

Advice Worker Monthly Report on in centre appointments, February 2021

Appointments offered: 71

Appointments attended: 56

Summary

- Housing referrals and housing advice: 20
- Housing placements: 3
- Night-shelter placements: 1
- Housing interventions (liaising with Landlords re suitability, rent reduction, rent payments, disrepair etc): 15
- Income maximisation including grants, freedom passes, DHP applications and foodbank referrals:14
- Welfare benefit advice: 25
- Immigration advice: 6
- Legal advice: 3
- Bank account opening: 3
- Customer rights advice: 0
- Employment: 2
- Help to get identity documents: 4
- Outreach referrals: 2
- Debt: 3
- Other: 4

Case Study Feb 2021

This month we have done some work for a longer-term client, Emmanuel and his wife Zara. Emmanuel and Zara are a young refugee couple, who have recently settled into private rented accommodation, after a long unstable period in hostels and before this, night shelters. Like so many refugees we work with, Emmanuel became homeless after leaving asylum support accommodation, which is only provided while a person's asylum claim is being processed. We advocated to the couple's local authority to provide the housing assistance they needed to settle into their own home. We then helped them get set up by assisting with their housing benefit claim. We were also able to give them a free computer, kindly donated by one of our supporters. This will be invaluable in helping Zara to access English lessons remotely.

Another client who we have been pleased to see move into settled accommodation is Ken, who came to us after being placed by his local council in accommodation he could not afford. We were able to help Ken into affordable accommodation through one of our partner landlords and raised funds through grants to pay the deposit. Ken also needed assistance to apply for housing benefit, as the standard of proof required can be tricky for people who do not yet have utility bills to show that they live at their address.