

What happens now I have approached as homeless?



Basingstoke
and Deane

I've made a homeless application - what happens now?

Initially you will be contacted by a triage officer who will advise you on how you can retain your current home or secure an alternative. If that advice does not enable you to resolve your homelessness you will then be assigned to a Homeless Prevention Officer and the triage officer will make you an appointment and advise you on the information you must provide for your circumstances to be assessed. The Homeless Prevention Officer will be the person dealing with your circumstances from that point. They will offer you advice and assistance at your assessment appointment.

What will happen in my assessment?

During your assessment, your Homeless Prevention Officer will ask you about your current housing situation and circumstances. An assessment can last up to 2 hours. They will use this to help decide what advice and options are suitable for you and what duties the council may owe to you.

What documents do I need?

Your Homeless Prevention Officer will ask for the following documents:

- ID for yourself and your household
- 3 months worth of bank statements
- Proof of income
- Your tenancy or licence agreement
- Any eviction notices you have been served
- They will also ask you to:
 - Complete an income and expenditure form so a thorough budget calculation can be conducted
 - Complete a medical declaration form if applicable

What duties might be owed to me?

1. The Prevention Duty

If you are eligible for assistance and threatened with homelessness within 56 days you will be owed the prevention duty. This means the council must take reasonable steps to help you to remain in your current accommodation or assist you to secure alternative accommodation if you cannot remain in your current accommodation.

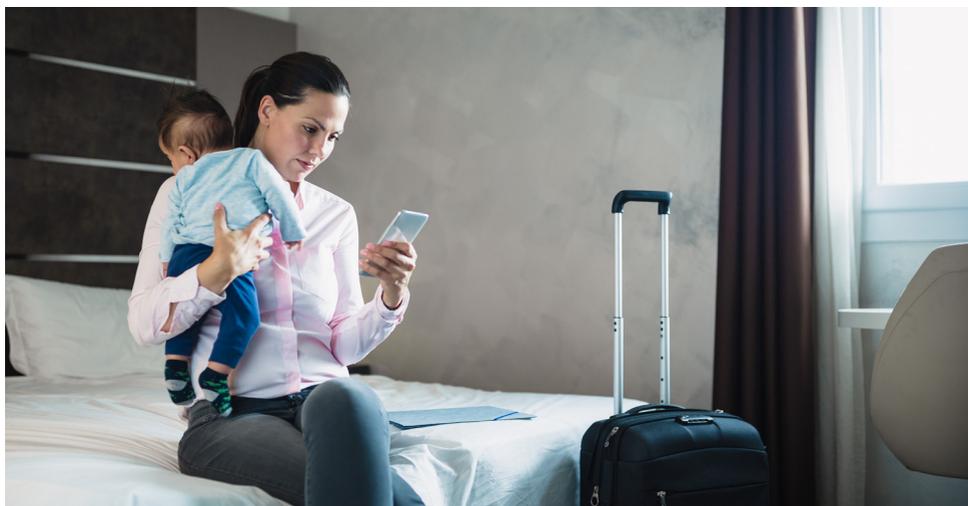
2. The Relief Duty

If you are eligible for assistance and homeless at the time of approach you will be owed the relief duty (even if you have previously been owed a prevention duty). This means that the council must take reasonable steps to help you secure suitable accommodation. The relief duty can last for up to 56 days.

3. The interim accommodation duty

Interim accommodation is emergency accommodation such as a bed and breakfast provided by the council to prevent you being street homeless.

The council does not have a duty to provide interim accommodation to all applicants who may otherwise be street homeless. The council will still assist you to find suitable long term accommodation, even if you are not entitled to interim accommodation.



What is Priority Need?

Certain types of applicant are seen by law as having more priority for housing if they are homeless and the council has a duty to provide them with interim accommodation if they are also eligible and homeless. These include:

- Having dependent children living with you
- Being pregnant
- Being aged 16-17
- Being a care leaver aged 18-20
- Being homeless because of a fire or flood
- Being assessed by the council as vulnerable For example: health, old age, institutionalised, ect.

Only those seen as being in priority need will receive interim accommodation whilst they are homeless.

What can my Homeless Prevention Officer do to help me?

Your Homeless Prevention Officer will work with you to create a personalised housing plan with agreed steps that you will both do to prevent or relieve your homelessness.

This can include but is not limited to:

- Negotiation/mediation with landlord
- Checking validity of notices
- Referring to hostel accommodation, Julian House outreach service and any other relevant support agencies if appropriate
- Referrals for additional support
- Providing budgeting and benefits advice.
- Assisting with any additional steps to help you to remain in your current accommodation
- Considering your eligibility for the council's rent bond scheme

What should I be doing?

You should follow any agreed actions in your personalised housing plan and provide updates to your Homeless Prevention Officer once those steps are complete. You should also update your Homeless Prevention Officer if your circumstances change.

Actions in your personalised housing plan may include:

- Looking for alternative accommodation. This is likely to be in the private sector
- Engaging with relevant services
- Suggestions for addressing any other problems you may face in securing accommodation; such as rent arrears
- Applying to the housing register

What type of communication can I expect?

During your prevention or relief duty you can expect:

- Acceptance of duty letter
- Personalised Housing Plan
- End of duty letter when this concludes
- You may receive further correspondence if any further duties are owed.

What are the reasons you can end my prevention or relief duty?

There are many reasons why either duty can be ended, this is mainly if suitable accommodation has been secured or the duty has been complied with for 56 days. The duty may also end if there has been a loss of contact, if you refuse to co-operate with the actions set out in your plan or if you refuse a suitable offer of accommodation.

The main housing duty

If your homelessness has not been resolved in the prevention or relief stage, and you are in priority need and not intentionally homeless, you will be owed the main housing duty. This duty is to secure that accommodation is available for occupation by the applicant.

I no longer want or require help, what should I do?

As soon as you have decided that you no longer require assistance from the council you should contact your Homeless Prevention Officer to inform them of your decision.

I'm 16-17, what can I expect?

We will work with colleagues in Children's services, who have the main responsibility for housing and support for under 18 year olds, to help you secure accommodation. The Homeless Prevention Officer will also provide you advice regarding your housing situation.

What if I cannot afford accommodation?

Your Homeless Prevention Officer will undertake affordability checks with and look at how best to increase your income before recommending accommodation to you. Your Homeless Prevention Officer will advise against any properties that are deemed unaffordable and unsuitable for you.

I'm not happy with the decisions made, what can I do?

If you are not happy with a decision made by your Homeless Prevention Officer you may have a right to review of the decision made. Your decision letter will outline how to do this.

How frequently should I contact you?

Make sure you keep in contact with your Homeless Prevention Officer and update them on any changes to your circumstances.



www.basingstoke.gov.uk | 01256 844844

customer.service@basingstoke.gov.uk

@BasingstokeGov

For general enquiries contact
Housing Services by calling 01256 844844.



Sign up

for email updates
on council services,
news and events.

www.basingstoke.gov.uk/signup



WORLD
LAND
TRUST™

www.carbonbalancedpaper.com
CBP00022772808181917

If you need this information in a different
format, for example large print, CD or braille,
please contact the council.

©Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council October 2020

