

Former members of the Armed Forces



The Council is a signatory to the Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant, which is a commitment to support the active and retired Armed Forces community living and working in Hertfordshire.

This leaflet provides information specifically about the help that is available to former members of the Armed Forces (veterans) who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Homelessness advice and assistance

The Council has a legal duty to help prevent you from becoming homeless, by providing advice and assistance to help you stay in your home or to help you find alternative accommodation.

If you are homeless through no fault of your own, eligible for assistance and in priority need, the Council has a legal duty to provide you with long-term accommodation. A person who is deemed to be vulnerable as a result of having been a member of the regular Armed Forces has a priority need for accommodation. Note that having been a member of the regular Armed Forces does not automatically mean that you are in priority need.

Contact the Council as soon as possible to discuss your housing options. You can do so via our online [Housing Assistance Referral Portal](#) (see our Housing Advice and Homelessness Support pages at www.north-herts.gov.uk) or you can call us on 01462 474000.

Access to social housing

In order to apply for social housing, most local authorities require that you have a local connection to the area, generally meaning that you have lived locally for a specified amount of time or that you have immediate family living in the area.

However, in recognition of the service that members of the Armed Forces and veterans give to their country, the law specifies that councils in England **cannot** disqualify a member or former member of the Armed Forces from joining a waiting list for social housing if they don't have a local connection. Specifically, this applies to:

- those who are serving in the regular forces or have done so in the five years preceding their application for social housing;
- bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the regular forces where their spouse or partner's death is attributable (wholly or partly) to

their service and the bereaved spouse or civil partner's entitlement to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation then ceases;

- seriously injured, ill or disabled reservists (or former reservists) whose injury, illness or disability is attributable wholly or partly to their service.

Members of the Armed Forces and veterans with urgent housing needs must also receive additional preference on local authorities' allocation schemes.

For information on applying for social housing in North Hertfordshire, visit our webpages at www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/housing/find-home

Support and advice

Specialist support and advice is also available from the following organisations.

Hertfordshire Heroes Information about support and advice available for veterans in Hertfordshire, including the Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant.
www.hertfordshireheroes.org

SSAFA Advice and support for veterans and their families.
0800 731 4880 (national helpline) or 01923 606 220 (Hertfordshire branch)
www.ssafa.org.uk

The Royal British Legion Support for Service men and women, veterans and their families.
0808 802 8080
www.britishlegion.org.uk

Veterans' Gateway A single point of contact for veterans seeking advice and support.
0808 802 1212
www.veteransgateway.org.uk