

For an information pack and/or further details please contact:
The housing advice and options service
Telephone: 01432 261600
Fax: 01432 26 1591
Email: housing.enquiry@herefordshire.gov.uk

The Out of Hours number is
01432 260000

Citizens Advice Bureau
Telephone: 0844 826 9685

If you would like help to understand this document, or would like it in another format or language, please call 01432 260500 or e-mail info@herefordshire.gov.uk

Homelessness and Housing

Please be aware that this leaflet contains basic information only and is no substitute for seeking individual advice. Herefordshire Council provides a free, impartial and confidential homelessness and housing advice service to everybody who lives in the county.



If you are homeless, or think that you are at risk of becoming homeless, you should contact the housing advice and options service for advice **STRAIGHT AWAY**.

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How can we help you?

If you are about to lose your home: Our first job is to try and prevent you from becoming homeless by helping you to stay in your home. We can talk to your landlord or mortgage lender on your behalf to try to prevent you from being evicted and we can help to make sure you are claiming all the benefits that you are entitled to. We can also mediate with parents, relatives and friends if you live with them and they are threatening to evict you.

If your landlord is harassing you or threatening to evict you we can intervene and take steps against your landlord where appropriate. We can give landlords information about your situation and advise them of the law.

In all circumstances, we can put you in touch with other specialist advisors who may be able to help you further, and you will be entitled to make a homelessness application. We will be able to help you to fill out an

application form to become registered with Home Point if necessary.

Home Point is a choice-based lettings agency, which manages the housing register (waiting list) and advertises the majority of affordable housing in herefordshire, which includes the rental properties of the largest housing associations in the county.
Tel. 01432 359500
Email: info@home-point.info

If you already homeless:

You may be entitled to make a homelessness application but we do not necessarily have a duty to find you somewhere to live. Each application is assessed in accordance with the Housing Act 1996, Part VII, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002. If you meet the assessment criteria we will then have a duty to arrange accommodation for you, however the housing advice and options service may initially try to source private rented accommodation for you, which you will be expected to accept.

How do I make a homelessness application?

If following your initial discussions with the housing advice and options service it is agreed that your homelessness application will be taken further, an appointment will be made for you to see your allocated housing advisory officer. This will be your dedicated officer until your housing issues have been resolved.

How do we make our decision?

We will assess your application on the five criteria shown on the right. Once we have completed our assessment we will write to you, as well as verbally explain the outcome of our decision.

If you are **NOT** in priority need, Herefordshire Council will not have a duty to provide you with temporary accommodation however we may be able to assist you with private rented accommodation.

If you are determined to be Intentionally homeless we will not have a duty to accommodate you on a permanent basis.

We will aim to complete our assessment of your homelessness application as quickly as possible.

To ensure that we make a fair and accurate assessment we will need to find out all about your personal circumstances by contacting your landlord or mortgage lender (if you have one), GP etc.

If you don't agree with the decision, you have the right to request a review.

A copy of your decision will also be available on audio-tape, in Braille or large-print, or translated for you where necessary.

1 Eligible for assistance

The majority of people are eligible for assistance. However, some people subject to immigration control may not be eligible.

2 Homelessness

A person is homeless for the purpose of the HA 1996 pt VII if he or she has no accommodation in the UK or elsewhere in the world, which is available for his/her occupation.

3 In priority need

You may be in priority need if:

- Pregnant
- Are responsible and have dependant children living with you
- Have been made homeless by fire, flood or other emergency
- We consider you to be vulnerable

4 Intentionally homeless

A person becomes Intentionally homeless if he or she deliberately does or fails to do anything in consequence of which he or she ceases to occupy accommodation which is available for occupation, and which would have been reasonable to continue to occupy.

5 Connected to Herefordshire

Are you able to prove a local connection - you, or somebody who normally lives with you, may have a local connection with Herefordshire if:

- You have lived in the county for 6 out of the last 12 months, or 3 out of the last 5 years
- You work in Herefordshire
- Your Immediate family that you have a close relationship with live in Herefordshire