

Appendix 1

Living Stable Lives Case Studies

Case Study 1

In December 2017, a landlord who rented out private rented accommodation in Flamstead phoned Dacorum Council for advice on issues she had with a tenant. She was informed about Living Stable Lives and told to contact them for support. After speaking to the Living Stable Lives team, the referral was processed. The tenant was 47 years old and during his initial assessment the following issues were identified:

- The white goods in the property were not working properly.
- Security was an issue as the locks on several doors were not secure.
- The tenant had rent arrears of £150.
- The windows were not able to open fully.
- The boiler not working properly.
- The landlord and Tennant were not communicating effectively

As result of the outstanding repairs, the tenant had taken upon himself to withhold the rent payments.

After visiting the property and collecting all the relevant information, the Living Stable Lives worker decided the best course of action was to email both parties outlining their responsibilities. As a result, of this action the landlord agreed to correct some of the repairs.

There was a further problem with the plumber that had been employed to undertake the work. The contractor was unreliable, and the tenants had on several occasions had to wait in for him, but he never showed up. The Living Stable Lives worker spoke to the landlord and in was agreed for the tenant's wasted time he would be compensated the amount of rent arrears that was owing.

However, as the landlord took longer than expected to undertake the other repairs, this caused further disgruntlement from the tenant. The Living Stable Lives worker continued to email the landlord and eventually she agreed to complete all the repairs.

How does this case study evidence the key performance indicators?

- Outcome 1 states Dacorum tenants can manage and maintain their homes in line with their tenancy agreement and as a result feel more secure in their accommodation. Following the work of Living Stable Lives, the tenant has stated that he feels more comfortable in his accommodation and would like to live there for the foreseeable future.
- Outcome 3 states Dacorum tenants have a positive relationship with their landlords and can resolve issues effectively. This is evidenced by the fact the tenant and the landlord now communicate effectively and openly, as and when the need arises.

Case Study 2

In June 2017, a tenant attended the South Hill Centre and self referred himself to Living Stable Lives. The main issues he needed support with were:

- He had received a Section 6A letter stating the landlord wished to evict him.
- He had rent arrears of £2,000.

As the property was rented through the Help to Rent scheme, the Living Stable Lives team did not negotiate directly with landlord, as that part of work was undertaken by council staff.

The flat was a two-bedroom property as the tenant had originally been living there with his child. However, two years ago the child went to live with his mother and since then the tenant had only been receiving benefit equivalent to a one-bedroom property.

At first the tenant was reluctant to make any payments towards his rent arrears. However, in October 2017, by working jointly with the Help to Rent team, Living Stable Lives managed to secure a back payment of housing benefit. This was paid directly to the landlord, so he therefore delayed taking any further action until January 2018 when he decided to go to court to ask for an eviction. During this time, the tenant attended one of the workshops organised by Living Stable Lives. At the workshop he was informed about the importance of managing payments to all creditors when in debt. Immediately following the workshop, the tenant attended Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and sought further advice.

Because of the appointment with CAB it transpired that the tenant had total debts amounting to £8,000 to different creditors and he was then assisted in formulating a debt management plan to manage all his debts. Furthermore, the Living Stable Lives Housing and Support Worker help to secure a discretionary housing payment for the tenant. However, this lasted just three months. The landlord delayed acting, but in January 2018 he decided to issue the papers to the court the court granted possession to the landlord.

In addition to working with the tenant, the Housing and Support worker also worked closely with Dacorum's Housing Prevention team. The plan was that they would assist him in finding the tenant alternative one bedroom private rented flat. However, the tenant was unable to raise the money for the deposit, so this plan never materialised.

During March it has become apparent that the tenant is about to lose his home. However, Living Stable Lives has been in contact with other local housing providers to see what else is available in the area. The team have liaised with the DENS and have supported him in applying for a room. Normally the DENS will not take people with such an amount of debt. However, by undertaking effective joint work with the DENS, it seems very likely that he will be able to access accommodation through this route.

The original accommodation that the tenant was in was never financially sustainable. However, by moving into a room that is more affordable, he is better able to manage his finances. In addition, the tenant has continued to be able to see his son a regular basis and

his debt payments have been put on a manageable footing which will avoid any legal action being taken against him in the future.

How does this case study evidence the key performance indicators?

Outcome 2 states

Dacorum tenants have accomplished life skills and use them to maintain a stable lifestyle. This case links into what is stated in this outcome, by the fact the tenant has achieved the skill of how to be more responsible around his finances and better manager his affairs.

Outcome 5 states

Dacorum tenants can recognise when they are struggling to cope of experiencing significant change and access a clear pathway of support to prevent crisis. In this case, the tenant sought the advice of both LSL and Citizens Advice Bureau, to manage his situation better. By listening to their advice, he has been able to cope with the change and had a clear pathway of support.