

HOUSING

City agencies helping woman who said rental unit was unfit

An effort is being made to help Patrice John find a place to live and to determine if she can get her rent money back. —SEAT 23/89

By Tony Hodgkinson
The London Free Press

London city hall is trying to help find a new home for a welfare mother who paid \$900 in rent for a northeast apartment she hadn't seen.

Patrice John later refused to move into it, claiming it was dirty and in disrepair.

The city's deputy administrator of social services, Bob McNorgan, said Tuesday that staff at Rotholme Women's and Family Shelter, along with other community agencies, are trying to help John find a place to live and determine whether she can take action under the Landlord and Tenant Act to get her money back.

McNorgan said the woman qualified for social rental assistance and the \$900 was for the first and last month of rent. He said it's unlikely the city will become involved in legal action, although he may consider providing her with more financial help.

The rental advance was a private business transaction. "Once we issue assistance to someone, it's their money to enter into whatever kind of purchases they feel appropriate."

Meanwhile, Bob Carson, the Middlesex-London district health unit's director of environmental health, said he is expecting an inspection report today on the apartment John rented at 105 Chey-



In this photo taken in December, 1987, apartment building owner Elja Elleff points to damage done to an apartment at 105 Cheyenne Ave. He said at the time tenants often damaged apartments beyond belief.

enne Ave., off Huron Street. If conditions warrant, a property standards report will be sent to city hall for action.

IN GOOD FAITH: John said Tuesday she gave the apartment building owner, Elja Elleff, the rental cheque in good faith on the understanding the apartment was clean.

Elleff, who operates Richmond Subs in downtown London, has denied a claim by John that he refused to give her a key to see the apartment until after she had turned over her rental welfare cheque.

He refused to talk to The Free Press on Tuesday. "I don't want to talk to anybody about anything. If anyone has something against me, they should go through the courts."