

Short case study – September 20

Ishmael

Ishmael* came to the Manna Centre after being signposted to us by another charity, for help with housing. He is a refugee who is working part time as a carer but had never managed to get stable housing since being awarded his refugee status and was sofa surfing with a friend. However, this situation was becoming difficult, and he needed to move on into his own accommodation.

As Ishmael's wage was not enough to pay both rent and living costs, we let him know he was entitled to apply for Universal Credit as a part time worker on a low wage and we did an online benefits calculation to let him know how much he might get. We then helped him to make the online Universal Credit application and let him know what to expect. As Universal Credit takes 6 weeks to process from the day of application there was a delay before we were able to help with housing, which we explained to him. Ishmael could then at least give his friend an estimate of how much longer he would need to stay with them and thankfully his friend was understanding about this.

When Ishmael was close to his first Universal Credit payment date, we emailed all of the landlords that we have a working relationship with to explain Ishmael's situation and to ask if any of them were willing to take him on as a tenant. Ishmael attended a viewing and was offered a studio flat. He now has a place of his own, which is vitally important for the difficult and important work that he does.

*Not his real name.