



Housing advice

For young people



**I'm thinking of moving out...
what can I do?**

What can I do to help resolve my housing situation?

If you are having problems at home and think you may need to move out, Hart District Council can offer support and advice through our Engagement and Support team in our Housing Service.

We can refer you to agencies locally who can work with you to remain in your family home if this is possible. If necessary we will visit your family and we can offer family mediation.

Through our assessment process our Engagement and Support team will talk to you about other issues that may be impacting on your housing need.

We will agree a set of actions which will be laid out in your Personal Housing Plan.

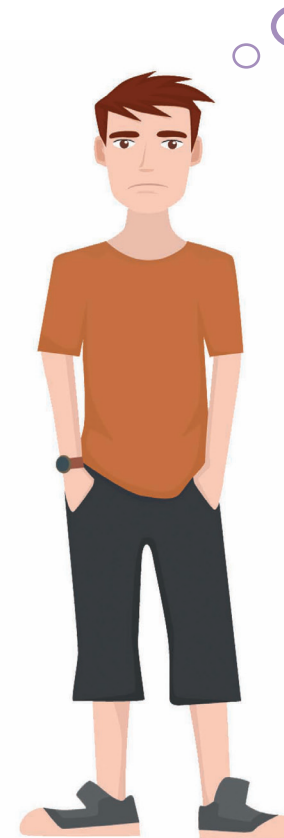
These actions may be about looking at alternative housing options, but may also be about actions that could help you resolve issues in your current accommodation which will allow you to stay there.

Under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 we can work with you as early as 56 days before you may lose your accommodation so the earlier you come and see us the better.

The Engagement and Support team can help you explore your housing options which may include private rented accommodation, social housing or referral to a local Supported Housing Project, where you can build on your skills to enable you to move on and live independently.



I think I am going to be homeless, what can I do?



If you are 16 or 17 and become homeless and there is nobody to care for you, a joint assessment of your needs will be carried out by Hart District Council Engagement and Support Service and Children Services Team. If you are found to be a “Child in Need”, the Children Services team will take responsibility for your care and may offer you a foster placement.

If none of these options provide you with accommodation before you become homeless, you may need to access temporary accommodation in the form of direct access night shelters or Bed & Breakfast.

PRIVATE RENTED ACCOMMODATION

Private rented accommodation is the most likely way to find accommodation quickly but it is not always easy to find if you are under 18. If you are under 18, the law says you are not allowed to hold a tenancy. However a tenancy can be 'held in trust' for you by a third party such as a parent or adult relative until you turn 18. The trustee is not liable for the rent.

However you may then require a guarantor. This again is a third party who 'guarantees the rent.'

Should you chose not to pay your rent and fall into rent arrears your guarantor will then be liable to pay these costs.

Housing Benefit will only pay up to the maximum entitlement for young people (under 35) to rent a single room in a shared house. This is based on the Local Housing Allowance and will vary depending on the area you rent in. The Engagement and Support team will be able to provide information and advice on the best way to access the private rented sector.

Pros: Choose where you want to live; available quicker than most other options; more flexibility to move when your needs change.

Cons: Can be expensive; will probably be a room in a shared house if you are not working and under 35.

SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

The best possible solution for 16 and 17 year olds who are unable to remain at home is to access supported lodgings. This is where you can receive housing and support to improve your skills and enable you to move on and live independently. The Engagement and Support Service can make referrals to local hostels and supported accommodation providers. The referral process in all cases includes an interview to ensure applicants are suited to the level of support available.

Local supported accommodation providers include:

Step By Step –based in Aldershot, Step By Step can offer short term emergency accommodation in a 24hr a day staffed hostel where all facilities are shared. They will accept people aged 16-25 and there is often a waiting list.

Life Homes – is supported accommodation for young single women who are pregnant or with young children. Clients must be under the age of 25 and be willing to engage with life skills support program.

Supported Lodgings – these are placements in the community with host households for under 21 year olds. Support will be given to ensure that the best possible match is made between the host household and the young person. All facilities will be shared and there is often a waiting list.

There are other supported accommodation providers outside of the Hart area that may in some instances take referrals. Information about these supported accommodation providers can be found in our leaflet '*Information on Local Hostels and Temporary Supported Accommodation*'. Many of these projects will require a local connection but if you would like to discuss your options to be referred to these projects please contact the Engagement and Support Service.

Pros: Good for those not ready to be fully independent

Cons: Waiting lists can mean it will be a while before you can move in

SOCIAL HOUSING

Hart's Housing Register is our way of allocating Housing Association properties which have become available to let. By joining the Housing Register you will be able to bid on available properties. Properties are advertised on a weekly basis. You will only be able to place bids on properties that are suitable to your needs i.e. one bedroom property or Studio Flat if you are a single person.

There is a severe shortage of social housing within the Hart District and the competing demands are incredibly high. It is highly likely that the majority of households joining the housing register for the first time can expect to wait a minimum of 4 years to be housed through this process.

Pros: Longer term housing option

Cons: Likely to be a long wait and may still not guarantee being successful



How can I join the housing register?

If you have not already joined the Housing Register you can apply online at www.harthomes.org.uk.

If you require any help a member of the Engagement and Support team would be happy to help you complete the application.

GETTING HELP WITH MY RENT OR LIVING COSTS

Information about Benefits

If you are 16 or 17 and have been excluded from your family home and have no other family members to care for you, you may be able to claim Universal Credit. To find out further information you can contact Job Centre Plus or the Youth Aims Service run by Step by Step. The Engagement and Support Service will be able to help you access Youth Aims and you may also be able to access the service through your school or college.

If you are considering leaving home, it is important that you are fully informed of what benefits you will be entitled to and what housing options you may have, so please seek advice when taking the steps to move out.

Local Housing Allowance (LHA)

LHA looks at how much assistance an applicant needs to assist with rent for people on low incomes or primary benefits. Savings and income will be taken into consideration when working out your benefits and you may have to pay all or part of your rent depending on these. The maximum entitlement for young people (under 35) is the single room rate and this will vary depending on the area you rent in. It is recommended to keep your rent below or at that level or there will be a monthly rental shortfall that would need to be found by another means to maintain the property.

MOVING IN – BECOMING A RESPONSIBLE TENANT

When moving into a new place it is important that you understand your responsibilities to ensure that you can maintain your tenancy in the longer term. When you first move into a property take as many documents as you can with you.

These include:

- Passport
- Driving license
- Birth certificate
- Bank cards
- Bank statements
- Benefit books

ENSURE YOU PAY YOUR RENT AND COUNCIL TAX ON TIME

It is important that you keep your bills and payments under control otherwise you will risk losing your tenancy. Make sure you read all bills and letters and attend to them immediately. Keep all bills, letters and receipts, put them in order and keep them together somewhere safe. Then make a note of when your rent and council tax are due and keep a record of when you have paid it.

Your rent and Council Tax are your most important bills. They are more important than loans, bills and other

stuff because if you don't pay them you could lose your home or go to prison.

The Engagement and Support Service will always provide help and advice even if we are unable to provide accommodation so please get in touch if you need help with your housing situation.

YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

When you rent for the first time, you may not be aware what your responsibilities are or what your landlord is responsible for, so here is a list to help you maintain your tenancy in the longer term. You are responsible for:

- Paying rent and service charges on time (you may lose your home if you don't!).
- Paying your Council Tax on time (you may go to prison if you don't!).
- Paying your utility bills – gas, electricity, landline phone & water (you may be cut off and face legal action if you don't!)
- Keeping the property clean and tidy – taking good care of it
- Sticking to the terms of your rental agreement.
- Allowing your landlord access to the property so that he/she can carry out repairs and inspect the property
- Report anything that needs repairing or that is broken to your landlord straight away. Be aware that you are responsible for any damage caused by you or visitors
- Be considerate of your neighbours – you are responsible for not only your own behaviour but for the behaviour of the people who visit.

ARE YOU AWARE THAT...

If you, your friends or any visitors to your property are found to be in possession of any illegal substances YOU will be held responsible because you are the tenant.

If you, your friends or any visitors to your property cause any nuisance or

disturbance to your neighbours YOU will be held responsible because you are the tenant.

Be warned! This may put you at risk of losing your accommodation.

**What happens if I need some advice?
Where do I go if I need help?**

First of all, don't panic if you are facing housing problems.

You are not alone and we are here to help and it is better to ask for help sooner rather than later.

You can contact Hart District Council Engagement and Support Service for free and confidential advice.

Call us on **01252 774420**

Visit our office at the address below Monday to Thursday 8.30am – 4.30pm and Friday 8.30am – 4.00pm.

You can also email us at **housing@hart.gov.uk**

You can find information on our website at **www.hart.gov.uk/housing**



USEFUL CONTACTS

Hart District Council	Engagement and Support Service www.hart.gov.uk/housing	01252 774420
Hart District Council	Housing Benefit www.hart.gov.uk/housing-benefit	01252 774444
Hampshire County Council	Children Services Team www3.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services	0300 5551384
National Careers Service Helpline	Offers advice on jobs, education, careers, training for people aged 13 years and over. www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/youngpeople/Pages/Youngpeople.aspx	0800 100 900
The Lions Community Store	They can help you with second hand furniture, kitchenware, clothing and bedding. www.communitystore.org.uk	01252 616998
Shelter	Homelessness charity that runs a housing helpline www.shelter.org.uk	01252 812308
Fleet Phoenix	Youth Centre offering advice, information and mentoring for young people 1.30-4.30pm. Ages 11-25 years. www.fleetphoenix.co.uk	01252 812308

Youth Aims at Step by Step	This service provides advice and advocacy, information, mediation and support for those aged 16-25 who are homeless www.stepbystep.org.uk/youth-aims	01252 346105
Step by Step	Young people (aged 16 – 25) needing accommodation www.stepbystep.org.uk	01252 346100
Supported Lodgings	An individual tailored service for young people (aged 16-21) giving them an opportunity to live in a home environment	Call Hart Housing Options Service for referrals.
D'n'A	Young people needing help with housing issues as a result of drugs or alcohol www.stepbystep.org.uk/dna	01252 346106
Job Centre Plus	For information on jobs and benefits www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus	0345 604 3719
Money Saving Expert	For help with managing money and debt and budget planning www.moneysavingexpert.com/banking/Budget-planning	

Contact Details:

Address: Hart District Council,
Harlington Way,
Fleet, Hampshire,
GU51 4AE

Tel: 01252 774420

Email: housing@hart.gov.uk

Web: www.hart.gov.uk

Facebook: [/HartDistrictCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/HartDistrictCouncil)

Twitter: [@HartCouncil](https://twitter.com/HartCouncil)

Instagram: [@HartCouncil](https://www.instagram.com/HartCouncil)

All Housing Advice Leaflets are available via our website at
www.hart.gov.uk/housing