



# Housing Support Guide

Family Action Early Help Birmingham



# Welcome

**About us:** Early Help Programme delivered by Family Action

The Early Help Programme supports families across West Birmingham to improve resilience and outcomes or reduce the likelihood of a problem getting worse.

## Areas we cover

West Birmingham – Perry Barr and Ladywood.

## Who can access this service

All families 0-19 living across West Birmingham & 0 –25 with additional needs. Self-referral & Professional referrals are welcome.

Early Help is not a service, but the way professionals, communities and families work together across Birmingham.

## FamilyLine

Family Action also have **FamilyLine** a free service available to support parents and carers manage the challenges of parenthood via telephone, text message and email.

Whether emotional support or practical advice on any aspect of parenting or broader family life, our free helpline offers a listening ear, support, guidance & information to parents/ carers on a range of topics based around being a parent.

The helpline is available for parents & carers across England & is open weekdays 6pm to 10pm, weekends 10am to 1pm.



Mon–Fri, 9am to 7pm



Text: 07537 404 282



[familyline@family-action.org.uk](mailto:familyline@family-action.org.uk)



Online chat

Call us or scan the QR code to find out more:



# Introduction



This document has been produced in response to the increasing number of families presenting with housing issues on Family Connect Forms, contacting our duty line and professionals contacting us for support for families they are working with. Unfortunately, we are not able to change families living situations but can offer advice on how families can access support.

There is an ACUTE shortage of Social Housing; to put this into context Birmingham City Council (BCC) receive over 500 housing applications per week. There are already over 24,500 people on the housing register in Birmingham with nearly 7,000 families seeking a 2 bed, 6,500 families in need of a 3 bed and 3,000 families required a 4 bed.

The demand for Birmingham City Council to supply Emergency Accommodation (EA) for our homeless families has grown significantly over recent years, there currently are over 5,000 families living in Temporary Accommodation (TA).

It is important to remember, families who are homeless do not automatically qualify for Social Housing. They need to qualify under the Birmingham City Council Allocations Scheme.

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**We are here to help**

# Birmingham City Council: Social housing application

There is currently a significant backlog for applications to be reviewed and approved/rejected, due to the volume of applications being made. We do not have a timeframe for application review, approval and rejections. The reality is the demand for social housing far exceeds stock available.

Unfortunately, whilst waiting for a Housing Application to be approved, families are unable to bid for properties.

When completing applications families need to ensure the form is being completed correctly. All relevant documentation/evidence must be attached/included for example eviction notices and medical reports. Failure to do so could result in an application being rejected and result in applicants needing to start the process again.

Families will receive confirmation of their housing application being approved via email or in writing with a bidding number so they can start to bid for properties.

To increase chances of finding a property Birmingham City Council advise families to expand their search areas. It is important that families bid regularly and only on properties they are prepared to accept. Refusal of a property could incur an allocation of a lower banding in some cases, they will be removed from the housing register. Families will not be allocated housing on a first come first served basis, however it is important to bid regularly as this can positively impact on your position.

## Guide to register for housing

To start the application for the housing process you must first complete an online application form. This will involve registering on the Birmingham Choice website.

Once registered, you will log into your account for any actions required on your housing application.

# Advice Aid

Provides 24 hours interactive guidance based on your circumstances. There is no need to provide personal details, just answer questions about your situation. You can be given advice around the following:

- Homelessness Legislation
- Tenants' Rights
- Benefits
- Section 21 Notices
- Rent Arrears
- Mortgages Arrears
- Domestic Abuse
- Rights of Occupation
- Illegal Eviction
- Welfare Reform
- Housing Disrepair
- Pest Control

## Eligibility for Mobility Assessment

The Housing Options Team will identify eligibility for a mobility assessment, to identify whether adapted facilities are required in future property (for example, the need for a wheelchair adapted property etc) to support your independence and wellbeing.

## Emergency accommodation

**Aged 25 or over or aged 18–25 and have dependent children**, phone:

0121 303 7410 (Option 3)

Phone Lines are open Monday to Friday 9:00am – 5:00pm.

**If you are aged 25 years and under and have no children**, you need to attend St Basils Youth Hub or call on: 0300 303 0099



# Out of hours support

If you are **aged 18 years and over** and need support to find accommodation outside of hours or at the weekend, call the Out of Hours Duty Team on:  
0121 303 2296

If you are **under the age of 18** years call the Emergency Duty Team on:  
0121 675 4806.

## Useful advice

To speed up the request for emergency accommodation the following documents will be needed where possible:

- A copy of a passport or proof of identification for each person in your household.
- Full birth certificates of all children.
- Proof of any state benefits you receive, such as job seekers allowance, universal credit and child benefit.
- Proof of any income or earnings your household may have, details of your spending. This is to assess the cost of any housing offered.
- Bank statements for all accounts covering the last 3 months.
- Copies of any court documents such as possession order and bailiff's warrant.
- Copies of eviction notices, Section 21 and a letter asking you to leave etc
- A copy of your tenancy agreement.
- Proof you have been living at the address you claim to be homeless from.

Advice

Support

# Domestic Abuse Homelessness Hub (Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation)

If you're experiencing domestic abuse or feel scared of, or controlled by, a partner, ex-partner, or family member, please remember – it's not your fault, and support is available.

If you or someone else is in immediate danger, or if it's an emergency, **call 999 straight away.**

- The National Domestic Abuse Helpline offers free and confidential support **24 hours** a day on **0808 2000 247.**
- BSWAID provides a wide range of services for women and children affected by abuse. You can reach their advice line **seven days a week from 9:15am to 5:15pm** on **0808 800 0028.**
- Male victims can contact Cranstoun on 0121 633 1750 or Trident Reach on **0800 111 4223** for specialist help. Both lines are open **Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm.**
- For LGBT+ individuals needing support, Birmingham LGBT can be contacted on **0121 643 0821 – Monday to Friday: 10am – 9pm – Saturday: 11:30am – 7pm**
- For any concerns about children, contact Birmingham Children's Trust on **0121 303 1888, Monday to Thursday: 8:45am – 5:15pm – Friday: 8:45am – 4:15pm.** For urgent help outside of these hours, call their emergency line on **0121 675 4806.**

The UK Government's website – [www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help) – provides advice and information for men, women, and perpetrators of abuse, with guidance available in multiple languages.

Birmingham City Council's Domestic Abuse Homelessness Hub is run in partnership with Cranstoun helping people escape domestic abuse and find a safe place to stay.

To access support call them on **0121 272 8905** or email **[BMHousingSolutions@cranstoun.org.uk](mailto:BMHousingSolutions@cranstoun.org.uk)**



# Newtown Housing Options Centre

Please note that there is limited capacity please ring to book appointment



Opening times are Monday to Friday - 9:00am - 4:00pm



New Aston House, Newtown, Birmingham B19 2SW



You can phone us on 0121 303 7410

## Temporary Accommodation Team

Families in temporary accommodation are regularly moved out of Birmingham.

Families will be allocated a Housing Officer if they are Homeless / in Temporary Accommodation and will receive confirmation of who this is in writing, when they receive approval of their Housing Application.

Families will need to contact their Housing Officers / Temporary Accommodation Team themselves.

Please remember that Birmingham City Council will not speak to a third party. The Temporary Accommodation Team have interpreters available to liaise with families, if required. It is important that families build relationships with their Housing Officer.

Temporary Accommodation enquiries can be emailed to **TAEnquiries@birmingham.gov.uk** or call **0121 303 7410 (Option 4)**.

Repairs for Temporary Accommodation can be made with the details above.

# Accommodation Finding Team



The **Accommodation Finding Team** provides a service for private landlords and letting agencies.

The team assist people in Birmingham who are homeless to find quality, private rented accommodation.

A focus of the Accommodation Finding Team is to ensure that placements are right for both the tenant and landlord.

The team can provide advice/information regarding Discretionary Housing payment (DHP) and Homeless Prevention Fund which may support with deposits or rent arrears.

For more information please contact the Team on:



Call: 0121 675 4885



Email: [AFT@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:AFT@birmingham.gov.uk)

## Repairs, mould and condensation

Families/tenants should contact Birmingham City Council themselves about Council or Private Landlords who are not maintaining/providing acceptable housing.

**Birmingham City Council Repairs need to be reported to 0121 216 330** or you can complete an online form. [Click here to book a repair.](#)

If it is a health and safety risk (i.e., front door lock is broken etc) then an urgent repair can be requested, and they will aim to have it done within 2 hours.

For **Private Landlords** not making an acceptable property standard, please call 0121 303 5070.

For **Environmental Health** issues, call 0121 303 6007.

# Housing Allocation Scheme and Housing Needs Assessment

## Did you know?

The Housing Allocation Scheme is the council's method for deciding who gets prioritised for social housing. Having this scheme in place ensures that the council gives social housing to the people who need it the most. There were changes to the Housing Allocation Scheme in January 2023. Band 1, now known as Band A, has the largest number applicants.

A Housing Needs Assessment is used to determine whether you are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days. During your housing needs assessment, BCC will look at what issues you may have with your housing and how we can help you.

## The council has a responsibility to support people who are:

- **Assessed as 'at risk' of becoming homeless**, under Prevention Duty: The prevention duty requires the council to help people who are eligible for housing assistance and have been assessed as at risk of becoming homeless in Birmingham.
  - If the prevention duty is awarded, the council must take reasonable steps to prevent you from becoming homeless.
  - The prevention duty normally lasts for 56 days (8 weeks), but it can continue for longer in some cases.
  - If you lose your home during the prevention stage, you may then be owed the relief duty.
- **Homeless**, under Relief Duty: The relief duty applies if a person is already homeless. The council must then help them secure accommodation for at least 6 months.
  - The council will offer temporary accommodation if the person is owed relief duty and has a priority need for housing.
  - You will be assigned a caseworker who will carry out a Housing Needs Assessment and create a Personalised Housing Plan.
  - The relief duty normally lasts for 56 days (8 weeks).

## Rehousing Duty (Main Duty)

The Rehousing Duty (also known as the Main Duty) means the council must make an offer of suitable long-term housing to the applicant.

- This could include an offer of private rented accommodation with a tenancy of 12 months or more.
- Until a suitable long-term offer is made, the council must provide temporary accommodation.
- Due to the acute shortage of housing in the city, families may experience a significant wait before receiving a permanent offer.
- An applicant, or a member of their household, must have a priority need as defined by Birmingham City Council's housing assessment criteria.

## Conditions for the main duty

The main rehousing duty is owed when the relief duty has ended and the council is satisfied that you meet the following criteria:

- **Eligible:** You meet the eligibility requirements for assistance.
- **Homeless:** You are currently homeless.
- **In priority need:** You have a priority need, such as having children, being pregnant, or having a disability, or you are homeless because of a disaster like a fire or flood.
- **Not intentionally homeless:** The homelessness was not your fault.
- **Local connection:** You have a local connection to Birmingham, for example, you have lived there for 6 of the last 12 months or have a permanent job.

## What to expect

- **Temporary accommodation:**
  - If you are owed the main duty, the council will provide temporary accommodation, but there is a significant housing shortage in Birmingham, so the wait for permanent housing can be very long.
- **Settled accommodation:**
  - Once you are in temporary accommodation, the council will aim to provide a long-term housing solution.
- **Private rented sector offer:**
  - This can be an offer of a 12-month fixed-term tenancy in the private rented sector arranged by the council. If you are made this offer, you are required to accept it to end the main duty.

# Housing Banding Information - (Bands A-D)

Birmingham uses a housing banding system (Band A to Band E) to prioritize social housing applicants based on their level of need.

- **Band A** has the highest priority for urgent cases like homelessness, critical medical needs, or severe overcrowding,
- **Band B** is for urgent needs such as harassment, medical conditions, or hardship,
- **Band C** is for those with moderate needs like one-bedroom overcrowding or non-urgent medical issues,
- **Band D** is for applicants with reduced priority due to issues like refusing offers, and
- **Band E** is for those with the lowest housing need.

**Band A:** People who have a reasonable preference and are granted additional preference (very urgent need to move):

- Homeless applicants
- Threats of abuse, violence or harassment
- Exceptional circumstances
- Severely overcrowding - lacking 3 or more bedrooms (assessed using bedroom standard)
- Move on from Care
- Underoccupancy 3+ bedrooms
- Releasing an adapted property
- Fostering, Adoption or Special Guardianship
- Child welfare
- Armed Forces

**Band B:** People who need to move and fall within one the reasonable preference categories:

- Homeless applicants
- Medical or disability
- Move on from supported accommodation
- Hardship
- Insanitary or unfit conditions
- Overcrowded 2 bedrooms (lacking 2 bedrooms)
- Underoccupancy 2 bedrooms
- Threats of abuse, violence or harassment
- Care and Support

**Band C:** People who need to move and have a low-level housing need:

- Homeless (owed a duty but non-priority homeless)
- Medical or disability
- Overcrowded (lacking 1 bedroom)
- Underoccupancy (1 bedroom)
- Armed Forces
- Sheltered or Extra Care 55+

**Band D:**

**Reasonable refusals** – exhausted (Applicants from bands A, B, and C who have exhausted their right to refuse an allocation of social rented housing (usually 2 offers) or have failed to bid on more than 3 occasions where a suitable property would be available. Applicants will remain in Band D for 12 months from date of refusal.

**Failure to bid** – Those who have failed to bid on more than 3 occasions where a suitable property was available.

- Bedroom standard
- Allows a separate bedroom each for:
  - A married or co-habiting couple
  - The applicant and/or adults aged 16 years or more
  - Pair of adolescents aged 10–20 years of the same gender
  - Pair of children aged under 10 years regardless of gender
  - An adolescent aged 10–20 years paired with a child aged under 10 years of the same gender
  - An unpaired adolescent aged 10–20 years

**Bedroom Room Standard:**

- An unpaired child aged under 10 years
- An adult or child who cannot share due to a disability of medical condition, or due to fostering arrangements being facilitated by the Local Authority
- An overnight carer for any usual household member, but only if the carer isn't a usual household member
- An adult or child where it would be detrimental to their mental health if they should share a room

# Useful/alternative links and providers



**Cranstoun Housing** – Support for rough sleeper, tenancy agreements, sustainable housing, avoiding homelessness and empowerment.



**Citizen Advice** – Housing, welfare, benefits advice, low level debt advice, energy advice, health and wellbeing activities, services for carers and more.



**Crisis Skylight Birmingham** – Support people experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness.



**SIFA Fireside** – Support clients in their experiencing or at risk of homelessness.



**BSWAID Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid (BSWAID)**  
Telephone: 0808 8000028



**Anawim** – Support women who are experiencing domestic abuse, including housing issues.



**Family Hubs** – bring together a range of organisations and professionals to offer early help services, advice, guidance, and support.



**Shelter** – Provides housing and homelessness services by defending the right to a safe home through advice, legal support, and helps people with housing problems, such as unlawful evictions, severe disrepair, or challenging unsuitable temporary accommodation.

# Links and providers continued...



**Narthex Sparkhill** – The money advice team can help with benefits, housing, debt and money advice.

disability  
resource  
centre



**Disability Resource Centre** – Housing, welfare benefits advice, low level debt advice, energy advice health and wellbeing activities, services for carers and much more.



**Refugee and Migrant Centre** – Assisting refugees and migrants through crisis and disadvantage, by removing barriers to their integration and empowering them to become equal citizens.



**Moseley for Ukraine**

**Moseley for Ukraine** – Integration support for Ukrainians, gather people and organisations who can provide service and help.



**Centrala** – Ukrainian Support Project. Provide activities and service as well as essential advice and support.

**DAAR UL JANNAH**  
SHELTER  
In Partnership with Shelter

**Do YOU need Support with Housing?**

**Know Your Rights Get Housing Help Book a 30-min Session**

**We can help you with:**

- ✓ Disrepair Resolutions
- ✓ Eviction Advice & Guidance
- ✓ Rent Arrears Support
- ✓ Securing Suitable Housing
- ✓ Addressing Homelessness
- ✓ Your Right as Tenants

**Open Mon-Sat 10.00 AM - 14.00 PM**

**Address**  
861 Stratford Road  
Birmingham B28 8BH

0121 792 5442  
www.daaruljannah.co.uk

07847661022  
info@daaruljannah.co.uk

**Crisis** We will end homelessness

**Housing advice drop in**

We provide practical advice and guidance regarding housing issues

**Date and Time:** Starting 9th Jan every Monday 12pm-3pm

- Advice and guidance for those who are homeless or risk of homelessness
- Support for families living in inappropriate temporary accommodation
- Advice and guidance regarding housing issues such as repairs
- Support for families issued with section 21 eviction notices.

# Housing Associations in Birmingham

The following Housing Associations operate across Birmingham, offering affordable housing options and support services for residents.

## **Accord Housing Association**

Telephone: 0300 111 7000

## **Adullam Homes Housing Association**

Telephone: 0121 551 5030

## **Advance Housing and Support**

Telephone: 08000 33636

## **Anchor Trust**

Telephone: 0845 140 2020

## **Alpha Housing Co-Operative**

Telephone: 0121 764 380

## **Birmingham Civic Housing Association**

Telephone: 0121 382 5105

## **Birmingham Jewish Housing Association Limited**

Telephone: 0121 459 3819

## **Black Country Housing Group**

Telephone: 0121 561 1969

## **Bordesley Green Housing Co-operative Limited**

Telephone: 0121 764 3808

## **Bournville Village Trust**

Telephone: 0300 333 6540

## **Elim & Lime Properties**

Telephone: 01454 411172

## **Glover's Trust (Charity)**

Telephone: 0121 373 1506

## **Habinteg Housing Association**

Telephone: 0207 822 8700

## **Haig Homes**

Telephone: 020 8685 5777

## **Harbourne Parish Lands Charity**

Telephone: 0121 426 1600

## **Holmwood Tenants Co-operative Limited**

Telephone: 0121 773 6488

## **Housing and Care 21**

Telephone: 0370 1924000

## **Lench's Almshouse Charity**

Telephone: 0121 426 0455

## **Longhurst Group**

Telephone: 0121 212 8451

## **Midland Heart**

Telephone: 0345 602 0540

## **Nehemiah**

Telephone: 0121 358 0966

## **New Outlook Housing Association**

Telephone: 0121 602 6511

## **Orbit Housing Association**

Telephone: 08458 500 500

## **PA Paragon Asra**

Telephone: 0116 247 0365

## **Pioneer Group**

Telephone: 0121 748 8100

## **Townsend Gardens (Riverside)**

Telephone: 0121 471 1462

## **St Basil's Centre Limited**

Telephone: 0121 772 2483

## **St Peter's (Saltley) Housing Association Limited**

Telephone: 0121 327 7265

## **Sanctuary Housing Association**

Telephone: 0121 456 1790

## **Optivo Small Heath Park Housing Co-operative Limited**

Telephone: 0121 773 3251

## **Sir Josiah Mason's Almshouse Charity**

Telephone: 0121 245 100

**Continued over page...**

# Housing Associations continued...

**Trident Housing Association Limited**  
Telephone: 0121 633 4633

**The Abbeyfield Sutton Coldfield Society Limited**  
Telephone: 01727 85753

Triangle Housing Co-operative Limited  
Telephone: 0121 764 3808

Yardley Great Trust – Housing for older people  
Telephone: 0121 784 7889

## **The Right to Remain Toolkit**

A guide to the UK immigration and asylum system

**Right to Remain Toolkit – Right to Remain**

## Parent Link Service

The Birmingham Parent Link Service is the first point of contact for parents and carer's who are not sure who they need to support them, where to go for help or just want to ask a question.

You can call the **Parent Link Contact Line** on **0121 303 8461** or email at: **ParentLinkService@birmingham.gov.uk**

The Contact Line is open:  
Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays: 9am – 5pm  
Wednesdays: 9am–4pm

You can also chat to a **Parent Link Officer** at a Parent Link Forum.

These are regular meetings that take place in your local area.

Find out more information about parent forums including where your nearest forum is at: **<https://localoffer.birmingham.gov.uk>**



# Family Hubs & Children Centres

## Ladywood

- **Soho Children's Centre & Family Hub:**  
21 Louise Road, Handsworth, Birmingham,  
B21 0RY, 0121 - 551 - 902
- **Ladywood Children's Centre:**  
9 Plough and Harrow Rd, Birmingham, B16 8UR,  
0121-454-6633
- **St Thomas Children Centre:**  
Bell Barn Road, B15 2AF, 0121-464-0002
- **Bertram Children's Centre:**  
6 Bertram Rd, Birmingham, B10 9QP, 0121-766-7774

## Perry Barr

- **Rookery Children's Centre & Family Hub:**  
Rookery Road, Birmingham, B21 9PW, 0121-752-1840
- **Lime Tree Children's Centre:**  
Heathfield Rd, Birmingham, B19 1HJ, 0121-752-1900



# FamilyLine.

## First-line support for every family

If you're feeling overwhelmed, worried or upset about any aspect of your family life, FamilyLine offers free emotional support, information and guidance on relationships, conflict, parenting, caring, financial worries and more.



Mon-Fri, 9am to 7pm



Mon-Fri, 9am to 7pm



Text: 07537 404 282



[familyline@family-action.org.uk](mailto:familyline@family-action.org.uk)



Online chat

### Nechells Community & Advisory Hub

Crompton Road, Birmingham, B7 5SN

**Ladywood:** 07816 086 607

[birminghamearlyhelpladywood@family-action.org.uk](mailto:birminghamearlyhelpladywood@family-action.org.uk)

**Perry Barr:** 07385 464 482

[birminghamearlyhelperrybarr@family-action.org.uk](mailto:birminghamearlyhelperrybarr@family-action.org.uk)

Scan the QR code  
to find out more.

