

## Commercial Services: Housing, Landlord and Tenant Services

### THE HANDYHELP CO SERVICE

The HandyHelp Company is a social firm providing ethical handyperson services to domestic and commercial customers. HandyHelp delivers basic repairs and maintenance, painting and decorating, gardening, home and garden clearance and cleaning services. It is an in-house enterprise developed by Clean Slate, an organisation creating and supporting opportunities for unemployed people and those at risk of homelessness, working in partnership with specialist support services and providers of vocational training. It operates in Bath and London.

HandyHelp was formed in partnership with Curo Housing Group in Bath to be an ethical, responsible and accountable service to tenants. HandyHelp enables jobseekers to prove themselves on the job, build experience and move onto mainstream work or go onto self-employment. Clean Slate is well-connected with public sector regeneration projects and is part of the movement to increase the role of social enterprise in supply chains. It complements HandyHelp with peer-led job preparation services usually based within or serving particularly disadvantaged communities.

### SERVICES

HandyHelp has a pool of workers, qualified to various levels in a range of skills from basic construction and cleaning through to, eg, painting, decorating and gardening. More specialist works are sub-contracted to carefully selected, qualified tradespeople who share our aims to support disadvantaged people. Charges are based on market rates.

#### Domestic Services – Independent Living

- To extend the social benefit of the service, means-tested benefit claimants receive an automatic discount
- All HandyHelp workers are DBS-checked and risk assessed before they can work in customers' homes
- We can undertake small jobs, such as changing light bulbs for older tenants, and organise them in clusters to minimise charges. However, if someone is at risk, eg, without a light on their stairs, we can prioritise

#### Void Management and Refurbishment

- HandyHelp can handle most clearance works (except some hazardous waste) and cleaning, plus redecoration and basic refurbishment, to help reduce void turnaround times and increase revenues to landlords
- We will comply fully with procurement processes and supply chain requirements

#### Empty Homes

- HandyHelp teams help authorities and owners of empty properties bring them back into use, starting with clearance and void management, preparing the way for more specialist attention when needed

#### 'Bill Busting' (Reducing Energy Usage) and Community Safety

- In partnership with Quids In<sup>1</sup>, a money management magazine for people on low incomes, HandyHelp can support residents in reducing their bills through the supply and installation of low energy products
- We can also promote home safety through reassuring materials and the supply/ fitting of security products

### PARTNERSHIPS

Social Landlords in Bath have made The HandyHelp Co a preferred supplier and recommends us to tenants for works that are outside the contractual obligations of the landlord and remain the responsibility of the tenant. We also offer an 'overspill' facility for repairs and maintenance teams for busy periods or when projects require less skilled labour, preparing surfaces or ground works, for example, so in-house teams can cost-effectively focus on more skilled jobs.

<sup>1</sup> See: <http://www.socialpublishingproject.com/quids-in-magazine.html>