

Advice and support for young people



Help with housing

The Council can offer you advice and support if you are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

If you are eligible for help, we have a legal duty to work with you over a period of 56 days (eight weeks) to help prevent you from losing your home or to help you to find somewhere else to live. We may, for example, be able to negotiate with your family so that you can stay in your home, help you claim benefits or help you find accommodation in the private rented sector.

Contact us as soon as possible if you need help with your housing so that we can explore all the options available to you:

use our online [Housing Assistance Referral Portal](http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/housing/housing-advice) for 24/7 access (www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/housing/housing-advice)

or call on 01462 474000 and ask to speak to the Housing Options team

Will the Council house me?

We will not have a duty to house you in emergency accommodation or longer term housing unless you are considered to be in **priority need**, usually because:

- you or someone in your household is pregnant;
- you have dependent children who usually live with you;
- you are aged 16 or 17 (but are not a care leaver);
- you or a member of your household is vulnerable because of mental illness, physical or learning disabilities, or because you are fleeing domestic abuse or violence or because of time spent in care, prison or the armed forces.



See our leaflet "*Homeless or at risk of homelessness? The Council's duties explained*" for more details.

If you do need emergency housing and you are not in priority need, we may be able to refer you to the Herts Young Homeless Crashpad scheme which offers emergency accommodation for a short amount of time.

Extra support

The Council may be able to refer you to work with a dedicated support worker (this is often called 'floating support') if you feel you need extra support to stay in your accommodation. The support worker will help you to find specialist support if you need it, for mental health issues for example, or may just provide support and guidance on things like education and training, life skills and getting yourself back on track.

Under 18?


If you are under 18, social services also have a legal duty to support you. This includes accommodation, education and other support. The Council will work with Hertfordshire County Council to arrange this.

Financial support

For advice and support on money matters, including budgeting, claiming the correct benefits and managing debt, contact [Citizens Advice North Hertfordshire](#) who are based in Letchworth. Their website has a lot of useful information or you can call and arrange to see an advisor.

Citizens Advice North Hertfordshire:

www.northhertscab.org.uk

 03444 111 444

Citizens Advice national website:

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Other sources of advice include:

- the [Money Advice Service](#), an independent organisation set up by the government to provide free money advice. Call on 0800 138 7777; also www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk
- [HertsHelp](#) can give advice and assistance to people who need emergency help in a crisis. Call on 0300 123 4044; also www.hertshelp.net
- [Turn2us](#) is a national charity that provides practical support to people who are struggling financially. Online support available, including information about grants available. www.turn2us.org.uk

Housing Benefit

This is a regular payment from the Council to help you pay your rent. To be eligible, you must be on a low income or claiming other benefits. The best way to apply is online via the [Council's website](#) (www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/benefits/apply-benefits).

If you are under 35 years of age, single and do not have children, you will usually only be entitled to Housing Benefit which would cover the cost of renting shared accommodation. If your rent is more than this, you will have to fund the difference yourself.

If you are struggling to pay your rent you may be able to ask the Council for a discretionary housing payment (DHP) to make up the difference.

Universal Credit

The government is changing the way that benefits are worked out, claimed and paid. Universal Credit will be replacing Housing Benefit, Jobseeker's Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit. In North Hertfordshire, Universal Credit will be replacing all new claims for these so-called 'legacy' benefits starting in October 2018.

More information is available from the organisations listed above, the Council or the Department for Work and Pensions, who are responsible for administering Universal credit. Online information is at www.gov.uk/universal-credit

More sources of advice and information

Local organisations

The Homeless Hub A single point of contact to access local services to help prevent homelessness. Provided by One YMCA and Herts Young Homeless. www.homelesshub.help



03003 230 130 (16-17 year olds) or 08000 355 775 (18-24 year olds)

Herts Young Homeless Local support and advice for young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. www.hyh.org.uk



03333 202 384

YC Hertfordshire (formerly called Youth Connexions) Advice and support on a range of issues including benefits and finance, education and training, jobs and health. They also run youth work projects teaching new skills and bringing young people together. Visit them at the Letchworth Young People's Centre in Letchworth Town Hall. www.ychertfordshire.org



01438 845943

Herts Youth Futures One-to-one mentoring support for young people facing barriers to employment. www.hertsmindnetwork.org/herts-youth-futures




01992 556183

Healthy Young Minds in Herts Advice and signposting on range of emotional health and wellbeing issues.
www.healthyyoungmindsinherts.org.uk

National organisations

Centrepont Advice and support for young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. www.centrepont.org.uk


 0808 800 0661

Shelter Advice, support and legal services for people of all ages with housing issues or who are facing homelessness. www.england.shelter.org.uk


 0808 800 4444 Online chat also available.

Childline Advice and support on a whole range of issues that affect young people. There is also a 1-2-1 confidential online counsellor chat facility.

www.childline.org.uk


 0800 1111

Prince's Trust Provides training, personal development opportunities and grants to help young people get into work, education, self-employment or training. www.princes-trust.org.uk

 0800 842 842

Rise Above A collection of useful web resources about mental health, substance abuse, friend and relationship issues including other young people's stories and advice. www.riseabove.org.uk


Talk to Frank Free and confidential advice about drugs. Online chat also available. www.talktofrank.com

 0300 123 6600


Kooth Free and confidential online support for young people, including online chat with counsellors and support from other young people. www.kooth.com

The Hideout A website created by Women's Aid to help young people understand domestic abuse, and how to take positive action if it's happening to them. www.thehideout.org.uk/young-people/home

Samaritans Confidential and free support for people of all ages experiencing problems and who need someone to talk to. www.samaritans.org

 116 123

The Mix Confidential and free support and advice for young people on a range of issues including mental health, money, housing problems, relationships, jobs. Online chat, discussion boards and telephone counselling sessions also available. www.themix.org.uk

 0808 808 4994