

## **Refuge**

### **Information for women**

Ross House is a bright, friendly refuge for women and children. It is clean and comfortable, providing family suites with your own private bedrooms and bathroom; women will share a fully fitted kitchen with one other family. Single women have their own private bedroom and will share a bathroom with one other woman and a kitchen with up to three other women.

All of the kitchens are fully equipped with necessary items including fridge/freezer, kettle, toaster, microwave and washer/dryer as well as cutlery, plates and cooking utensils. Each bedroom has two single beds, a wardrobe and two small storage units, cots and Moses baskets are also available if required. There is also a television with freeview in each room.

When you arrive in Ross House you will be given fresh bedding, towels and a small toiletries pack to help get you started.

The refuge has a number of communal areas including a spacious lounge, training and computer room, which also houses the gym equipment, and two children's activity rooms which include a computer and television to be used by the children/young people for homework or games.

Smaller private rooms are available for personal support sessions with staff and relevant support related phone calls.

What you can expect whilst living in Ross House;

- A safe, comfortable place to live
- A supportive and friendly environment
- Staff who will listen to you without making any judgments
- Confidential one to one support
- Weekly opportunities to see a GP, Nurses or Health Visitor if you need them
- Support in applying for all of the benefits you're entitled to
- A weekly 'house meeting' which gives you the opportunity to exchange views on how the refuge operates and suggest alternatives or improvements
- Friendly tea/coffee and toast mornings
- Staff on site 24 hours a day every day.

Throughout your stay in Ross House, staff will support you in looking at your options and deciding where you want to live; whether that is returning to your previous property, if it is safe to do so, or looking for a completely fresh start in a new area.

## **Children and Young People – already on the website**

### **Ross House Information for Professionals**

Updated information regarding our current vacancies can be found by accessing 'Refuge On-Line' or calling the National Domestic Violence Helpline on 0808 2000 247 and asking them to do that for you, this is updated daily. Alternatively you can call the First Step Centre and make enquiries.

When taking the initial referral information from you staff will not be able to guarantee that accommodation will be given even if a room is vacant. A full referral must be taken from the woman herself over the phone, which should take approximately 45 minutes. Once this process is complete the team will discuss the support needs of the woman or family and establish whether or not we can provide the correct support package at that time. Each referral is considered individually but staff do consider those already living in refuge and will assess the impact of bringing in a new woman/family. For example we will usually only support one woman at a time who is reliant on tier four drug treatment services i.e. those currently on a methadone or subutex programme.

As Ross House has a zero tolerance approach to the use of drugs or alcohol on the premises we do not accept referrals for women who are still leading chaotic lifestyles as we feel we would be setting them up to fail. We do welcome women who are in recovery and already have a full package of care which will follow them to the local area.

Referrals may not be accepted where the woman, or perpetrator, is from or has close connections to the local area as this may also be considered a safety concern.

If a referral is accepted and accommodation offered, arrangements will need to be made for an immediate move. If this is not possible, for safety or other reasons, we can arrange an anticipated move in for the following day but rooms will not be held for any longer than 24 hours.

Should we be unable to offer accommodation due to being full or any other reason, we will offer referring agent phone numbers for alternative refuges in the Merseyside area.

Once a woman or family is living in Ross House staff will work collaboratively with all partner agencies involved but will not take on any statutory responsibilities for example monitoring movements outside of refuge. Support staff are welcome to use the refuge facilities to convene core group or other

meetings and are able to meet with women outside of office hours if required. As crèche sessions only operate at certain times availability of childcare should be checked in advance if required.