

Housing Case Studies- April, 2020.

Arrears prevention - Our Housing Officer Income received a pro-active referral from the local Housing Team. Arrears were only £85 but they were increasing. The Housing Officer Income visited and discovered that the oldest child had moved out and they now had an under occupation charge. The family didn't want to downsize as he may need to move back in the future. A Discretionary Housing Payment claim was completed and a wider review of their entitlement was undertaken. It was identified they were not getting the Council Tax support they were entitled to. Our Housing Officer Income resolved this and a back date was made which put their council tax £235 in credit and saved them £5 a week going forward. When our Housing Officer Income told the mother this, she burst into tears as the family had been burgled over Christmas and this would allow them to replace items that had been stolen, as well as help pay for the new school uniform for their daughter.

Reunited family - Our Housing Officer Income visited following a referral about a housing benefit shortfall. The house was cold and the mother was struggling to feed her children, who had been placed back in her care following an extended period in foster care. Referrals were made for food support and 3rd sector family support. There were issues relating to multiple benefits which have been tackled and backdates of £550 Housing Benefit and £500 Council Tax Support were secured. The outcome has been that the mother's mental health has improved and she is attending courses at the local community centre. The children are back home and the family are beginning to thrive. Ongoing support is being provided.

Supported into work with the NHS - Our Housing Officer Income contacted a tenant about her arrears which were increasing due to under occupying her home. She was not in a position to move due to her child's school and the tenant had also secured a part time job in the NHS which had led to her Income Support and Housing Benefit being cancelled. The tenant didn't have any other debts and was eligible for Housing Benefit extended payment. Our Housing Officer Income submitted a Discretionary Housing Payment claim and advised Leeds Benefits Service to secure the additional Housing Benefit. The payments cleared her rent arrears and when we told the tenant of this she was sincerely grateful as this would free up some much needed cash as she would not receive her wage until the end of the second month of work.

Young mother fleeing domestic violence: Our Housing Officer Income supported a young mother who had moved as she was fleeing domestic violence. Housing Benefit was being paid to the previous address and the rent account on the new address was going into arrears which was causing her worry and upset that she might lose her new safe home. Our Housing Officer Income liaised with the local housing team and Leeds Benefits Service to clarify the tenancy end date of the previous property, appeal Housing Benefit on two homes and apply for Discretionary Housing Payment. The outcome was that rent arrears were substantially reduced and it alleviated the tenant's stress levels, she no longer feared she was going to lose her new home.