

TRANSLATION POLICY

Overcoming communication difficulties

Brent Housing Partnership (BHP) is committed to providing information on services to all its customers regardless of any visual impairment, disability, language or literacy barriers. Therefore it is the objective of BHP to provide all information in a form appropriate to the needs of our service users in plain English, with eligibility criteria, policies and processes clearly explained. Translations into other languages, Braille, large print and audio tapes will be made available on request to ensure details are accessible to all. Customers with a hearing impairment can communicate with BHP staff by telephone through Typetalk or in person at a One Stop Shop location or at our offices using an induction loop. This will ensure compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and Commission for Racial Equality guidance.

Translation Statement

All handbooks, brochures, guides and other promotional literature produced by BHP for its customers must be printed with a prominent translation statement, where possible on the first three pages of the document. The translation statement must:

- Tell the target audience what the publication is about. For example “this brochure contains information on your right to buy your home.”
- It must then offer to translate the document into another language. For example: “If you would like this information in another language.” Or offer to reproduce the document in large print or Braille or audio / video for visually impaired residents.
- In order to achieve best value staff should contact a minimum of two translation companies for quotes when requesting a document to be translated. The same applies when staff are requesting a strap line to

be translated. The following translation companies are recommended by the Communications Officer.

1. The Language Team, Brent Council, Town Hall, Forty Lane, Wembley, Middlesex, 020 8937 1071/1072 or email language.section@brent.gov.uk
 2. Language to Language, 15 Broughton Avenue, Littleover, Derby DE23 6JA, 01332 272171 or email info@lang2lang.co.uk
- The Communications Officer will consult regularly with Brent Council's translation unit to establish the most popular languages spoken in the borough. The translation statement will be produced in the eight most popular languages. At the time of printing these languages are:
 1. Farsi
 2. Gujarati
 3. Albanian
 4. Arabic
 5. Punjabi
 6. Somali
 7. Tamil
 8. Urdu

Once ordered the translated version of all documents should be posted on the internet and made available to others on request.

Budget Implications

It is important that all managers consider budget implications of printing language statements and offering translations of documents when planning brochures. It is difficult to estimate how many residents will take advantage of

the service to translate a document. The exact cost of translating a document varies but Brent Council's language team offer the following guidelines and all estimates and quotes are free.

- Face to face interpreting is approximately £30 per hour.
- Around £200 per thousand words translated with a minimum charge of £40 per language for up to 200 words.

Staff interpreters

There are around 15 languages spoken by staff at BHP and around 20 officers have registered their language skills with the Communications Officer. All are willing to speak to residents in their specialist languages to help interpret documents, brochures and newsletters or to give advice and interpretation over the phone. The full list of staff and their additional language skills is available on the intranet. The contact details for these officers will be printed on the BHP website with their permission. Officers who speak more than one language can also be contacted to check official translations to be printed in brochures are an accurate reflection of the language.

Translating BHP web pages

It is the objective of BHP that all customers have access to the information provided on the website and it is available in a comprehensive range of languages and formats appropriate to our service users.

The website will provide links to translated documents with clear signposting from the front page and will utilise the latest technology to ensure that website content is fully accessible to all customers, e.g. links to a web page translator and speech enabled software. Where possible, BHP will look to share costs with other landlords by using shared versions of translated and large print documents through links to appropriate websites.

Clear English

All documents, brochures and handbooks, produced by BHP for distribution to 50 or more residents, should be reviewed by the Communications Officer or a senior manager who has attended a writing in plain English course. It is the aim of BHP that all printed literature be written in plain English and be jargon free with any technical or specialist information clearly explained. All documents should include a strap line for residents to call and speak to an officer if they would like help understanding any of the detail in the literature.