



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Information & Advice Pack

Helping you resolve your housing issues

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Councils, Homelessness and Housing Solutions team provide advice and assistance to all customers with a housing need. Our dedicated team can assist with the following:

- Help to prevent homelessness, through advice, support and assistance detailed within a tailored personal housing plan.
- Assist you with advice around bidding for a new home.
- Provide you with debt advice.
- Provide advice to tenants who have been served a notice to quit from a private landlord
- Provide advice to tenants who have been illegally evicted from a private tenancy.
- Provide advice regarding disrepair issues at a property.
- Registering on the housing waiting list
- Registering a homeless application.

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Homelessness and Housing Solutions

The Homelessness and Housing Solutions team delivers a service covering a vast range of essential homeless related services with specialist trained staff equipped to respond and adapt to the ever changing demands of a frontline homeless department. With specialist teams, tailoring responses to meet individual clients circumstances.

Stockton Council may be able to assist you if you are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The Homelessness and Housing Solutions Service aims to prevent people becoming homeless by providing advice and assistance to help you find a solution to your housing problem.

Who can the Homelessness and Housing Solutions Service help?

We are able to provide advice to anybody who approaches the service. In some cases, we will give you information about other specialist agencies that may be better able to help.

Are you homeless or at risk of losing your home?

- Being homeless doesn't just mean you have nowhere to live, you can be homeless if:
- You have accommodation but you cannot return to it because you, or a member of your family would be at risk of violence,
- You have accommodation but have been restricted entry by your landlord or other persons,
- You have accommodation but it is unreasonable for you to continue to live there,
- Your accommodation is a movable structure, for example a houseboat or a caravan and you have nowhere to put it legally.

Our aim is to prevent homelessness whenever possible and we will help you to keep your current accommodation, if appropriate, whenever we can. Some of the ways we can help are listed below but not limited to:

- If you rent your current accommodation, we can advise you on negotiating with your landlord to delay or to stop you becoming homeless,
- Referral for benefit advice to maximise your income,
- We can refer you to other agencies for advice and support,
- Help and advice with paying your mortgage,
- Offering advice and assistance if you are affected by domestic violence,
- Referral to tenancy support services,
- Referral to supported housing schemes,
- Help to find accommodation in the private sector (Please do not make any financial commitments without prior agreement with an officer from Stockton's housing team. If the service does not agree that the property is acceptable for you to move into, any potential offer of financial assistance will not be honoured. Therefore do not pay any fees until you have agreement from your officer.)

What we will do when you contact us?

Losing your accommodation can be a difficult time but most people do find somewhere else to live. The longer you leave it, the harder it will be to find a new home.

We will ask you questions about your present situation, if we think there is a real risk of you losing your accommodation or you are presenting as homeless an officer will find out more about your circumstances. Our main aim is to help you to stay in your current accommodation, but if this is not possible (for example if you are suffering or at risk from domestic violence) we will give you advice and help to find you somewhere else to live. We may put you in touch with other agencies for them to help you.

What does the Homelessness and Housing Solutions Service do?

- Try to assist you to keep your existing accommodation
- Help you explore your housing options
- Give advice on the council's statutory duties
- Provide temporary accommodation

What services can Homelessness and Housing Solutions offer?

The Homelessness and Housing Solutions Service offer a wide range of services to help people who are homeless or likely to become homeless. Where possible, we aim to make sure nobody actually becomes homeless. We do this by providing advice at an early stage about what legal rights you may have to property, solutions to resolve a threat of homelessness and any housing options available to you.

What if I am homeless tonight?

Some applicants will qualify for emergency accommodation. We will only arrange this if we have reason to believe that you may:

1. Be homeless.	2. Be eligible for assistance.
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You can visit us at: Stockton Central Library and Customer Service Centre
Church Road, Stockton, TS18 1TX

Email us: Housing.options@stockton.gov.uk

Telephone: 01642 528389

Service Opening times: - Mon, Tues & Thurs: 9am to 4pm. Wed: 12.30pm to 4pm. Fri: 9am to 3.30pm.

If you are homeless in an emergency outside these times you can telephone the **Emergency Duty Team:** 01642 524552, 5pm – 8.30am weekdays and all-day weekends (including bank holidays).

If you are worried about becoming homeless you should contact us as soon as possible.

Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP)

During the cold weather, in accordance with the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP), if you see anyone who appears to be sleeping rough or on the streets you can direct them to the Council's Homelessness and Housing Solutions Team (or the Emergency Duty Team out of hours) who will make contact with the individual(s) and arrange accommodation. For more information about SWEP please visit Homeless.org website.

Duty to Provide Advice and Assistance

The Housing Solutions Service has a duty to provide advice and assistance; we will register a homelessness application for all customers who are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days.

We will explore various options to prevent homelessness through a personal housing plan. The Personal housing plan outlines what steps are expected from yourself and the council in order to prevent homelessness. The housing plan is personal to you and tailored to your circumstances. These steps will include steps suitable to resolve situation and may include contacting your landlord or agent, signposting to the debt and money advice teams, seeking assistance with renting in the private renting sector through the home finder scheme. There will be an agreement between both yourself and the council to work together to look to work to resolve your situation. You will be expected to act to resolve your situation, inaction may result in discharge of duty by the council.

When registering a homeless application under part VII of the Housing act (1996) the Council will consider the five criteria's below during the assessment:

- Homelessness – Are you homeless or threatened with homelessness?
- Eligibility – Do you have recourse to public funds or are you exercising your treaty rights as a European Citizen?
- Priority need- Are you pregnant, have children or vulnerable for any other reason?
- Intentionality – Investigation in the course of your homelessness
- Local connection – this will only be assessed at the end of the decision making process and will not apply to all applicants, for example those fleeing domestic violence.

Reviews of Decisions

Decisions made on homeless applications by the council have the right to request a review of the decision made. Reviews can be requested on decision on the applications and on the suitability of an offer of accommodation.

The purpose of the review is to enable a decision to be objectively scrutinised by an individual not involved in the original decision making process. Where an applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the review, he or she has the right to appeal to the County Court, on a point of law, which has the power to confirm, quash or vary the outcome of the review. The timeframe to request a review is usually 21 days from the date of the decision. If you choose to submit a review, following your request you will be notified in writing acknowledging your request, confirming if it has been accepted as a review and if accepted confirming that the review process has been triggered.

Documentation needed

We advise that you provide the following documentation when approaching us for future housing assistance.

Identity documents (one for each household member)

- Full Birth Certificate – either EU or non-EU (non EU to be accompanied by copy of settlement/immigration document)
- Full British birth certificate for each child (long version)
- Passport (non EU must show immigration visa stamp or letter from the Home Office)

Homelessness documents

- Notice seeking possession from your private landlord or letter from National Asylum support service (NASS) or letter from a resident landlords etc. terminating your licence
- Possession order or Warrant of Eviction issued by a County Court

Residency Documents

Please provide proof of your residency by providing one of the following documents, dated within the last three months. This will not apply if you have been asked to leave accommodation provided by NASS.

- Confirmation from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) employer
- Recent bank/credit card statement
- Recent utility bill (gas/electric/telephone/water)
- Council tax bill.

Income benefits documents (please supply all that apply)

- Bank statements verifying universal credit payments
- Confirmation letter/benefit book form DWP/inland Revenue
- Attendance book if receiving Job seekers Allowance (JSA)
- Child benefit confirmation
- Child or working Tax Credit confirmation
- Contract of employment for EU members
- Workers registration certificate where applicable

Pregnancy Documents (if expecting a baby)

Maternity records or hospital notes, antenatal book/notes stating expected date of delivery.

Proof of medical/Mental health conditions

Letters confirming medical condition and medication taken.

Looking for a privately rented property

Disclaimer: The following information is to assist you with making contact with local agents, this is not a recommendation or instruction to use one of the following agencies. Please note also that there will be other accommodation providers and agencies to contact within our locale.

There are many letting agents covering the Stockton Borough who may be able to help you with finding a place to live. You can also look in local shop windows and supermarkets for advertisements. The following websites/agencies may be able to help you further, please bear in mind the decision to accept Local Housing Allowance (housing benefit) claimants, is an individual decision made by the company/respective landlord. If you will be dependent on being able to claim assistance with the rent you must ensure that you are eligible to receive it (via the housing benefit team) and that the property you are enquiring about will be granted to you as a Local housing allowance claimant.

Local letting agents

NGU Homelettings	01642 312312
Stockton Flats	0162614651
Whitegates	01642 550076
Ron Greig	01642 533000
MS properties-	01642 677704
Manners & Harrison	01642 606194
Your Move	01642 607191
Reed Rains	01642 601601
Jones Estate Agents	01642 885511
Gowland White	01642 615657
Roseberry Newhouse	01642 424323
Thirlwells	01642 361111
Michael Poole	01642 355000
Browns	01642 677411/363345
Robinsons-	01642 607555
Bridgfords lettings	01642 685244

Acorn lettings	01642 268106
Pattinsons	01642 210132
Leinster Properties	01642 634502
NS Estates	01642 817333
AFR Teesside	01642 956704
Jomast	01642 674203
Kings Lettings	01642 654855
I am Lettings	01642 462153
Adore Properties	01642 205023
Connect Properties	01642 602001
Ingleby Homes	01642 671025
Merrifield Homes	01642 939109
Drummonds	01642 530919
Northgate Lettings	01642 813222
Boro Properties	01642 218000

Websites

www.rightmove.co.uk

www.gumtree.com

www.propertypigeon.co.uk

www.primelocation.com

www.zoopla.co.uk

www.gazettelive.co.uk/news/property/

Viewing and Signing up

You should go and view the accommodation and read any associated paperwork before you agree to move in or sign any agreements. Beware of internet scams – and do not give any money up front until you are certain that the letting is a genuine one. If the property is very cheap and appears too good to be true, it probably is.

Be sure to consider the following:

1. Can you afford the rent?
2. Doors and Windows can be securely locked?
3. Heating, lighting and plumbing are in good working order?
4. The landlord has a valid gas safety certificate for any gas appliances?
5. The cost of council tax, water rates and average gas/electric bills?
6. The location – i.e. will you be able to get home safely, especially at night?

Most private landlords will grant an Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST). Tenancies will normally be for six months or one year initially. This can usually be extended at the end of the term. You will have reduced rights if our landlord lives in the property with you.

The Timescales for finding a suitable property to rent in the private sector depends on your presenting personal circumstances and on how active you are with your search.

Help moving into private rented accommodation

If you are homeless, your only option may be to rent a suitable property in the private sector. You may also be able to claim housing benefit/Universal credit) to help with paying you rent. You can find out more about this at www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits

You can also work out the maximum amount of housing benefit you may be entitled to online at www.direct.gov.uk

In Stockton Borough you can claim housing benefit at one of our Customer Contact Centres based at Stockton, Billingham and Thornaby Libraries.

If you need assistance with finding a deposit, you may be able to apply for a loan from the credit union at www.creditunion.co.uk if you are working. If you are on benefits, you can look at budgeting loans on www.direct.gov.uk

Having trouble paying your rent?

If you're having trouble paying your rent, you can contact the following services

Thirteen Group/housing association tenants - contact your association's income officer in the first instance to discuss your financial situation and arrange either an acceptable repayment plan for rent arrears or to discuss the possibility of any discretionary housing payment (DHP). Anyone wishing to claim a DHP must have an active housing benefit claim.

Private tenants – Consider discussing issues with your landlord. For rent arrears attempt to establish a reasonable repayment plan to repay rent arrears. Struggling to meet rent payments? Approach the Stockton District advice and information service for advice and assistance - www.stockton-cab.co.uk/housing

You can also contact housing benefit for assistance with your rent. Housing benefits service phone number 01642 393829. You can also use the online Housing Benefit calculator to see if you can qualify for benefits, just go to www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators

Housing benefit is paid from the time you make your claim. If you need to have your housing benefit claim backdated you must request this, however the decision to backdate is not guaranteed, a decision will be given to you in writing.

LOOKING FOR SOCIAL RENTED ACCOMODATION?



Making an application to the Compass Scheme (CBL)

Choice based lettings (or CBL) is a way of letting social housing, and other housing options like private rented homes, mutual exchanges and low cost home ownership. Available homes are advertised on daily basis and people who have an active housing application can express their interest in these properties by bidding for them.

Applications are prioritised by being placed in a banding. The band you are in will depend on your level of housing need. Most people are placed in Band 4 when they first register. If you are working with Homelessness and Housing Solutions you may have your banding changed to reflect your circumstances, if you are not working with the team and you feel you have circumstances that need taking into consideration with regard to your housing you may wish to contact the Compass team to discuss your situation. **Telephone: 0300 1111 000** and ask to be transferred to the Compass team.

Registration.

To register, you need to apply online at: www.compasscbl.org.uk.

Once registered, you will need to provide the following information (depending on the makeup of your household not all will apply):-

Proof of Identity for the main (and joint) applicant	Proof of National Insurance Number for the main (and joint applicant)	Proof of address for everyone aged 16 and over who lives with you
If you have a child/children who will be moving with you, we will ask you for recent proof of Child Benefit dated within the last 6 months	If you have shared access to a child/children, we will ask you for details of the child's full time guardian so that we can confirm your access arrangements	If someone to move with your is pregnant, we will ask you to provide proof of pregnancy

Once all information is received, you will be given your login details informed what Band you are in. Available properties are advertised regularly in the 'bidding cycle'. Once your case is active you can log in via the website and bid on properties suitable to your households needs.

When you bid, your position on the list may change as other people make or withdraw their bids. Your final position for a property will be show in your My Bids section when the advert has closed. When the property has finished advertising, a shortlist is produced for each property. The landlord of the property will make any offers of property. A landlord may decide to overlook a person who is at the top of a list if they have a good reason to do so. If you are offered the property, you will be invited to view it before deciding if you want to take it. Some landlords may arrange viewings for more than one person. If you are in Band 1, 2 or 3, we may remove your priority if you refuse an offer of a property that would meet your needs.

LOOKING FOR SOCIAL RENTED ACCOMODATION?

CONTINUED...

The following Housing providers operate their own housing lists, you may wish to contact them to apply to be considered for properties with them.

Accent Group

Accommodation provider (Registered Social Landlord).

Address: 2nd Floor, 202 Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough, TS1 3QL

Email: customerservices@accentgroup.org

Telephone: 0345 678 0555

Facebook: facebook.com/accentmb

Twitter: twitter.com/AccentHousing

Opening Times:

Mon, Tues & Thurs, Fri: 9am to 1pm	Wednesday: 10am to 1pm
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Anchor Trust

Accommodation provider (Registered Social Landlord). Independent living for older people. Self-referrals can be made. Application forms can be requested by telephone or via email on the website.

Address: Shared Services Centre, Burnbank House, Balliol Business Park, Benton Lane, Longbenton, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE12 8EW.

Website: www.anchor.org.uk

Telephone: 0808 102 4074

Opening Times:

Monday to Friday: 8am to 6pm,	Saturday: 10am to 4pm
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Habinteg Housing Association

Accommodation provider (Registered Social Landlord). Self-referrals can be made.

Address: Chapman House, Unit 1, Adwalton Business Park, 132 Wakefield Road, Bradford, BD11 1DR

Website: www.habinteg.org.uk

Email: Direct@Habinteg.org.uk

Telephone: 0300 365 3100

Twitter: twitter.com/Habinteg

Opening Times:

Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm

Hanover Housing

Accommodation provider (Registered Social Landlord). Supported independent living for older people. Self-referrals. Applications can be made online.

Address: North Regional Office, Dove Court, Bolton Street, Bradford, BD3 0BJ

Website: www.hanover.org.uk

Email: general.enquiries@hanover.org.uk

Telephone: 01480 475 069

Twitter: [twitter.com/@Hanover Housing](https://twitter.com/@Hanover_Housing)

Opening Times

Monday to Friday: Telephone between 9am and 5pm

Home Group

Accommodation provider (Registered Social Landlord). Enquires can be made by telephone or via the online enquiry form.

Contact details:

Website: www.homegroup.org.uk

Telephone: 0345 141 4663

Facebook: facebook.com/HomeGrouphousing

Twitter: twitter.com/homegroup

Opening times:

Monday to Friday: 7am to 8pm

Saturday: 8am to 12pm

Housing and Care 21

Accommodation provider (Registered Social Landlords). Provides sheltered housing for older people. Applicants need to be aged over 55 years. The applicant can contact the housing provider directly (via online application form) or a referral can be made by an agency on behalf of the applicant.

Address: Housing & Care 21, Tricorn House, 51–53 Hagley Road, Birmingham, B16 8TP

Website: www.housingandcare21.co.uk

Telephone: 0370 192 4000

Facebook: facebook.com/housingcare21

Twitter: twitter.com/HousingCare21

Opening Times:

Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm

Places For People

Accommodation provider (Registered Social Landlord). Self-referral by online application form.

Contact details:

Website: www.placesforpeople.co.uk

Telephone: 0845 850 9571

Opening Times

Monday to Friday: 8am to 8pm

Railway Housing Association

Accommodation provider (Registered Social Landlord). Self-referral Application forms and information packs can be requested by phone or by calling into the office.

Address: Bank Top Square, Neasham Road, Darlington, DL1 4DR

Website: www.railwayha.co.uk

Email: info@railwayha.co.uk

Telephone: 0800 0287428

Twitter: twitter.com/railwayhousing

Opening Times

Monday to Friday: 8.30am to 4.30pm

Riverside (English Churches Housing Group)

Homeless Scheme, short term basis (up to 18 months), run by ECHG Middlesbrough, for ex-service personnel of any age. The scheme does not discriminate on the amount of time spent in the services. Staff will work at finding permanent accommodation anywhere in the UK. Referrals can be made through local Councils and other agencies.

Address: Customer Service Centre, Riverside, 2 Estuary Boulevard, Liverpool, L24 8R

Website: www.riverside.org.uk

Email: spaces@riverside.org.uk

Telephone: 0345 111 0000 (24 Hour Service)

Facebook: facebook.com/RiversideHousing

Twitter: twitter.com/RiversideUK

Opening Times:

Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm.

North Star Housing Group Ltd

Accommodation provider (Registered Social Landlord). Advertising via the compass scheme and advertises independently directly on their own website.

Address: Endeavour House, St Marks Court, Thornaby, TS17 6QN

Website: <http://www.northstarhg.co.uk>

Email: customer.services@northstarhg.co.uk

Telephone: 03000 11 00 11

Facebook: facebook.com/northstarhg

Twitter: twitter.com/NorthStarHG

Opening Times:

Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm

Bond Guarantee Scheme

What is the Bond Guarantee Scheme?

- ❖ The aim of the scheme is to help those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness to access privately rented accommodation.
- ❖ The decision to be accepted into the scheme can only be made by the Homelessness and Housing Solutions team following an assessment of your circumstances.
- ❖ Homelessness and Housing Solutions will provide the landlord with a guarantee in the form of a written agreement instead of a cash bond.
- ❖ The guarantee will last for a minimum of six months and a maximum of two years from the start of the tenancy.

Am I eligible for the Bond Guarantee scheme?

You may be eligible for the scheme if you can answer **yes** to all of the following questions:

- Are you homeless or at risk of homelessness?
- Do you have a local connection to the borough of Stockton-on-Tees?
- Do you have insufficient funds available to you to secure accommodation yourself?

How do I apply for the scheme?

If you would like to apply, initially you need to contact the Homelessness and Housing Solutions team. Following your contact, an interview will be arranged. You will be invited to discuss your current housing situation and the different ways in which it could be resolved. After this discussion, if the Homelessness & Housing Solutions Officer supports your application to the Scheme, you will be considered for acceptance.

An assessment of your application will be conducted to decide if you are eligible - this will include making enquiries into your housing history, obtaining references regarding the applicants. Once the assessment is complete, we will advise you of the outcome.

If you qualify for the scheme, you will need to find an affordable, suitable property with a landlord who is willing to accept a guarantee in place of a cash bond. The landlord must be a member of the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council's landlord Accreditation Scheme, or have made an application to join the scheme. Information about the scheme and a downloadable application form is available at: www.stockton.gov.uk/landlord-accreditation-scheme.

Homelessness and Housing Solutions reserves the right to refuse to provide or withdraw a guarantee for an applicant or landlord who is not considered suitable or who has provided false information in association with the application. Any property not deemed suitable for you/your household following assessment by the Homeless and Housing Solutions officer will not be offered a guarantee. All applicants are asked not to commit to a property, i.e. to put down own monies to secure or to sign any tenancy agreements etc. without prior confirmation from Homelessness and Housing Solutions that the guarantee is to go ahead. Any financial liability incurred as a result of such an action will be yours to meet.

STOCKTON WELFARE RIGHTS UNIT

How can our service help you?

The Stockton Welfare Rights Unit is here to help. We offer free, confidential advice and information. We are committed to ensure that all of the residents of the Borough have equal access to the benefits system in order that they may receive those benefits to which they are entitled by law'. This commitment serves not only to maximise income to the individual but also brings economic benefits to Stockton.

Telephone advice line – 01642 526141

Please call Stockton Welfare Rights Unit, during normal office hours. Brief details of names, address and query will be taken. You will be given a contact time which is convenient for you when an Officer will ring you back. Alternatively e-mail us at welfare.rightsreferrals@stockton.gov.uk . We will advise you over the phone or will take referral from you if the problem requires further work.

Please note that the Welfare Rights Unit does not have the power to pay money to claimants.

Policy

In the course of our work we find out a lot of information about how difficult it is for people to manage on low incomes and how changes in benefit rules affect claimants in Stockton.

We think it is important to represent the views of disadvantaged groups in our communities and to feed information to local & national government bodies to enable them to make more informed decision about Social Security issues.

Tribunal Representation

This means that if you have an appeal to the Social Security Appeal Tribunal, a Housing Benefit Appeal Tribunal or an appeal to the Upper Tribunal contact us on 01642 526141. If for any reason we cannot represent you we will try and refer you to an appropriate agency.

Campaign work

Change to and interpretation of Social Security Law can often open up the possibility of extra benefit for whole groups of claimants who are unaware of their entitlement. Whenever we aim to promote extra benefit claims and help those people increase their take-up of benefits.

Outreach

We have officers in Stockton Library Monday mornings except the first Monday of the month and Thornaby Library every Monday afternoon. We are in Billingham Library every Friday morning.

Information

We have an extensive information service providing a variety of resources from statutory instruments to handbooks. We aim to produce bulletins at regular intervals intended to keep people up-to-date with benefit issues. We produce briefing papers and information leaflets. Please telephone us to make enquiries or to add your details to our mailing lists.

If you wish to find out more about our service please contact

Telephone: 01642 526141

Email: welfare.rightsreferrals@stockton.gov.uk

Local Housing Allowance Rates

April 2019 to March 2020

The rates below tell you the maximum amount of the Local Housing benefit allowance that you can receive. Your actual benefit may be less depending on the amount of money you have coming in, your capital and any if any other adults (not your partner) are living with you.

Most single people aged **under 35** only qualify for the **shared accommodation rate** regardless of the type of accommodation they live in.

If you (and your partner) share parts of your homes with other tenant (for example a bathroom or living room), you will receive the **shared accommodation rate**.

Number of Bedrooms (The maximum LHA rate is the 4 bedroom rate)	April 2019 – March 2020	
	Weekly Rate (£)	Monthly Rate (£)
Shared Accommodation Rate	57.34	249.16
One Bedroom	83.78	364.04
Two Bedroom	97.81	425.01
Three Bedroom	114.00	495.36
Four Bedroom	149.59	650.00

The above rates will apply until they are reviewed in April 2020

What is my Local Housing Allowance Rate?

Your Local Allowance rate depends on how many people live in your household.

You are allowed one bedroom each for:	Any two children of the same sex under the age of 16	Any other aged 16 or over
Every adult couple	Any other child (under 16)	Any two children under 10yrs

A bedroom may also be allowed for:

A non-resident carer who stays overnight to provide care, where an extra bedroom is available for the purposes
A registered foster carer (with a child placed with them or placed within the last 52 weeks, or if newly approved) -only one bedroom is allowed regardless of the number of children
Children who are unable to share because of severe disabilities

Example House households

Household Examples	Bedrooms (LHA Rate)
Single Person, under 35	Shared Bedroom Rate
Single Person, aged 35 and over (living in a self-contained property)	One bedroom Rate
Single person aged 35 and over (living in shared accommodation)	Shared accommodation Rate
A couple living in a self-contained property	One bedroom Rate
A couple living in a shared accommodation	Shared accommodation Rate
Single person with two girls aged 8 and 14	Two Bedroom Rate
A couple with one girl aged 6 and one boy aged 12	Three Bedroom Rate

If you need housing advice or are homeless: Help for victims of Domestic Abuse

What is Domestic Abuse?

Domestic Abuse can refer to a range of behaviours such as (but not limited to):

- **Domestic violence** - a pattern of controlling and aggressive behaviours from one adult towards another, within an intimate or family-type relationship. It can take the form of physical, sexual, psychological, financial or emotional abuse. The violence and abuse can be actual or threatened and can happen once or on a regular basis.
- **Honour based violence (HBV)** - can be described as a collection of practices, which are used to control behavior within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Such violence can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code. It is a violation of human rights and may be accept as a form of domestic and/or sexual violence.
- **Forced Marriage (FM)**. FM is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor.
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**. FGM is a grave violation of the rights of females.

If you are experiencing Domestic Violence, Honour Based Violence, Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation or any behaviour from a partner, family member or person whom you live with which is concerning to you and you want help please arrange to speak to an officer from the Homelessness and Housing Solutions team. Depending on your situation we will tailor our response to you and work with you to form a plan to address your safety, support needs and any accommodation issues that need resolving.

Who can the Homelessness and Housing Solutions Service help?

We can provide advice to **anybody** who approaches the service. In some cases, we will refer you to specialist agencies that may be better able to help in your circumstances.

What we will do when you contact us?

Our main aim is to help you to stay in your current accommodation, but if this is not possible because of the domestic violence you are experiencing we will give you appropriate advice and help to find you somewhere else to live. We will ask you questions about your situation and will consider your safety and needs at all times.

What will the Homelessness and Housing Solutions Service do?

Refer you to specialist support from agencies best suited to help you.	Try to assist you to keep your existing accommodation
Help you explore your housing options	Give advice on the council's statutory duties
Provide temporary/emergency accommodation	

What if I am in danger tonight and need somewhere safe to stay?

Some customers will qualify for emergency accommodation. It may be possible to arrange either emergency hostel/refuge accommodation or alternative temporary accommodation for you and your family to keep you safe.

If you are worried about becoming homeless you should contact us as soon as possible.

You can visit us at: Stockton Central Library & Customer Service Centre
Church Road, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1TX

Email us: Housing.options@stockton.gov.uk

Telephone: 01642 528389

Or write to us: Homelessness and Housing Solutions, 16 Church Road,
Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1TX

Service opening times:

Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday: 9am to 4pm

Wednesday: 12.30pm to 4pm

Friday: 9am to 3.30pm

If you are homeless in an emergency outside these times you can telephone the **Emergency Duty Team**: 01642 524552, 5pm - 8.30am weekdays and all-day weekends (including bank holidays).

WHO ARE THE LOCAL SUPPORT AGENCIES?

You may, of course, wish to contact the local support agencies yourself, here you will find their contact details.

Accommodation

Locally there is refuge provision for customers experiencing domestic abuse.

If you need a refuge tonight and would prefer to approach the agencies yourself, their contact details are as follows:

Harbour Support services Phone: 01642 553323 (Stockton office) Telephone: 03000 202525 (24 hours) Email: info@myharbour.org.uk	EVA Women's Aid Redcar: Phone: 01642 490677 Fax: 01642507099 Email: info@eva.org.uk
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<p>FOUNDATION Redcar Phone: 0113 3030150 Fax: 0113 3030151 Email: Redcar@foundationuk.org</p>	<p>HALO project Phone: 01642 683 045 Emergency: 08081 788 424 (24 hr./free) Email: info@haloproject.org.uk</p>
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The above information is to assist you with contacting local support agencies with the intention of making enquiries regarding emergency refuge availability. Please note ideally, we would recommend that you consider approaching the Homelessness and Housing Solutions service and working with us to address your situation and to assist you with this process.

The decision to accept your referral for placement is down to the individual provider, each provider will have qualifying criteria and will most likely need to make enquiries regarding your circumstances.

SUPPORT AVAILABLE

In the service contact details above for EVA Women's Aid, Harbour Support Service, HALO project and FOUNDATION Redcar please refer to each individual services website for the most up to date service information available.

My Sisters Place

My Sister's Place (MSP) is an independent 'one stop shop' for women who are, or who have suffered from domestic violence. The service is based in central Middlesbrough and provides services to women aged 16 years and over.

As a one stop shop the service aims to meet the varied needs of women suffering domestic violence and works in partnership to ensure access to the relevant support and protection for women.

Telephone : 01642 **241864 01642 224812**

E-mail: reception@mysistersplace.co.uk

Website: [My Sister's Place website](#)

Each support provider offers an advice and outreach services for victims of Domestic Abuse. For victims of Forced Marriage (FM). **Female Genital** Mutilation (FGM) Honour based violence (HBV) who wish to contact a service provider direct please direct your contact to the HALO project for specialist support.

Outreach support can be in the form of 1 to 1 sessions with a member of the team, in a group with other people or a combination of both.

Services can possibly offer:

- Safety planning, to enable you to reduce the risks of harm to you and your children
- Advice about housing, including the security of your home
- Access to advice about your civil and criminal legal options
- Support with attending court
- Access to financial/budgeting advice

- Programmes to enable you to rebuild your confidence
- Help to rebuild your involvement in the community
- Access to support for your children
- Support to rebuild your relationship with your children
- Signposting to other specialist services which may benefit you

National information and support

National Centre for Domestic Violence

Telephone 0844 8044 999 or visit www.ncdv.org.uk.

Women's Aid

Telephone 0808 2000 247 (free phone 24-hour helpline) or visit www.womensaid.org.uk.

The Men's Advice Line

Telephone 0808 801 0327 or visit www.mensadviceline.org.uk.

Respect

Information and advice for people who are abusive towards their partners. Telephone 0808 802 4040 or visit www.respectphoneline.org.uk.

Broken Rainbow Helpline

Information and signposting to services for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people experiencing domestic violence. Telephone 0800 999 5428.

Forced Marriage Unit

Telephone 0207 008 0151 (Mon to Fri, 9am to 5pm) or 020 7008 1500 (Out of hours, ask for the Global Response Centre).

The Hideout

The charity Women's Aid created www.thehideout.org.uk because children and young people said they wanted more information about domestic violence that's easy to read and understand.

TEMPORARY ACCOMODATION

ARE YOU HOMELESS TONIGHT?

Not everyone will qualify for emergency accommodation, but if we can help we will.

We can only arrange emergency accommodation if we have reason to believe that you are homeless and are eligible for assistance. If you are worried about becoming homeless you must contact us as soon as possible (information about our accommodation drop in/advice service details are below)

HOMELESS TONIGHT, DROP IN SERVICE:

Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday: 9am till 4pm

Wednesday: 12.30pm till 4pm

Friday: 9am till 3.30pm

You can visit us at:

Stockton Central Library and Customer Service Centre
Church Road, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1TX

OUT OF HOURS EMERGENCY ACCOMODATION

The Emergency Duty Team on: **01642 524552**

5pm – 8.30am Monday to Friday,

ALL DAY Saturday & Sunday (and bank holidays)

If you are homeless and have nowhere to stay tonight: Losing your accommodation can be a difficult time but most people do find somewhere else to live. The longer you leave it, the harder it will be to find somewhere to stay. We will ask you questions about your present situation, if we think there is a real risk of you losing your accommodation or you are presenting as homeless an officer will find out more about your circumstances. Our main aim is to help you to stay in your current accommodation, but if this is not possible (for example if you are at risk from domestic violence) we will give you advice to find you somewhere else to live. We may put you in touch with other agencies for them to help you.

What if I'm not homeless tonight?

The Homelessness and Housing Solutions Service offer a wide range of services to help people who are homeless or likely to become homeless. Where possible, we aim to prevent homeless. We do this by providing advice at an early stage about what legal rights you may have to property, solutions to resolve a threat of homelessness and any housing options available to you. **Initially contact is made with our team either via walk in approach, telephone or email, your details will be taken and dependent on your circumstances you will either been seen as an emergency case that day or arranged to be contacted within a reasonable response time.**

The Homelessness and Housing Solutions service is open between; **9am - 4pm Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, 12.30am – 4pm Wednesday, & 9am to 3.30pm Friday.**

You can visit us at: Stockton Central Library and Customer Service Centre
Church Road, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1TX

Email us: Housing.options@stockton.gov.uk **Telephone:** 01642 528389 **Write to us at:**

Homelessness and Housing Solutions, 16 Church Road, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1TX.

LOOKING TO FIND TEMPORARY ACCOMODATION YOURSELF?

Disclaimer: The following information is to assist you with making contact with local providers, please note that this is not a recommendation or instruction to use one of the following. There will be other accommodation providers and companies to contact within our locale.

There are many bed and breakfasts, guesthouse, hotels etc. covering the Stockton Borough who may be able to help you with finding accommodation in which to stay on a temporary basis.

The following may be able to help you; you should make your own independent enquiries to secure this accommodation, any arrangement made is a private arrangement between you and the providers. Please bear in mind the decision to accept Local Housing Allowance (housing benefit) claimants is an individual decision made by the company/respective provider. If you will be dependent on being able to claim housing benefit to meet any fees for accommodation you must ensure that you are eligible to receive it, that the property you are enquiring about is eligible to be granted a payment for it (information for both obtained via the housing benefit team) and that the provider will be accepting of this arrangement.

Local B&B's, Guest House's, Hotels	Address	Telephone number
Prefer homes	13-15 Portrack Lane, Stockton, TS18 2HP	01642 672849
Newtown guest house	68 Londonderry Rd, Stockton <u>TS19 0ES</u>	07775711065
2020 homes	Various addresses	01642 924954
Metro inns	Teesway, North Tees Industrial Estate, Stockton, TS18 2RT	01642 606 560
The Garrick Hotel	Yarm Lane, Stockton, TS18 1ES	01642 350 360
Kingswood hotel	379 Norton Rd, Stockton, TS20 2PJ	07917 755764
Four Seasons Guest House	314 Norton Rd, Norton, Stockton, TS20 2PU	01642 554826
Bed & Breakfast 615	615 Yarm Rd, Eaglescliffe, Stockton, TS16 9BS	01642 649282
Rosedene House Farmhouse B&B	Viewley Hill Farm, Norton, Stockton, TS20 1PQ	01642 550476
Parkmore Hotel Best Western	636 Yarm Road, Stockton, <u>TS16 0DH</u>	01642 786815
Premier Inn Hotel Stockton-On-Tees West	Yarm Road Cleveland, Stockton, TS18 3RT	0871 527 9046
Premier Inn Hotel Stockton/Middlesbrough	Whitewater Way, Thornaby, Stockton, TS17 6QB	08715279048
Thorpe Thewles Lodge	Off Durham Road, Stockton, TS21 3JB	07590 687 190
The Parkwood Inn	64-66 Darlington Rd, Stockton, TS18 5ER	01642 587933
The Stockton Arms Hotel	24 Darlington Rd, Stockton, TS18 5BH	01642 571900
The Claireville Hotel	519 Yarm Rd Eaglescliffe, Stockton, TS16 9BG	01642 780378

Agency Support

Stockton Citizens Advice Bureau

Stockton and District Advice and Information Service (SDAIS)

Address: Stockton & District Advice & Information Service, Bath Lane, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 2DS

Telephone: 01642 633877

Send us an email at: support@stockton-cab.co.uk

In Stockton Town Centre, just off the High Street just opposite Splash's car park. Offering advice on Welfare Benefits, Debt, Housing, Advocacy, Employment, Immigration, Tax and other areas.

Enquiry Services: - Stockton & District Advice & Information Service (SDAIS) can offer advice and assistance with many problems. Our general and specialist advisers receive ongoing training to keep up to date with the latest government changes which impact upon our lives. We provide services in a wide range of areas which you can look at on the sidebar.

Our Face to Face Service: - We offer both Appointments and a Drop-in Session as part of our core service. Our Drop-in Session runs every weekday from 9:00am until 12:30pm. We also offer Specialist Appointments every weekday from 8:30am until 5:00pm. We also have Saturday Appointments that are available on request. Telephone 01642 633877 to book in advance.

Our Youth Service: -The Cabin is our youth project to provide young people with the opportunity to develop skills and confidence to engage and become actively involved in their local community and obtain high quality advice. The Drop-in Session runs every Weekday 9:00am to 12:30pm. Telephone 01642 615834 or visit <http://stockton-yas.co.uk>.

Advice line Service: -Advice line is a telephone information service that the Citizens Advice Bureau runs nationally. To contact the service call 03442 451 295. The service is open from 9:30am to 3:30pm, Monday to Friday (charges may apply see your provider for details).

CGL

Stockton Recovery Service

Address: 32-34 Williams Street, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1DN

Telephone: [01642 673888](tel:01642673888) **24hr helpline:** 0800 0522050

Opening hours: Mon & Weds -9.00am-7.30pm Tues, Thurs & Fri-9.00am-5.00pm
Saturday-9.30am-1.00pm (Needle exchange only)

Stockton Recovery Service is an integrated drug recovery service. As a service, they offer a wide range of interventions from prescribing services through to needle exchange facilities and harm minimisation advice. Stockton Recovery Service is for anyone aged 18 years and over who may need support around addiction. As a service we offer a tailor made package of support to all service users to support them in making positive sustained changes in their lives. You can self-refer into the service for support. We have a dedicated engagement team who carry out assessments and support engagement in order to identify personalised recovery goals. As a recovery service our aim is to support positive change and to help better the lives of individuals and the wider community. The range of services we offer to support us in achieving this are:

Housing support	Complementary therapies	Harm Minimisation advise
Drugs and/or alcohol detox	Psychosocial intervention	Links to Stockton Family Service
Prescribing services	BBV intervention	Recovery support and Aftercare
Criminal justice services	Needle exchange facilities	BRIC initiatives
ETE Support	Benefit support	Foundation of Recovery programme



FOODBANK INFORMATION



There are several organisations locally operating food banks and/or hot meals - offering a lifeline to those in need. An example of some of these excellent agencies are:

The Salvation Army
Billingham Foodbank
Labyrinth Holistic Café
AWAY OUT
The Moses Project

All agencies know that anyone can find themselves at crisis point for a number of different reasons.

Most agencies will ask for a food voucher or letter from a referring agency, the reason for this is to ensure that people are seeking help and not just responding to a crisis. This is also to stop the abuse of the foodbanks and ensure that the use is by those only in genuine need.

If you feel you are struggling to put food on the table please ask to speak to an officer regarding getting assistance. An officer will chat to you about your circumstances. The officer can provide you with advice and assistance regarding your circumstances, offer you support if needed to help address some of the issues behind the reasons for your crisis. Information regarding food assistance points can be obtained from a homelessness and housing solutions team officer. Vouchers/letters will be issued to those in need.

Environmental Health Team

Pest Control Issues

Advice for tenants

If you live in private rented accommodation your landlord may be responsible for pest control. If your landlord does not respond to requests to deal with the problem, Stockton Councils environmental health departments may help you with infestations

If you are a current Tristar tenant please report any pest issue direct to the Thirteen Customer Service Contact Centre on 0300 111 1000 (Option 3 for Tristar Customers) They will arrange for a third party to address your issue, Stockton on Tees Borough Council Pest Control is no longer providing this service to Tristar tenants.

Advice for all

It can be worrying when you spot a pest in your home or garden. Our specialist team of pest control officers are able to answer any queries that you may have about pests in a domestic or commercial property.

Free pest control treatment services for domestic properties

Stockton Borough Councils Environmental Health Pest Control team provide the following free pest control services to all domestic properties:

rats	mice (indoors only)	cockroaches	bed bugs
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Chargeable pest control treatment services for domestic properties

We provide the following pest control services to all domestic properties at charge:

ants and flies	bees and wasps	biscuit beetles	carpet beetles	fleas and mites
moles and squirrels	pigeons	Silverfish	spider beetles	woodlice

To treat these pests within domestic properties there is a charge commencing subject to required treatment **from £35 + VAT**.

The Pest Control team are able to answer any queries that you may have about pests in a domestic property. Contact the Environmental Health Team for advice about pest control.

Environmental Health Team

P.O. Box 232
16 Church Road
Stockton on Tees
TS18 1XD

Telephone 01642 526575

Email: environmental.health@stockton.gov.uk

Webpage: www.stockton.gov.uk/environment-and-housing/environmental-health/pest-control

Private Sector Housing Team

Disrepair/Housing Conditions

Emergency Numbers:

Gas Leaks: 0800111999 • Electricity: 0845 234 0040 • Water: 0800714 614

If you do not know the contact details for your landlord/ housing association look at your tenancy agreement or rent book, the information should be contained in these documents.

If your landlord is a housing association.

In the first instance you should always contact your housing association or housing management officer and they should have their own staff or contractors who should carry out repairs

If your landlord is Thirteen Group.

As a Thirteen Group tenant the Thirteen Group have a duty to carry out repairs to your property. You can report a repair by:

- contacting Thirteen Groups Customer Service Centre on tel: 0300 111 1000
- emailing Thirteen Group at: www.customerservices@thirteengroup.co.uk
- reporting via the web page www.thirteengroup.co.uk.

If your property is privately rented in Stockton Borough

Your landlord has a duty to ensure that the structure of your property and the provision for the gas, electricity and water are maintained and are safe.

If you are suffering disrepair, firstly approach your landlord or letting agent in the first instance.

If they do not remedy the situation you can report the issue to the councils Private sector housing departments Housing Conditions team during normal office hours, via the:

Stockton Central Library and Customer Service Centre, Church Road, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1TX
Tel: 01642 527797

How can the Private Sector Housing Team help you?

Following your initial report to the team about your issues, depending on the severity of the repairs our response will be either:

- Response within 24hours - identifiable potential immediate risk of danger repairs.
- Response within 5 working days - on a triage basis for none urgent household repair issues

If we find your complaint is something we are able to help with, we will usually serve a notice on the owner of the property. This is a legal document listing the work that they must do to solve the problem. If the landlord does not meet the conditions of the notice, we can take formal action against them. The service will keep you fully informed at all stages and send you copies of any notices served on your landlord. Notices usually give your landlord 28 days in which to deal in which to deal with the problem. It may take longer than this for the work to be completed and the problem to be resolved. If a notice is served on your landlord asking them to carry out work in your home your landlord should give you enough notice and you should agree the date with the landlord for the works to be carried out.

