




BEVERLEY LEWIS HOUSE

a safe place

Beverley Lewis House is part of East Living, which provides care and supported housing services to people with a range of needs including those with learning disabilities or mental health needs and the elderly.



Beverley Lewis was a black deaf-blind woman with learning disabilities who had a warm personality and a lot to offer. At the age of 23 she died, wrapped in newspaper and weighing less than five stone.

Built on a tragic history

Beverley Lewis had been a source of great joy to her family but her mother had severe mental health problems and was not able to provide the support she required. The family repeatedly requested assistance from statutory agencies but failed to obtain an appropriate response. Beverley Lewis died because the welfare system failed to protect her.

The tragic story of Beverley attracted extensive media coverage but inevitably after the first few days, coverage stopped. Beverley Lewis House for women with learning disabilities was opened, ensuring that her name will continue to live on.



Beverley Lewis House (BLH) is a unique service for women with learning disabilities who are at risk of abuse or fleeing abuse.

Who we are and what we do

We provide temporary safe accommodation for up to two years. During this time the women staying with us are able to address the difficulties, trauma and effects of abuse.

BLH provides a place to live that gives each individual as much choice and as much privacy as they wish within a secure and safe setting.

The scheme provides an environment where dignity, rights and independence are all respected.

BLH is part of East Living, which provides care and supported housing services to people with a range of special needs including the elderly and those with mental health needs or learning disabilities.





During their stay at BLH women are given the time and space to address any problems that may stem from the abuse they have suffered. Sometimes, just to have the abuse understood and recognised is the first and most important step to being able to deal with their experiences.

What happens?



Specialist staff at Beverley Lewis House work intensively with tenants to build their sense of self-worth, whilst also developing their potential. Each week staff run a range of workshops which help tenants to develop the skills needed to overcome abuse such as, safety planning and sexual health.

Workshops also cover a range of life skills to promote independent living, including health, budgeting, wellbeing and keeping safe.

The women are actively encouraged to have a say in all aspects of the house's day-to-day running, which further helps develop skills to empower them towards independence once they are ready to leave.

Each woman is allocated a key worker. The key worker provides support in accessing a range of support services such as health, education, employment opportunities and social and leisure activities. Key workers also provide information on local counselling and advocacy services where needed. Tenants benefit from weekly one-to-one meetings with their key worker.



BLH is a bright, modern and comfortable house with access to a range of communal amenities.

What's it like?

There are six two bedroom flats, two of which are on the ground floor and wheelchair accessible. Each woman has a key to her own room and to the front door of her flat. The building has external safety measures including an intercom system to enter the premises, 24 hour CCTV surveillance and 24 hour support including waking night staff.

Communal facilities which are wheelchair accessible include:

- Fully equipped kitchen
- Lounge and dining room
- Laundry room
- Resources room – which includes a computer, internet access and a small library
- Spacious garden



The staff

The staff provide professional, friendly expertise to support the women as they move on in their lives. They provide assistance in finding alternative, safe accommodation and support for women to move on. Staff work closely with a range of external specialists in areas such as health and local support groups.

Local amenities

There are many facilities, shops, community groups and things to do in the local area. All of these are within walking distance of the house or a short bus or taxi ride away.

Assessment criteria

Women aged 18 to 65 years, with a learning disability and are at risk of abuse or are fleeing abuse, may be eligible for referral. We are also able to provide emergency accommodation.

Referral procedures

An agency referring a woman should:

- Have the informed consent of the woman prior to initiating any procedure, wherever possible
- Contact us to make an appointment with the woman and or her advocate and staff at BLH
- Have funding in place prior to her admission (please contact us for current costs)

It is expected that every tenant will have a social worker who will work in partnership with the staff at BLH and support the tenant during her stay and through moving on. We take emergency referrals by phone on a 24 hour basis. We also support tenants to move in on a gradual basis, where we invite potential tenants to view the available accommodation.

To find out more about Beverley Lewis House and the referral process, simply call 0800 432 0457 or email blh@east-living.co.uk



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