

House to Home

Information for Referral Partners

Helping people create a safe, comfortable place to call home

Habitat for Humanity Great Britain's **House to Home programme** supports people experiencing poverty, housing hardship or difficult life circumstances to create a home that is safe, comfortable and welcoming.

We believe that having somewhere to live is only part of the story. A home should be somewhere people feel safe, settled and able to move forward with their lives.

Through our Community Hub and ReStore in Romford, we work with trusted local organisations to identify people who would benefit from practical help with their home.

Who do we support?

House to Home is intended for people who would otherwise struggle to afford the practical improvements or essential furniture they need.

This can include:

- people experiencing financial hardship;
- women and families rebuilding their lives after domestic abuse;
- people who have experienced homelessness or are moving into a new tenancy with very few possessions;
- families struggling to afford essential furniture;
- older or disabled people;
- people living in homes that are cold, poorly maintained or difficult to manage; and
- people experiencing other circumstances where their home environment is affecting their health, wellbeing or ability to live independently.

Referrals are made by our approved community partners, who know the individual or family and can help us understand their circumstances.

What support can House to Home provide?

Support is tailored to the needs of each household and the resources we have available.

Furniture and household essentials

We provide good-quality donated furniture through our ReStore, alongside some purchased essential items where appropriate.

For furniture-only referrals, we will normally invite the person to visit ReStore at a convenient time. Our team will talk with them about what they need and help them choose suitable furniture from the stock available. We will then arrange delivery.

Our furniture resources are limited. Our priority is to help with the **most important items needed to make a home safe, functional and comfortable**, rather than fully furnishing a property. We cannot guarantee that every item requested will be available.

Home Transformation

Our Home Transformation Service is about much more than decorating.

Our Interior Designer works with each household to understand how they would like their home to look and feel. Residents choose two rooms they would most like to transform, including their preferred colours and design.

We then bring together professional design, paint and accessories, volunteer decorators and, where needed, furniture to help create a home that reflects the people who live there.

Choice is an important part of our approach. We want people to have a say in creating their own home rather than having decisions made for them.

Minor repairs and practical home improvements

Where appropriate, we can help with minor repairs and practical improvements that a household is unable to undertake or afford themselves.

Our aim is to address smaller problems that can make a significant difference to someone's safety, comfort and ability to enjoy their home.

Where a referral includes Home Transformation or repairs, we will normally arrange a home assessment before agreeing the work.

Safe and Warm Homes

As the programme develops, our ambition is to help households identify simple ways of making their homes safer, warmer and more affordable to run.

This may include practical energy-saving measures, draught reduction and other small improvements alongside our existing home transformation and repair work.

How does a referral work?

Our referral process is designed to be straightforward.

1. A referral partner identifies someone who may benefit.

The referral worker discusses House to Home with them and completes our referral form with, or following a conversation with, the person being referred.

2. We review the referral.

Our Community Hub team reviews the person's circumstances and the support requested.

3. We agree the appropriate next step.

For furniture-only referrals, we will normally arrange an appointment at ReStore. For Home Transformation or repair work, we will arrange a home assessment.

4. We agree what we can provide.

We work with the household to identify their priorities and explain what support House to Home can reasonably offer.

5. We provide the support.

This may involve furniture delivery, a home transformation, practical repairs or a combination of support.

Working together on home assessments

Where a home assessment is required, we usually ask a worker from the referring organisation to attend the first visit with us.

This helps the person being referred feel comfortable and helps us understand their circumstances in partnership with an organisation they already know and trust.

Where this is not possible, please tell us. We may need to arrange for two Habitat for Humanity GB team members to attend, which can sometimes mean that it takes us a little longer to arrange the visit.

Referral partners must also tell us about any known safeguarding or safety concerns that could affect the household or our staff and volunteers before a home visit takes place.

Our ambition

Our ambition for House to Home is simple: **to help people move from having somewhere to live to having somewhere they can truly call home.**

We want our practical support to help people feel safer, warmer and more settled; reduce some of the pressures associated with poverty and housing insecurity; and give people greater choice, dignity and confidence in their home.

We also want to work closely with our referral partners to understand the housing challenges facing local people. What we learn will help us improve House to Home and develop future services that respond to unmet needs in our community.

Becoming a House to Home Referral Partner

We welcome conversations with local voluntary organisations, charities and community or statutory services that regularly support people experiencing poverty or housing need.

To become an approved referral partner:

1. Contact our Community Hub.

Email communityhub@habitatforhumanity.org.uk with some information about your organisation and the people you support.

2. Have an initial conversation with us.

We will arrange a discussion to learn more about your work, explain House to Home and make sure the partnership is appropriate for the people we both support.

3. Agree how we will work together.

Approved referral organisations will be asked to sign a simple **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** setting out our respective roles and responsibilities, including referrals, safeguarding and information sharing.

4. Referral partner onboarding.

We will provide training and onboarding for relevant members of your team so that they understand who House to Home is for, what support we can provide and how to make a good referral.

Once this is complete, your organisation can begin making referrals to House to Home.

Interested in becoming a referral partner?

Please contact our Community Hub:

Email: communityhub@habitatforhumanity.org.uk

We would be pleased to talk with you about House to Home and whether becoming a referral partner would benefit the people your organisation supports.