

**SCOTTISH HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS WIN NATIONAL
COMMENDATION FOR EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER
SERVICES FOR DIVERSE COMMUNITIES**

Trust, Hanover (Scotland) and Bield win RaceActionNet commendation for their "Happy to Translate" Logo initiative

Scottish housing associations, Trust, Hanover (Scotland) and Bield have, through their joint equal opportunities programme, won a major national commendation for excellence in customer services for diverse communities. The award, presented by RaceActionNet, a network of practitioners and policy makers seeking to promote community cohesion and race equality, was made in recognition of the success of the housing associations' "Happy to Translate" Logo initiative.

The "Happy to Translate" Logo initiative involved the development of an official logo. It encourages public and private sector organisations to display the logo on their literature and advertising and commit to providing people from black and ethnic minority (BME) communities with quality translation and interpreting services.

Rohini Sharma, Housing Equal Opportunities received the commendation certificate from Rt. Hon Baroness Amos of Brondesbury, Leader of the House of Lords and President of the Council, on behalf of her team, the associations and Communities Scotland.

Commenting on Trust, Hanover (Scotland) and Bield's initiative, the RaceActionNet judges described it as "a simple idea which has real potential to be replicated and with huge potential for usage. It gives a positive inclusive message to non-English speakers. In time this can and probably will be an exceptional initiative which could have nationwide benefits."

Receiving the award, Rohini Sharma said: "In the course of our early research and grassroots work with Scotland's BME communities it became clear that there has been a significant increase in the number of languages being spoken in Scotland and that many people, particularly older people, were not able to access appropriate services and information because of communication problems.

"We are delighted to have been awarded this "highly commended" certificate, for the encouragement it gives us and for the endorsement that our "Happy to Translate" Logo is making a very real difference to peoples' lives across Scotland."

Trust, Hanover (Scotland) Bield's "Happy to Translate" Logo initiative was proposed for the award by Communities Scotland, a member of RaceActionNet. Communities Scotland, in partnership with the Scottish Executive, supported the "Happy to Translate" Logo initiative with funding of £132,000.

Says Lynne Allan of Communities Scotland: The "Happy to Translate" Logo initiative is a creative partnership project between Trust, Hanover (Scotland) and Bield, designed to break down the barriers faced by those who experience difficulty communicating in English. We are obviously delighted its success and potential has been recognized by this award and trust that the initiative will prove highly effective in becoming a national symbol for language assistance that streamlines translation and interpretation service provision in Scotland."

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For further information, please contact Tamiko Mackie, Logo Development Officer on 0131 444 4951 or tmackie@trustha.org.uk