

NEWS RELEASE

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GRAMPIAN HOUSING ASSOCIATION GAINS RECOGNITION AS A “HAPPY TO TRANSLATE” LOGO ORGANISATION

A multi cultural celebration is being hosted by Grampian Housing Association on Friday (2 May 2008) in recognition of the Association becoming the first organisation in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire to achieve “Happy to Translate” logo status. “Happy to Translate” is a national initiative funded by the Scottish Government to promote equal opportunities for all communities in Scotland by providing access to quality translation and interpreting services.

Alan Moat, chief executive of Grampian Housing Association said:-

“We are keen to be recognised as a “Happy to Translate” logo organisation in view of the increasing number of our tenants and people on the waiting list to be housed who represent black and minority ethnic communities. It helps to demonstrate that we are committed to offering the same quality services to the diverse communities we serve whilst also fulfilling our commitment to equal opportunities.”

Rohini Sharma Joshi, who runs the Equal Opportunities Programme for Bield, Hanover (Scotland) & Trust Housing Associations said:-

“We congratulate Grampian Housing on becoming the first organisation in the Grampian area to sign up to the Happy To Translate (HTT) initiative and we look forward to working with them.”

“The HTT logo has proven to be a highly effective way of improving communication with people who are not native English speakers. Public and private sector organisations are increasingly adopting it as a valuable aid to

Grampian Housing Association
Huntly House, 74 Huntly Street, Aberdeen AB10 1TD

Tel: 01224 202900 / Fax: 01224 645526
E-mail: info@grampianhousing.co.uk
Web site: www.grampianhousing.co.uk

understanding. Grampian's decision to join the scheme marks an important step towards the logo becoming a nationally recognised symbol."

The initiative gives practical guidance detailing how to provide communication assistance to service users. Participating organisations display the official logo on their literature and in reception areas to let non-English readers and speakers know they will provide quality translation and interpreting services.

Local MPs and MSPs are amongst the guests at Friday's event who also include representatives of Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Grampian Police, Multi Ethnic Aberdeen and Grampian Racial Equality Council. Given the North East's experience of a large influx of migrant workers from the EU Accession states in recent years it is hoped that the celebration will promote uptake of the initiative by other organisations in the area.

Sandra MacIntyre
Communications Co-ordinator
Tel: 01224 202902 (work) / 078100 34851 (mobile)

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