

EastendHomes Interpretation, Translation and Communication Needs Policy

Statement of Intent

- 1.1 EastendHomes is committed to securing excellent services for its residents. A central element of this relates to providing services that can be accessed by all residents, including those that do not have English as their first language and people who are deaf, blind or partially sighted.
- 1.2 EastendHomes has set its interpretation and translation policy with clear reference to the identified profile of its service users and also with reference to the costs of services for individual tailoring alongside the potential application to the wider customer base.

Languages- Interpreting and Translation services

- 2.1 There are four potential levels of customer service provision:
 - A personal interpreter- a person with suitable language skills who translates conversations as they are taking place on a face to face basis.
 - An oral interpreter- Normally, a three way conversation over the phone.
 - A written translation- A formal reproduction of a published document in another language.
 - An oral translation- a verbal translation of written text into oral language either in person or over the phone.

Interpreting Services

- 2.1 Appropriate interpreting arrangements (including sign language) will be provided to enable all residents of EEH to have effective access to EEH services.
- 2.2 EEH will use bi-lingual staff for interpreting wherever possible.
- 2.3 Where interpreting needs cannot be met by a bi-lingual member of staff, an interpreting service will be used.
- 2.4 Interpreting will be delivered in person or via the telephone. Face to face interpreting is preferred when the issue being discussed is complex, highly detailed, is seen as high risk, or of a sensitive nature. Interpreting over the telephone is appropriate where the communication is relatively straightforward or in circumstances which cannot be planned for, such as when someone visits a reception desk.

2.5 Care will be taken to find an interpreter that best meets the needs of the user. Issues that may need to be considered include:

- Gender
- Specific Dialect
- Country of origin
- Specialist knowledge (eg Knowledge of housing benefit)
- Specialist language (eg legal or medical)

Translations- Demographic Considerations

3.1 The Status survey 2007 indicated that 28% of EastendHomes households were of Bangladeshi ethnic origin. However, a review of the distribution of BME households indicates a particular concentration of Bangladeshi households in Holland (65.8%) and St Georges (40.3%). Somali households did not appear to be significantly represented in the housing stock although this will be reviewed following the resident profiling exercise.

3.2 Additionally, the 2005/6 Census information on the home language of school pupils demonstrated that while 59% spoke Bengali/ Sylheti, 12% spoke a range of 107 other languages, including other Asian and European languages, with the single largest of those being Somali at 2.4%

3.2 The resident profiling exercise, commenced in 2007, will provide detailed information regarding the language and communication needs of individual residents. However, given the concentration of a specific ethnic group in particular housing centre areas and the disparate potential range of other potential languages required, core EEH service documents will be translated into written Bengali only. As the primary cost implication is engaged by the initial translation exercise, these documents will be held in English and Bengali at every housing centre site. Other language options will be offered as oral translation in the first instance.

Translation Services

4.1 All published EEH service standards will be produced in English and Bengali. A translation/ communication needs panel will be included on all of these standard leaflets, detailing other options.

4.2 The Tenants handbook will be available in English and Bengali.

4.3 The leaseholders handbook will be available in English and Bengali.

4.4 The complaints poster will be displayed in English and Bengali.

- 4.5 In the two housing centre areas with a concentration of Bangladeshi households, the local newsletter will be routinely translated into Bengali.
- 4.6 All other published EEH documents will be offered** in Bengali or other community languages but these will not be translated in advance unless a clear demand has been identified. All published material will be offered as a verbal translation in the first instance and where required, a written version will be provided with seven days for documents of A4 Size material and 28 days for anything larger.
- 4.7 All documents published for residents must offer the facility for the information to be provided in community languages, large print, audio and Braille.
- 4.8 All standard letters will include the translation/communication needs information on the rear of the paper.
- 4.9 For larger documents (ie bigger than a leaflet), the translation/communication needs information will be included on the rear cover.
- 4.10 Where a specific translation or communication need has been identified, the service provider will contact the customer in the preferred format as identified by the resident profiling exercise.
- 4.11 All reception areas have standard posters promoting the availability of interpreting and translation services in Bengali and a range of other community languages.
- 4.12 If it becomes apparent that EEH is discriminating against any particular group, then this policy will be reviewed. The policy will be reviewed at least once annually by the Service Review Board with reference to estate specific demographic information, where available.
- 4.13 EEH reserves the right to refuse an application for oral translation where the subject of the request is mischievous or frivolous. Additionally, EEH reserves the right to refuse an application for written translation where such a translation would represent an inappropriate use of funds although an oral translation facility will be provided.

Guidance

- 5.1 Personal interpreting will involve a minimum of three people (You, the client and the interpreter) meet at a prearranged place and time. It is best used for:
 - More complicated procedures and form filling
 - Longer interviews
 - Interviews/ situations involving more than one client

- 5.2 Translation is the conversion of written documents into another language either in written or oral form. It is normally used for reports, leaflets and publicity.
- 5.3 Telephone interpreting is normally 3 people. (You, the client and the interpreter) speaking on the phone at the same time. It should be restricted to:
- Unplanned and emergency information
 - .Resolving relatively simple issues. It is not a good for complex and lengthy interviews.
 - Contacting the customer at home
- 5.4 ** Offered means that we will respond positively to any request we receive, considering the best way for the person's language needs to be catered for, if not already catered for via the resident profiling exercise
- 5.5 Where a tailored service provision is indicated by the profiling exercise, we will contact the resident in standard written English but supplement this by proactive contact in the preferred communication method. This is to ensure a basic standard recording method of communicating with the resident which they will be able to share with support networks.

Special Communication Needs

- 6.1 Audio refers to Audio CD and cassette.
- 6.2 Where requested by the resident or identified through the profiling exercise EeH will provide information on audio CD, braille or large text within 28 days.