

Rough Sleepers Accommodation Programme

In a joint bid with West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), Black Country Housing was awarded funding through the government's Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP), enabling us to purchase fifteen homes in Walsall, Dudley and Sandwell.

The new homes have been allocated to house customers with a history of street homelessness, giving them a safe and comfortable environment, whilst receiving intensive and specialist support to succeed in their tenancy. Black Country Housing's tenancy support coaches provide this service direct in Walsall and Dudley. The programme aim is to support each of the customers over the next two years to rebuild their confidence and work towards their personal goals enabling them to move on and secure long-term accommodation.

Case Study – Andrew and Mary – Dudley – In their own words with names changed to protect identity

Our past

When Andy's mum passed away he became homeless. We had been together for a while and he had no alternative other than to live with me in my camper van. It became too cold and crowded so we began to live in his rented studio which was designed for work and not for living. It was tiny and there was no bathroom, just one shared toilet. It was unbearable. Every time we used the toilet we had to bleach it first as the people who rented the other studios left it filthy. The landlord became aware that we were sleeping there and gave us an eviction notice so we had to leave and our only alternative seemed to be to go back to living in the camper van.

Our present

When we were accepted onto the RSAP scheme and offered a Black Country Housing property we were overjoyed and couldn't believe our luck. As soon as we viewed the flat we said yes. It felt like a miracle and you can't begin to imagine how much we needed it. We moved in in April of this year and it is a lovely quiet place which feels like a proper home. The support from RSAP and BCHG has been incredible. We have been helped with everything from obtaining essential items for our flat to supplying much needed food parcels in the early months when we were struggling for money. We were even given a tablet which has made it so much easier to get online than using our phone. We have been helped to set up direct debits for all of our bills and assisted with making a joint claim for Universal Credit. They found us a local doctor and a local dentist so I am now getting support with both my physical and mental health and Andy has been able to get help with a toothache he has had for ages.

My future

We cannot over state how grateful we are for this opportunity. Both of us are delighted with the service offered to us. We are loving our new home and hope that others are offered and can benefit from this opportunity too.

In the future we hope to obtain a permanent home which is on the ground floor due to my mobility needs and affords us some privacy like this one does.

We thank you for all your help and your continued support.