



What is a DWP resettlement grant?

Basic info

Many years ago central government ran a network of hostels providing temporary accommodation for single homeless people with unsettled lifestyles (two of the best known were West End House at 91 Dean Street in Soho, London and the Gibbs Road Hostel at Lye near Stourbridge, West Midlands). By the end of the 1990s the government had disposed of them, either by transferring them to alternative providers who received funding to keep them open; or by closing them down and funding providers to set up alternative projects to replace the closed establishments. The funding was provided by the Department of Social Security whose functions are now carried out by the Department for Work and Pensions.

The direct funding of resettlement places no longer exists but any establishment that received such funding continues to count as exempt accommodation if it is still open.

Further info

The definition of “exempt accommodation” refers to a “resettlement place” having the same meaning as in section 30 of the Jobseekers Act 1995. Section 30(2) says “in this section “resettlement places” means places at which persons without a settled way of life are afforded temporary accommodation with a view to assisting them to lead a more settled life”. Therefore if those “places” still exist and still provide temporary accommodation for the purpose specified in s30(2) it appears that they continue to have exempt accommodation status. Note in particular that:

- There is no requirement that the landlord be a charity, housing association, voluntary organisation or non-metropolitan county council.
- It is unnecessary to consider afresh whether each individual occupier personally receives more than minimal support from the landlord - the status of exempt accommodation belongs to the “place”, not the person.

Where are the hostels that received funding under the Jobseekers Act?

In response to a Freedom of Information request in December 2015 the Department for Work and Pensions said it did not have information about the whereabouts of the funded resettlement hostels. Identification of these establishments will therefore rely on the local knowledge of the people who manage them and the local authority benefits staff.