED	HOUSING POLICY
TITLE	COMMUNICATION: MEDIA OTHER THAN PRINT AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION
DATE OF APPROVAL	MARCH 2008
DATE OF REVIEW	MARCH 2011

INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out Horizon's approach to the provision of information to service users in media other than print.

The need for provision of information in media other than print and the need for non-verbal communication

Horizon wishes its tenants and other service users such as Housing Applicants, Sharing Owners and other individuals who receive services from Horizon to be fully aware of the range of services provided by the Association and the standards to which these services will be provided.

We recognise that the provision of information about the Association and its structures, activities and standards is a vital part of achieving the awareness we seek.

We believe that the majority of tenants and other service users will find the provision of written, printed information to be acceptable and appropriate. We also believe that the majority of tenants and other service users will find verbal interactions with staff, in addition to published documents, to be an acceptable means of giving and receiving information about the Association and its activities.

We recognise, however, that there will be a number of tenants and other service users who require information to be provided in alternative formats, for a number of reasons, including the following:

- visual impairment
- another disability resulting in an inability to read or comprehend published material
- reading impairment e.g. conditions such as dyslexia.

We recognise that there will be a number of tenants and other service users who cannot use written material in standard published formats, for the reasons given above, and others.

We recognise that there will be a number of tenants and other service users who cannot interact verbally with staff for reasons including hearing or speech impairment.

Horizon does not wish these needs to become obstacles to the provision of full information about the Association, its structures, standards and activities and so it is committed to addressing these needs by the following measures:

Horizon Housing Association Limited is a Registered Scottish Charity

Macintosh HD:Users:markhewins:Desktop:horizon web files:Policies - May 2008:Communication Media other than Print & Non Verbal Communication (Hous) - March 08 - March 2011.doc

The provision of information in media other than print including:

- Braille
- Tape
- Computer disk/CD

The provision of printed information in non-standard formats e.g.

- large print

The provision of sign language interpreting services.

WHAT WE WILL PROVIDE AND HOW WE WILL PROVIDE IT.

We believe that printed information and verbal interactions are acceptable to the majority of Tenants and others.

We will make every published document available, on request in Braille, tape, computer disk or large print.

Horizon will meet the costs of provision of documents in media other than standard print.

We will publicise the availability, on request, of published documents in Braille, tape, computer disk or large print. For the avoidance of doubt, published documents should be considered to include any policy document of the Association, the Annual Report, Tenancy Agreement and the Tenant's or Sharing Owner's handbooks. It will also include any document that the Association produces for circulation. It will include any documents that the Association would intend to be publicly available including Newsletters, Information leaflets, circular letters etc.

The primary responsibility to request provision of published documents in Braille, tape, computer disk or large print lies with the Tenant or Service user, carers, family members, friends or advisers of the tenant or service user who may request it on behalf of another.

However, staff who have contact with tenants or other service users should identify anyone who they feel may require the provision of published documents in Braille, tape, computer disk or large print and advise the tenant, service user or carer that the document is available in Braille, tape, computer disk or large print.

HOW WE WILL PROVIDE IT

The Housing Manager will ensure that the Association holds at any time a copy each of the following documents in Braille and also one copy or each on tape.

- The Housing Allocation Policy
- The Tenancy Agreement

Horizon Housing Association Limited is a Registered Scottish Charity

Macintosh HD:Users:markhewins:Desktop:horizon web files:Policies - May 2008:Communication Media other than Print & Non Verbal Communication (Hous) - March 08 - March 2011.doc

- The Complaints Policy
- The Right to Repair Policy

Other documents will be available on request. The Director of Housing Services will hold details of organisations which can provide transcriptions of documents into Braille or tape. The primary contact in this regard will be

[RNIB Scotland: Transcription Service](#)

Centre for Sensory Impaired People
17 Gullane Street
Partick
GLASGOW
G11 6AH

Tel: 0141 337 2955

Fax: 0141 357 4025

Email: glasgowtrans@rnib.org.uk

Documents can be provided in large print with the Association's own resources. It is envisaged that the Association will produce documents in large print in-house. The RNIB guidelines for large print are:

- Any size over 16 point
- Printed on yellow paper
- Typeface to be plain (i.e. Arial)

THE PROVISION OF SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

There are many occasions where it is necessary for Association staff to communicate verbally with tenants and others in order to give and receive information.

Examples include

- Housing Allocation interviews
- Meetings associated with the provision of Stage 2 and Stage 3 alterations
- Pre-completion visits to new homes
- "Signing up" meetings at the property
- Interviews associated with rental payment arrangements and other tenancy matters
- Making informal and formal complaints
- Meetings associated with works of repair or maintenance of a tenants home.

In the majority of cases, verbal conversations will offer an entirely acceptable means of giving and receiving information, however we recognise that there may be a number of tenants and others who are unable to use verbal communication, for example because of hearing or speech impairment

Horizon Housing Association Limited is a Registered Scottish Charity

Macintosh HD:Users:markhewins:Desktop:horizon web files:Policies - May 2008:Communication Media other than Print & Non Verbal Communication (Hous) - March 08 - March 2011.doc

In such cases, the Association will meet the costs of provision of a sign language interpreter.

It is not necessary, at this time, for any Association staff to receive training in the use of sign language as the number of requests for such a service is very low. This will be reviewed in light of the actual number of requests for sign language interpretation services.

We will publicise the availability of this service through the Tenant/Sharing Owners' handbook and in published information concerning our Housing Allocation policy.

The primary responsibility to request provision of sign language interpretation services lies with the Tenant or Service user, carers, family members, friends or advisers of the tenant or service user who may request it on behalf of another.

However, staff who have contact with tenants or other service users should identify any who they feel may require the provision of sign language interpretation services and advise the tenant, service user or carer that the service is available.

HOW WE WILL PROVIDE SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION SERVICES

In many cases, we anticipate that the person requesting the service will have knowledge of an individual or organisation who are able and qualified to provide the service. In that case, the Association will meet the costs of provision provided these are not believed to be excessive (see below for comparisons).

In the event that the person requesting the service cannot identify a suitable provider, the Association will seek provision of the service from the following organisations:

East of Scotland Deaf Society

49 Albany Street
EDINBURGH
EH1 3QY

Tel No: 0131 556 3218

Website: www.deafsociety.org

Charges (at March 2008)

Minimum charge of £72.00 for 2 hours (this would reduce to £60 if using a Trainee Interpreter)

Travelling expenses of dependent on distance travelled

Cancellation fees from £10 to full fee dependent on notice given

Require 1-2 weeks notice.

Horizon Housing Association Limited is a Registered Scottish Charity

Macintosh HD:Users:markhewins:Desktop:horizon web files:Policies - May 2008:Communication Media other than Print & Non Verbal Communication (Hous) - March 08 - March 2011.doc

SASLI

Baltic Chambers
Suite 317-319
50 Wellington Street
GLASGOW G2 6HJ

Tel No: 0141 220 0791

Website: www.sasli.org.uk

Charges (for 2008)

Minimum charge of £52 for 2 hours (this would reduce to £40 if using a Trainee Interpreter)

Travelling expenses of 40p per mile

Cancellation fees from 50% to 100% dependent on notice given

REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

This policy will be reviewed in March 2011.