

5. SPECIALIST PROGRAMMES	2
5.1. Homelessness Change & Platform for Life – Overview	2
Purpose.....	2
Context	2
Main Features	2
Scheme Eligibility	3
Client eligibility	3
Design and Standards	3
Homelessness Change & Platform for Life - Management Arrangements	4
Homelessness Change & Platform for Life - Programme Management.....	4
Homelessness Change & Platform for Life - Grant Recovery	5
Homelessness Change & Platform for Life - reporting and audit requirements.....	5
5.2. Tenants Incentive Scheme.....	6
Overview	6
Project objectives.....	6
Project Conditions.....	6
TIS - payment arrangements	6
TIS – grant recovery or reduction.....	7
TIS – programme management & monitoring	7
5.3. Extensions & de-conversions of existing affordable housing ..	8
Introduction	8
Contracts.....	8
Processing	8
Extensions & deconversions – grant recovery	8

5. Specialist Programmes

5.1. Homelessness Change & Platform for Life – Overview

Purpose

- 5.1.1. This chapter sets out the requirements and procedures which must be followed when developing Homelessness Change and Platform for Life Programme schemes.

Context

- 5.1.2. The Homelessness Change and Platform for Life Programme forms part of the 2015-18 programme. This section sets out its special features and specifies procedures and requirements that differ from those for the 2015-18 programme as a whole. Unless otherwise stated, the policies, requirements and procedures of the 2015-18 Affordable Homes Programme should be applied to Homelessness Change and Platform for Life schemes.

Main Features

- 5.1.3. The aim of the Homelessness Change and Platform for Life Programme is to underpin other work being undertaken to end rough sleeping by providing funding to support the development and improvement of hostels to support rough sleepers, and those at risk of sleeping rough. The specific aim of platform for life funding is to provide hostel accommodation (or a HMO registered with the local authority), generally for younger adults, where they can be supported to maintain employment and/or education and who are at risk, or likely to become at risk, of homelessness and/or sleeping rough. It is envisaged that residents will need low levels of support and that communal spaces will be minimised, with any service charges proportional to the size of communal areas. This accommodation is to be separate from any hostels that serve different groups. For the avoidance of doubt Platform for Life schemes are not to be developed adjacent or close to foyer schemes, or other hostel accommodation for young people who are not already engaged in employment and or education. A willingness to seek employment or to seek education opportunities does not give eligibility for nomination into Platform for Life schemes.
- 5.1.4. The Homelessness Change and Platform for Life Programme is managed on an individual scheme by scheme basis. Payment of grant will be calculated based on the funding agreed for individual allocations.
- 5.1.5. The priority of the programme is to fund accommodation. However, other elements such as the provision of training facilities and activities space can be considered where funding is available, if they offer value for money and are deliverable. It is envisaged that these schemes will not require extensive communal facilities, although some limited shared areas/facilities are expected.
- 5.1.6. Schemes developed through the Homelessness Change and Platform for Life Programme will be classified according to the GLA's standard

definitions of supported housing (see the section on procurement and scheme issues in the general chapter of this guide).

Scheme Eligibility

- 5.1.7. Under the Homelessness Change and Platform for Life Programme, grant is payable to cover the capital costs of developing and improving hostel accommodation to support the eligible client groups.

Client eligibility

- 5.1.8. Homelessness Change and Platform for Life Programme funding is aimed at providing two different forms of hostel accommodation
- 5.1.9. Homelessness Change hostels aim to support rough sleepers, those at risk of sleeping rough, and other non-statutory homeless people. Definitions of these groups are available on the [Homeless Link website](#).
- 5.1.10. Platform for Life schemes hostels (or HMOs) are aimed at supporting younger adults who are already engaged in employment and or education, and who are at risk, or likely to become at severe risk, of homelessness and/or rough sleeping. On its own, a willingness to seek employment or to seek education opportunities does not give eligibility for nomination into a Platform for Life scheme.
- 5.1.11. Schemes exclusively for statutory client groups, such as 16/17-year-olds, homeless families, teenage parents, and older people/extra care, are not eligible.

Design and Standards

- 5.1.12. The HCA's [Design and Quality Standards 2007](#) (in particular the guidance for supported accommodation in Annex one) apply to schemes developed under the Homelessness Change and Platform for Life Programme.
- 5.1.13. The following are key elements of building design to consider when developing a Homelessness Change and Platform for Life Programme scheme.
- Plenty of natural light and air.
 - A flow of traffic that mixes staff and residents.
 - All bedrooms are to be for single occupation.
 - Where a scheme is refurbished, the minimum area for bedrooms is 10.5 square metres and ideally they should be ensuite.
 - Where a scheme is new build, the minimum area for bedrooms is 12.5 Sqm and they should always have an ensuite shower room with a WC.
 - In addition to the general requirements above, Homelessness hostels should have the following.
 - Non-institutional décor.
 - A welcoming reception that is both open and safe.
 - Integrated activity spaces.
 - A Platform for Life scheme should have the following.
 - A communal living room.
 - Internet access by cable or Wi-Fi in each bedroom.
 - On site laundry facilities appropriate for the number of residents.

- Extensive communal facilities and services are not envisaged as necessary.

Homelessness Change & Platform for Life - Management Arrangements

- 5.1.14. RPs may either manage a Homelessness Change and Platform for Life Programme property themselves or enter into a management agreement with a managing agency that has relevant management expertise. In the latter case RPs must be satisfied of the following.
- The managing agency is a viable organisation.
 - The aims of the managing agency are compatible with its own.
 - The capacity, experience and resources of the managing agency are commensurate with the responsibilities it will hold.
 - If entering into a management agreement, the document should set out the terms under which the managing agency will undertake to manage the property/scheme. The terms must allow RPs to do the following.
 - Retain overall responsibility for the financial control of the scheme.
 - Monitor the condition and occupancy of the properties.
 - Let the units on a written tenancy or licence agreement between the RP and the occupant.

Homelessness Change & Platform for Life - Programme Management

- 5.1.15. Offers funded through the Homelessness Change and Platform for Life Programme will be subject to the requirements set out in the programme management chapter of this guide.
- 5.1.16. As per the main programme, RPs funded through the Homelessness Change and Platform for Life Programme will be required to attend review meetings with the GLA in order to track scheme progress against agreed targets and milestones.
- 5.1.17. As part of this process RPs will be obliged to use the GLA's Information Management System to keep all scheme forecasts up to date, confirm that delivery is on schedule and to provide prompt applications for milestone payment events as well as keeping all other data entry systems up to date.
- 5.1.18. Approved Homelessness Change and Platform for Life Programme offers will be subject to a programme-specific framework delivery agreement (contract), separate from any existing framework delivery agreement which may be in place.
- 5.1.19. The progress of Homelessness Change and Platform for Life Programme schemes will be monitored against the following milestones.
- Planning permission.
 - Acquisition (for new provision only).
 - Start on site.
 - Practical completion.
- 5.1.20. Further details and definitions of these milestones are available in the programme management chapter of this guide.
- 5.1.21. Homelessness Change and Platform for Life Programme funding is based on payment by results, subject to a scheme having reached practical completion.

- 5.1.22. For RPs with a signed Framework Delivery Agreement, a 50% start on site tranche is available between 1st April 2015 and the end of the funding programme in March 2018. The remaining 50% tranche would be paid at practical completion.
- 5.1.23. For definitions of what constitutes a valid start on site and practical completion, please see the **programme management chapter of this guide**.

Homelessness Change & Platform for Life - Grant Recovery

- 5.1.24. Allocations made under the Homelessness Change and Platform for Life Programme are subject to the Agency's standard grant recovery rules. Details of this process, including the relevant recovery events are available in the grant recovery chapter of this guide.

Homelessness Change & Platform for Life - reporting and audit requirements

- 5.1.25. Grant-funded affordable rent housing will be subject to the GLA's audit of schemes as set out in the programme management chapter of this guide. In addition, following the completion of a scheme, the Agency will require the following output information to be reported on a quarterly basis.
 - The number and percentage of service users moving on positively from the service.
 - The number and percentage of service users being evicted from/abandoning their place.
 - The average length of stay of departed service users.
 - The number of service users taking part in structured and educational activity.
 - The number of service users gaining employment (full or part-time).

5.2. Tenants Incentive Scheme

Overview

5.2.1. The Tenant Incentive Scheme was designed to provide grant support for tenants of existing affordable housing to move into homeownership, thereby freeing up a rented home.

Project objectives

5.2.2. To obtain vacant possession of affordable rent or social rent homes by provision of incentive payments for tenants moving into other tenures.

Project Conditions

5.2.3. Any tenant receiving an incentive payment must be vacating an affordable rent or social rent property and moving into the private rented sector, purchasing on the open market, purchasing shared ownership, or moving abroad. Anyone moving into another affordable rent or social rent property is not eligible.

5.2.4. Landlords must use best endeavours to ensure that such tenants are moving to suitable alternative accommodation and can afford the costs associated with such accommodation.

5.2.5. The entirety of the GLA funding must be used for the incentive payment, and not for administration costs or works to any vacated property. All additional costs relating to administration or works are to be borne by the grant recipient;

5.2.6. Vacated properties in respect of which incentive payments are made must be let at an affordable rent for a minimum of five years.

5.2.7. Grant payments sought from the GLA must not exceed the incentive payment made to the tenant for each property.

5.2.8. Where incentive payments are offered for decant purposes then: -

- the purpose of such decant shall not be to dispose of the property on the open market; and/or
- if the property is to be demolished for estate regeneration, then the number of replacement units should be greater than or equal to the number being demolished; and

TIS - payment arrangements

5.2.9. For each completion (grant payment resulting in vacated property) the recipient submits a grant claim via the GLA's IMS system. For each claim, the following supporting evidence must be retained and available for at least six years.

- Copy of invoices clearly showing the expenditure incurred on the objectives; or, in the absence of such invoices copy purchase orders and/or contract documents and transaction listings from the recipient's finance management system and certified as true and accurate records of such expenditure and/or committed expenditure by the recipient's Chief Financial Officer.
- Such other evidence and information as the GLA may require from time to time.

TIS – grant recovery or reduction

- 5.2.10. The GLA will recover grant for incentive payments that do not comply with the project conditions (e.g. if a property is not available to let at an affordable rent for at least five years). There may also be grant recovery if there are project changes without GLA permission.
- 5.2.11. If for any reason GLA funding exceeds eligible expenditure incurred by the recipient for the achievement of these objectives, then repayment of the excess will be necessary within 30 days (unless the GLA opts to recover this excess by reduction of other funding still to be paid).
- 5.2.12. The recipient must use all reasonable endeavours to secure income and/or additional funding for the project. The GLA has discretion to reduce further payments by an amount equivalent to that additional funding.

TIS – programme management & monitoring

- 5.2.13. As with other programmes, the GLA will hold regular TIS review meetings with grant recipients (usually quarterly).
- 5.2.14. GLA written permission is required for any changes to milestones or project outputs.
- 5.2.15. Grant recipients must establish suitable monitoring systems to ensure that cost funded by the GLA can be clearly identified and subsequently audited. They must inform the GLA immediately of any suspected financial irregularity.

5.3. Extensions & de-conversions of existing affordable housing

Introduction

5.3.1. Grant funding for extensions and de-conversions scheme was introduced as part of the Mayor's Housing Covenant Building the pipeline programme. Severe overcrowding in existing affordable housing is a challenge facing London's housing providers and tenants. The purpose of this programme is therefore to extend existing properties to provide extra bed-spaces or to de-convert properties previously divided up into smaller flats.

Contracts

- 5.3.2. Providers' contracts specify the minimum number of additional bedrooms to be created, delivery profile and the GLA funding. Providers are required to seek prior agreement from the GLA to any changes to project objectives set in their contract.
- 5.3.3. The contract includes a project monitoring form that the partners are required to complete and submit on production of an invoice (or quarterly where no invoice is submitted).
- 5.3.4. A final project report, also included in the contract, needs to be submitted within 3 months of the completion of the programme or by the 30th June 2016 (whichever is sooner).

Processing

- 5.3.5. This programme is managed via the GLA's SAP system, not GLA IMS. Providers should contact their GLA area manager in order to claim completions. The GLA will normally arrange a payment within 30 days of receipt of a valid invoice.

Extensions & deconversions – grant recovery

- 5.3.6. The funding is subject to recovery in a case of breach of conditions stated in the project contract.