

Deutsche Wohnen supports young refugees

Berlin, 22 December 2015. Deutsche Wohnen and JaKuS e.V., a Berlin-based registered charity that provides support to young people, announced the start of a cooperation project for young refugees today. As part of this project, Deutsche Wohnen will make available urgently needed accommodation to young refugees aged 15 to 17. It will also support the care provided to these young people by qualified personnel and promote their integration by adapting the tried and tested “certificate for independent living” – a programme that inducts young people into the challenges of coping in their first flat. Deutsche Wohnen is investing a total of EUR 10,000 in this project.

As Stefanie Steinfurth, the Regional Manager East of Deutsche Wohnen Immobilienmanagement GmbH, explains, “With this project, we would like to help a group that is in particular need of protection – young refugees. But making flats available isn’t enough. In order to achieve the long-term integration of these young people, it is important to provide them with close support and to help them acquire knowledge and skills with regard to living in their own flat. We will achieve this with a certificate for independent living – for refugees.”

Juliane Witt, the councillor in Marzahn-Hellersdorf with responsibility for young people and patron of the certificate for independent living, adds, “We are delighted that Deutsche Wohnen is working with us on this very important topic. The people who seek refuge with us want to have a safe home and a new future here in Germany. And we have a particular responsibility towards young refugees.”

To start this cooperation project, Deutsche Wohnen is making three flats available in the Berlin district of Hellersdorf. The approach adopted by JaKuS is to bring together young refugees and young Berliners and, in this way, to promote integration from the very outset. The cooperation between Deutsche Wohnen and JaKuS is building on successfully established foundations. Deutsche Wohnen already provides flats to socially disadvantaged young people who are looked after by JaKuS.

To help it to support these young people, JaKuS will be setting up an office, which is being provided by Deutsche Wohnen, Mark-Twain-Straße in Marzahn-Hellersdorf. The premises will also serve as a place where young refugees and young people from Berlin can meet and communicate. In future, four social workers will be based there, including a colleague with a Syrian background who has been living in Germany for eleven years. The involvement of the Syrian colleague ensures not only uncomplicated communication despite the language barrier but also a good understanding of the challenges which the mainly Syrian young people will meet in the process of integrating into German society. As part of this cooperation project, Deutsche Wohnen also helped to finance additional training for this social worker.

To help with the integration of the young refugees, the cooperation project is making use of a tried and tested tool – the [certificate for independent living](#). This is a programme that makes young people fit for living in their own flat. As Frieder Moritz, the CEO of JaKuS explains, “We will adapt the certificate to

the needs of the young refugees – not only linguistically but also in terms of the cultural, legal and social particularities in Germany. This will also promote social cohesion in the neighbourhood.”

A first young refugee from Syria moved into his first flat with Deutsche Wohnen on 15th December 2015. Further young people are expected to follow in January 2016.

About Deutsche Wohnen

Deutsche Wohnen is one of the leading publicly listed residential property companies in Germany and Europe with a business focus on managing and developing its residential property portfolio. As at 30 September 2015 the portfolio comprised 149,100 units, of which 147,000 were residential and 2,100 commercial properties. Deutsche Wohnen owns flats in four Berlin Modernist housing estates, which were given UNESCO world cultural heritage status in July 2008: White City, the Horseshoe Estate in Britz, the Carl Legien Estate in Prenzlauer Berg and the Ring Estate (Siemensstadt).