

**Name of Project:** HARP Connect

**Lead partner:** St Mungo Community Housing Association

**Borough:** Ealing

I was placed in interim accommodation by the council which was completely unsuitable for my needs - I have kidney failure, and as a result, I have significant mobility issues which sometimes require me to use a wheelchair. I always have to use a stick.

The property was only accessible by a set of very steep steps with no hand barrier and I couldn't safely enter or exit the building. The ambulance had to come and pick me up for my kidney dialysis and physically assist me down the stairs. The kitchen was shared with a large number of other residents and as I am unable to stand and wait to use the facilities I couldn't cook in the kitchen. I relied on cold sandwiches delivered to me from the church and take aways. I am also immunosuppressant, so sharing facilities with lots of people was dangerous. The journey to the hospital was approximately an hour and a half and I had to make this journey three times a week. The room was also very small and so I couldn't have a chair in there and I had to stay in the bed all the time as I couldn't leave the property. This was significantly impacting both my physical and mental health.

St Mungo's collated evidence from the hospital where I receive my kidney dialysis and the ambulance team who collect me for my appointments. St Mungo's assisted me in obtaining Personal Independence Payments (PIP). They advocated on my behalf to the council regarding the unsuitable accommodation.

I was made an offer of accommodation but again, it was completely unsuitable for my needs. St Mungo's prepared detailed submissions to the council and again collated evidence in support of why this accommodation was unsuitable. St Mungo's asked the council to withdraw the offer as they advised me that turning it down could be detrimental as the council could terminate their duty to house me. This happened twice. One of the properties was unsuitable as the ambulance couldn't park near the property to collect me for kidney dialysis (the nearest parking was 10 minutes away and I am unable to walk that distance, especially when I have had kidney dialysis as it makes me very tired). One of the properties had severe damp and mould and triggered my asthma immediately when I entered the property.

Eventually I was offered a suitable accommodation within a reasonable distance from my kidney dialysis where I could live safely.