



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

Housing Services

A guide to homelessness advice and support in Darlington



People can become homeless for lots of different reasons. There are many different causes of homelessness, such as a lack of affordable housing, poverty and unemployment, and life events which push people into homelessness.

Rough sleeping is the most visible form of homelessness and is perceived by many as representative of homelessness however, it in fact represents one of the smallest percentages of homelessness in Darlington.

How can you help me?

You can find information online (www.darlington.gov.uk/housing/finding-a-home-or-garage/homelessness) to support you or you can contact us, and we will carry out a telephone assessment and provide you with advice and assistance to support you.

If you are not able to resolve your own housing issues using the information provided, you will be provided with a face-to-face appointment with our Housing Options team for a further assessment.

We will talk to you about your current situation, discuss any difficulties you're having and help you look at your options to either:

- help you stay in your current home (prevention duty)
- find alternative housing (relief duty)

We can work with your current landlord if you have a tenancy already or with whoever you are currently living with. Its better to get in touch with us early so we can help prevent you from losing your home.

We may carry out home visits to you to assess your housing need and to confirm your housing situation.

We recognise that homelessness is complex, our main focus is to help people avoid becoming homeless by providing them with useful support and guidance. We work with a large number of agencies to ensure we can provide this support and in emergency situations provide short-term temporary accommodation to those that meet priority need.

You should not worsen your own housing circumstances to gain emergency or temporary accommodation, we will carry out checks and you may lose your priority need if its proven you have made a false claim of homelessness.

If you have no recourse to public funds you should read this document first [Housing support for families with no recourse to public funds - Shelter England](#).

Please note there is a significant demand on Council housing so you should consider all types of accommodation, the Housing Options team cannot allocate or fast track you to Council housing.



What help can you give me if I am homeless tonight?

You can present to the Town Hall in office hours and see the Emergency Housing Options Officer. They will carry out an assessment with you, and provide you with advice and assistance, depending on your circumstances.

If you meet the criteria under homelessness legislation (homeless that night, have priority need and have a local connection to Darlington) you may be offered emergency accommodation.

We have a limited amount of emergency accommodation in Darlington, so you may be placed outside of Darlington.

If you do not meet the above criteria, you will be provided with advice and assistance but will not qualify for emergency accommodation.

Support is also available out of office hours via telephone to the Emergency Duty Team (see back of leaflet for contact details) where you will be directed to the on-call Housing Options Officer who will provide you with advice and support.

Are you at risk of rough sleeping or have concerns that someone is rough sleeping?

If you are rough sleeping, you can contact us either through our customer services or by presenting at the Town Hall. We have an outreach worker and a rough sleeper coordinator who can work alongside you.

If you are worried about someone rough sleeping, please report through [StreetLink - Connecting people sleeping rough to local services](#) and our outreach worker will visit the area and speak to the individual to offer them help and support.

What happens at my face-to-face Housing Options appointment?

At the appointment we will decide what help the law says we must give you and may make a Personal Housing Plan (PHP) with you. This will have actions for you to take and for us to take to help your housing situation.

If you have any additional support, we will refer you to a relevant support agency. These include:

- Housing Related Support Services Provision of Outreach Support for Drug and Alcohol.
- Floating Support Complex Needs.

- Housing Related Support Services Provision of Outreach Support.
- Housing Related Support Services Provision of Outreach Support for Enduring Mental Health.

If you do not work with us and do not adhere to your PHP, we may end our homeless duty to you.



What should I bring to my Housing Options appointment?

You should bring with you:

- **ID** - a current passport; driving licence or birth certificate
- **Proof of address** - utility bill or tenancy agreement
- **Proof of income** - this may include payslips or benefit letters
- Any relevant information or correspondence about your current housing situation. For example, if you have received a Notice to Quit, any court papers or any other relevant letters from your landlord.

Who else do you work with?

We recognise that you may need additional support to manage, maintain or source a home, so we work closely with several agencies, including:

- 700 Club
- WayThrough (formerly known as Humankind)
- Foundation
- Creative Support
- Citizens Advice
- Family Help
- Harbour
- YMCA
- First Stop
- Access Team
- Probation and Offender Management Services
- Health/Hospital
- With You
- Stride

Within our Housing Options team we also have:

- A specialist Housing Options Officer (Domestic Abuse) that can provide additional support and advice.
- A Specialist Housing Options Officer (Mental Health) who works with the teams in the Mental Health Service.

Drop-in services are also provided by the third sector who can support you to access services including GP and Health and accessing private rented sector.

What type of emergency and temporary accommodation do you use?

We have a limited number of temporary accommodation available but the types of accommodation we use are:

• **Emergency Placements.**

- These are usually only used for 1 night or 2 at a weekend and may be outside of Darlington.
- You will need to pay towards this accommodation, we can help you make a claim for welfare benefits to help cover the cost but you will need to pay the top-up.
- This can include:
 - Emergency supported accommodation.
 - Hotel type accommodation.

• **Short-term temporary accommodation.**

- This is accommodation which is needed for more than 1 or 2 nights.
- You will need to pay towards this accommodation, we can help you make a claim for welfare benefits to help cover the cost but you will need to pay the top-up.
- This can include:
 - Temporary accommodation houses and flats
 - Housing First properties (Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding).
 - Next Steps Accommodation for Preventing Rough Sleeping.
 - Domestic Abuse Accommodation
 - Move On Flats working alongside the third sector.
 - Single Housing Accommodation Programme properties.



Useful local organisations and support agencies

Housing Related Support Provider	Type of Service
<p>700 Club Tel: 01325 366397 www.700club.org.uk</p>	<p>700 Club is a charitable organisation that provides temporary accommodation and support services to vulnerable individuals, families and couples who are homeless, at risk of becoming homeless and/or are in condition of need, hardship or distress.</p>
<p>Waythrough Tel: 01325 527837 www.waythrough.org.uk</p>	<p>Specialist mental health and related areas support agency</p>
<p>Citizens Advice Bureau Tel: 01325 266888</p>	<p>Provide free, independent, confidential and impartial advice and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Support Scheme • Household Support Fund • 50+ Advocacy Service • Benefit Entitlement Action Team • Move Forward and LEAP
<p>Creative Support Tel: 01325 461970 www.creativesupport.co.uk</p>	<p>A not-for-profit organisation promoting the independence, inclusion and wellbeing of people with care and support needs.</p>
<p>Family Help Tel: 01325 364486 www.familyhelp.org.uk</p>	<p>Independent charity and home to Darlington's only women's refuge</p>
<p>Foundation Tel: 01325 289410 www.foundationuk.org/team/foundation-darlington</p>	<p>Support service for individuals and families affected by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeless or at risk of homelessness • Leaving prison or on probation • Leaving care • Domestic abuse
<p>Harbour Tel: 03000 202525 www.myharbour.org.uk</p>	<p>Provides assistance to families and individuals affected by domestic abuse.</p>
<p>YMCA Tees Valley Tel: 01325 462452 ymca.org.uk</p>	<p>Provider of safe, supported housing and support for young people, including emergency housing, supported longer-term housing, hostels and foyers.</p>
<p>Adult Social Care Tel: 01325 406111 (office hours) Tel: 01642 524552 (OOH's) www.darlington.gov.uk/adult-social-care</p>	<p>Helps people to live independently</p>

Housing Services contact details



01325 405333



Emergency Duty Team number: 01642 524552



housing@darlington.gov.uk



www.darlington.gov.uk/housing/finding-a-home-or-garage/homelessness



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