

Housing & Homelessness

This factsheet provides information and guidance on several options available for support and guidance on housing issues. It also contains further details of key services in Harrow that can be contacted for further specialist advice, related to housing for people with mental health problems.

Quick reference

If you become homeless suddenly and do not have a friend or relative to stay with and require emergency housing please contact:

Harrow Housing Assessment Team

PO Box 65, Civic Centre, Station Road, Harrow HA1 2XG

Phone during office hours: 020 8424 1093

Phone for emergencies (out-of-hours): 020 8863 5611

Email: housing.advice@harrow.gov.uk

Website:

http://www.harrow.gov.uk/info/200198/housing_options/551/sheltered_housing/4

This service is available to all those who have a connection with Harrow and are homeless. You will need to be assessed according to priority. People with mental health problems who have urgent and immediate need for emergency social services, such as being homeless will be considered a priority. Please note you will need to provide proof of ID, proof of income and proof of medical requirements or a hospital discharge note.

Shelter (National telephone advice line)

Tel: 0808 800 4444 (Helpline) 0808 1644 660 (Emergency Helpline)

Email: info@shelter.org.uk

Website: <http://england.shelter.org.uk/home>

This advice line is open seven days a week from 8am to midnight and offers advice, guidance and specialist information on housing and can direct you to local support services available to support you in the long term. Please note that the service can get very busy, so you may be kept on hold for up to an hour before you talk to an adviser.

Am I entitled to help?

The Homeless Reduction Act (2017) came into effect in April 2018. The Act amends Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 and places new duties on local authorities.

The local authority has the following duties,

- to provide free tailored advice on homelessness issues.
- to make enquiries re eligibility
- to assess and draw up a Personal Housing Plan (PHP)

The local authority has a duty to provide advisory services to all Harrow residents, however there are a number of specified vulnerable groups that may be eligible for emergency support/relief duty.

These groups include:

- Care leavers aged 18-20
- Victims of domestic abuse
- Persons leaving hospital
- Persons pregnant or have dependents under 16 years
- Persons over 65 years
- Persons suffering from ongoing physical disability or learning disability
- Persons suffering from a mental illness or impairment

You will not necessarily qualify for housing if you fit into one of these vulnerable groups. You will need to be assessed first and you will be asked to bring with you evidence of your diagnosis, supporting letters from your psychiatrist or care co-ordinator, as well as details about any treatments undertaken. There may be other circumstances in which individuals are classified as vulnerable, so it is advisable to contact Harrow Housing Advice in the first instance.

Homeless and threatened with homelessness

You will be considered legally homeless if you have no accommodation which is available and reasonable for you and your dependents to live in. You will also be considered homeless if you have accommodation but cannot get into it. For example, if you have somewhere to stay with friends or relatives but have been asked to leave, or if you are at risk of violence in your home, you will be considered to be threatened with homelessness.

If you are likely to be at risk of homelessness within 56 days, the local authority has a 'prevention duty' to prevent you from becoming homeless. This will involve providing you with information and advice on the steps you can take to prevent homelessness via a Personal Housing Plan (PHP). This is an agreement between you and the local authority about what steps you can take and how they can support you to achieve

this. If you meet the above criteria and you are homeless, the local authority has a 'relief duty' to alleviate homelessness by providing emergency accommodation. This may be in the form of a hostel or a B&B and does not extend to permanent or secure accommodation.

Harrow Council Support

Harrow Housing Advice Service

Housing Advice: Emergency Accommodation

PO Box 65 Civic 1, Civic Centre, Station Road, Harrow HA1 2XY

Tel: 020 8424 1093 for an appointment Email: housing.advice@harrow.gov.uk

Emergency accommodation is a very limited resource which can only be offered to those who are actually roofless, are eligible and have a priority need.

Advice available Monday, Tuesday, Thursday or Friday. Please contact for an appointment.

Sheltered Housing - Harrow Housing Assessment Team

PO Box 65, Civic Centre, Station Road, Harrow HA1 2XY

Tel: 020 8424 1093 during office hours | Email: locatahelp@harrow.gov.uk

Website:

http://www.harrow.gov.uk/info/200198/housing_options/551/sheltered_housing

Housing assessment team review all applications including those for long term housing options on the housing register. This includes people who are homeless and existing tenants who want an alternative home.

Homelessness - Homelessness assessment

PO Box 65, Civic Centre, Station Road, Harrow HA1 2XY

Tel: 020 8424 1093 Emergencies: 020 8863 5611 (out of hours)

| Email: homeless.homeless@harrow.gov.uk

Website:

http://www.harrow.gov.uk/info/200059/looking_for_a_home/75/homelessness

If you or someone you know is due to be homeless please contact the team as this will help prevent reaching crisis point and enable you to take up any housing options that maybe offered.

Out of hours support

If you are at risk of homelessness outside of office hours, you can contact the 'Emergency Duty Social Worker Team'. This number is only to be used out of hours only.

This service is available to help children and their families, elderly people, people with disabilities and people with mental health problems who have urgent and immediate need for emergency social services; for example people who are homeless or at risk.

Emergency out of hours contacts:

- **Out of hours - Social Services**

The emergency duty social worker is available weekends, bank holidays and between 5pm-9am weekdays.

Tel: 020 8424 0999

- **CNWL Single Point of Access (SPA) 24 hour crisis line**

24 hours on Monday - Sunday and Bank Holidays

Tel: 0800 0234 650

The SPA provides emergency mental health support for existing service users and new referrals. If you are calling during office hours, and normally see a mental health professional please contact them first.

What to do if you are threatened with homelessness?

In order to evict you from your home, the landlord needs to follow a legal procedure.

- There are several reasons that a landlord may decide to evict you, examples being **rent arrears, violating a tenancy agreement or damage to property**. While there are some reasons that are out of your control, it is advisable to prioritise paying your rent and council tax bill when managing your finances, to avoid serious consequences.
- Make time to read your tenancy agreement to ensure you know what is expected of you as the tenant.
- If you are unwell or you are finding it difficult to manage your tenancy due to your mental health, you must inform your landlord of this. The landlord has a duty to show they have offered you support to manage your tenancy within Housing law if you have disclosed to them your mental health needs.
- If the landlord still decides to evict you, they will first issue you with a section 21 notice. This is a 2 month notice in writing that is asking you to leave your home. Please note, **you do not need to leave your home at this point**, but you **must** seek legal support. For legal advice as part of legal aid, you can contact the organisations outlined below.
- It is also advisable to contact Harrow Housing Advice, to ask for any further support and advice that can be offered, as you are threatened with homelessness within 56 days.
- To complete the eviction, the landlord then needs to apply to the court for a possession order. This is normally issued, giving you 14 days' notice to vacate

your home. If you receive this notice please seek legal advice **immediately** via the legal support listed below.

- If you do not leave on the date when the possession order expires, then the court may order bailiffs to attend your property. This experience may be very upsetting and stressful. It is important to note that bailiffs are not able to use physical violence or offensive language. Bailiffs are not allowed to force entry into your house, so they cannot gain entry if you do not open the door.

For further information about the eviction process, please visit the Shelter website: <https://www.shelter.org.uk/>.

The website contains information on how to ask the council for help on homelessness, and how to assess if you're eligible for certain covers/assessments. Further useful factsheets are available from the National Homeless Advice Service (NHAS) factsheet <https://nhas.org.uk/factsheets> that provide detailed information about your legal rights on various topics such as rents, eviction, possession and illegal eviction.

Legal Housing Advice

Civil Legal Advice Line

Telephone: 0345 345 4 345

Monday-Friday 9am-8pm,

Saturday 9am-12:30pm.

Refer to <https://www.gov.uk/civil-legal-advice> for more information.

If you live on a low income or benefits, Civil Legal Advice can give you free advice over the telephone.

Harrow Law Centre

The Lodge, 64 Pinner Road, Harrow, Middlesex, HA1 4HZ

Telephone: 020 8863 4355 | Email: info@harrowlawcentre.org.uk

Website: www.harrowlawcentre.org.uk/

Harrow Law Centre provides a free and independent legal advice service to people who live or work in the London Borough of Harrow.

The Law Centre can also offer second tier advice to local community groups to assist their clients and to the voluntary sector if they feel they have been treated unfairly in funding applications administered by a public body.

Harrow CAB

Civic 9 Milton House, Station Road, Harrow, Middlesex, HA1 2XH

Telephone: 020 8427 9477 on Mondays 1.30pm - 4pm, and Tuesdays and

Thursdays 9.45am - 12pm and 1.30pm - 3pm

Email: advice@citizensadviceharrow.org.uk

Website: www.citizensadviceharrow.org.uk/

Free independent impartial advice to anyone who needs it. Harrow Citizens Advice can give advice on problems including benefits, debt, employment, housing, family, tax and consumer issues.

How to appeal against a decision

The first place to register an appeal against an unsuccessful or unsatisfactory housing application is with the Housing Assessment Team. You usually have 21 days to challenge any decision made. Harrow Housing Advice Centre or Harrow CAB may also be able offer you help with your appeal.

If you still feel aggrieved, you are entitled to appeal to the Local Government Ombudsman <http://www.lgo.org.uk/> . Although this can be a lengthy process, there have been several successful outcomes by people using this route.

For further information about the appeal process please visit:

https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/homelessness/guide/homeless_get_help_from_the_council/challenge_a_council_decision

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/homelessness/challenging-your-homeless-decision/if-you-disagree-with-your-homeless-application-decision/>

Housing Ombudsman Service

PO Box 152 Liverpool L33 7WQ

General Helpline Telephone 0300 111 3000 Mon to Fri 9-15am till 17-15pm

To make a complaint 0300 061 0614 (8-30am to 5pm) | Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Website: <http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/default.aspx>

What to do if you are rough sleeping

If you are rough sleeping then the first step is to contact the Housing Advice team at Harrow Council (contact details on pg3). If you are assessed and deemed not eligible for emergency housing then you need to consider where you can stay to keep yourself safe. The organisations below may be able to support your situation.

Streetlink

Telephone 0300 500 0914, 24 hours a day for local services

Website: <https://www.streetlink.org.uk/>

You can contact Streetlink if you or someone you know is sleeping rough. They will locate the individual and inform local homelessness services who will aim to offer the most appropriate support. Please note it is important that the rough sleeper remains in the same position for several nights as he/she is unlikely to be visited on the first night. The easiest way is to alert Streetlink of a rough sleeper is through their website.

Firm Foundation

Brigade House, Brigade Close, South Harrow, HA2 0LQ Telephone: 020 84265515

Email: js@firmfoundation.org.uk Website: <http://firmfoundation.org.uk/>

The Firm Foundation charity works across the borough of Harrow assisting those who are single and homeless. They provide a Winter Night Shelter during January to March with 15 bed spaces for male guests and 12 bed spaces for female guests per night.

Single Homelessness Signposting Drop-in

Firm Foundation run this drop in service twice weekly on Wednesdays 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. at Trinity Church, Hindes Road Harrow HA1 1RX. They have a variety of services on offer; advice, practical face-to-face advice from housing and support agencies. Office 020 8426 5515.

Mondays 2.00pm to 4.00pm at Harrow Baptist Church, College Road Harrow HA1 1BA, the drop in provides food, shower and a chat.

Hostels and night shelters

There are currently no direct access hostels in Harrow, but there are a small number in neighbouring boroughs. Please note all hostels have a different referral process so it is advisable to ring in advance to ask. Many are operated on a first come, first served basis and you may have to get there early for a space.

Open Door

Open Door, 8 Bricket Road, St Albans AL1 3JX | Telephone: 01727 859113

Website: www.opendoorstalbans-district.org

Open Door is open 365 days a year, 6pm to 8.15am. There is overnight accommodation for single homeless people in small dormitories. A cooked meal and hot drinks are provided in a welcoming atmosphere. Men and women are accommodated on separate floors each with bathroom facilities (up to 12 males and 4 females). A nurse is available for health advice.

Rules in the night shelter are kept to a minimum - no drink or drugs on the premises and no violence.

Guests can stay for up to four weeks during which time workers aim to help them find other accommodation.

Shelter from the Storm

Website: <http://sfts.org.uk/> E-mail: refer@sfts.org.uk

Free emergency night shelter in London providing bed, dinner and breakfast for up to 44 homeless people every night of the year. There are two male dorms each with 12 beds and one female dorm with 18 beds. Referrals are accepted from all London boroughs, locations and organisations. Self-referrals or referrals by members of the

public on behalf of friends, family are not accepted, so please contact a local advice agency to be referred.

Homeless link <https://www.homeless.org.uk/search-homelessness-services>

Provides an online search for homelessness support and accommodation local to the postcode or area inputted.

No Second Night Out <http://www.nosecondnightout.org.uk/>

No Second Night Out (NSNO) focuses on helping those who find themselves rough sleeping on the streets of London for the first time. Help is offered to prevent people needing to return to the streets; for many this will be returning to their home area, reconnecting with family and support networks. Clients can be referred to this service via Streetlink and there can be a waiting list as the service is over subscribed.

What to do if you are under 25 years and are homeless

If you are under 25 years and homeless or threatened with homelessness then initially you need to contact the Harrow Housing Advice team, whose details are on pg3. There are some additional organisations that can specifically support this age group:

Centrepoint Helpline

Telephone: 0800 800 0661 (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm)

If you're young and worried you might be homeless, the Centrepoint Helpline can offer advice to anyone in England aged 16-25. They can also help people worried about a young person they know.

New Horizon Youth Centre

68 Chalton Street, London, NW1 1JR | Telephone (general info): [0207 388 5560](tel:02073885560) |

(Youth work) [0207 388 5570](tel:02073885570) | Advice [0207 388 5580](tel:02073885580) | Email:

info@nhyouthcentre.org.uk | Website: <https://nhyouthcentre.org.uk>

New Horizon Youth Centre provides a vital support network for 16-21 year olds from hot food, showers and laundry to help with finding accommodation, training and employment. Other services include; counselling, drug and alcohol support, health, fitness, art, music and communication skills workshops. You would need to be outside the New Horizon Youth Centre (near Euston Station), at 10.15am. It is first come first served and there is no guarantee that everybody will get an appointment. You cannot be referred into a night shelter until an initial assessment has been completed.

Nightstop London

Sherborne House, 34 Decima St, London, SE1 4QQ | Telephone: 0207 939 1220

|07767 882881 (Mon to Fri 8am-4pm)| 24 hour helpline: 116 000 | Email:

NightstopUK@depaulcharity.org.uk Website: <https://www.nightstop.org.uk/>

Nightstop London places young people aged from 16 to 25 who have nowhere to stay in trained volunteers' spare rooms across all of London. Young people receive a private room, a warm meal and somewhere safe to stay for the night, while support is given to secure a more permanent solution. Nightstop in London is delivered by [Depaul UK](#) - a national homelessness charity.

Harrow Churches Housing Association

Head Office, Ground Floor, Ewart House, 9 Richards Close, Harrow, HA1 2BE

| Telephone: 020 8424 2776 | Website: <https://hcha.org.uk>

Provide housing with support in shared properties for vulnerable young people aged 18 to 24 who have been homeless or living in care, or who can no longer live with their families. To access this service, you will need to be referred via Harrow Council Housing Department.

Roxeth Gate Foyer

YMCA Roxeth Hill, Roxeth Hill, Harrow HA2 0JN | T 020 8832 1550 | Email:

roxethgate@ymcawestlondon.org | Website: <https://ymcastpaulsgroup.org/home/our-services/accommodation/hostels/hostel-ymca-roxeth-gate/>

Roxeth Gate hostel is a three storey building situated next to Christ Church Roxeth on Roxeth Hill. The hostel comprises of 42 flats, of which 28 are studio flats (two studio flats specifically cater for disabled residents) with shared bathroom facilities and 14 are furnished one-bed flats. They each have their own fully equipped kitchen where residents are expected to prepare and cook their own meals. To be considered for this accommodation, you will need to be formally referred from Harrow Housing Team, Harrow Youth Offending Team, Harrow Children's Services or Ealing Social Services.

Mental health specific housing support

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis and are about to become homeless but not being seen by the Community Mental Health Team, you are advised to go to Accident and Emergency (A&E), or call 999.

If you have a housing related problem and are already being helped by Bentley House, you can ask to speak with a housing adviser at Bentley House according to your area, i.e. East or West. Please ask your key professional for more details about this.

Bentley House CNWL, CMHT

15-21 Headstone Drive, Harrow, HA3 5UB

Telephone: 020 8424 7701 (Mon- Fri 9-5pm)

Mental Health Service Users leaving hospital

If you are currently in hospital and due to be discharged with no place to reside, your care co-ordinator will decide if supported accommodation could be an option for you on leaving hospital, if so the case will be taken to a multidisciplinary SPOR (Single Point Of Referral) meeting, held fortnightly. The usual placement length for people being accommodated by these services is 18-24 months, during which time key workers assist and support you with plans for moving on to permanent accommodation. For example, they may support you to bid for housing using the Locata Scheme to find independent accommodation via Harrow Council.

At this meeting the Care Co-ordinator will discuss the situation with the other professionals present as well as representatives of supported accommodation service providers in the area. They will look at what you are entitled to, what is available and look at placing you in a suitable accommodation after discharge. The below are possible options that your professional would be able to refer you to based on your needs:

Lookahead

Kings Buildings, 16 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HQ.

Telephone: 020 7368 4600

For existing customers: 0333 010 4600

Email: getintouch@lookahead.org.uk

Website: <https://www.shp.org.uk/>

Lookahead is one of the largest providers of specialist mental health support services across London and the South East. They offer a range of services including supported housing and have a residence for complex needs in Harrow.

Rosedale Court

75-79 Greenford Road, Harrow HA1 3QF

Telephone: 020 8864 2925

Website: www.cnwl.nhs.uk/service/rosedale-court

Rosedale Court is a 22 bedded unit providing 24-hour support and rehabilitation to clients with enduring mental health problems.

Roxbourne Complex and Annexe

41 Rayners Lane, Harrow, HA2 0UE

Telephone: 020 8423 8200

Website: www.cnwl.nhs.uk/service/roxbourne

Roxbourne Complex & Annex is an inpatient rehabilitation unit. It provides care and support for people who have complex mental health problems and where previous placements have been unable to meet their needs.

Rethink Recovery House

13-17 Roxborough Road, Harrow, HA1 1NS

Telephone: 020 8861 3717

Website: [http://www.rethink.org/services-groups/services/rethink-recovery-house-\(harrow\)](http://www.rethink.org/services-groups/services/rethink-recovery-house-(harrow))

Rethink Recovery House is a residential home providing care for people with serious and enduring mental health difficulties. Up to seven beds are available for four to six months. The service aims to support clients' mental health through individualised support and enable them to move onto supported or independent living.

Domestic Violence specific support

If you need to leave your home due to domestic violence, there may be additional support you require according to your situation. These include safety planning, finding a refuge and legal steps you can take around property rights. If you are in an emergency situation and you are at risk, do not hesitate to call 999 and make a report to the police. You should be a priority need under the Harrow Council Housing assessment as it is not safe for you to return to your current accommodation due to the threat of violence. Below are specialist organisations that can support you with your options if you are in this situation:

Hestia (Harrow Domestic Abuse Support Service)

P. O Box 863, Harrow, HA1 4NR

Telephone: Refuge: 020 8357 0126; Support: 020 8907 8148 Support & Drop in: 020 8864 7575

Website: www.hestia.org

Hestia Harrow provide a floating support service for clients experiencing low to moderate domestic violence situations. Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVA) are appointed to individuals experiencing moderate to severe circumstances.

National Domestic Violence Helpline

24-hour National Domestic Violence

Telephone Freephone Helpline: 0808 2000 247

Website: <http://www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk/>

The Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline, is a national service for women experiencing domestic violence and others calling on their behalf.

The Helpline is staffed 24 hours a day can give support, help and information over the telephone. All calls are completely confidential.

Women's Aid

PO BOX 3245, Bristol, BS2 2EH.

Telephone: 0808 2000 247 | Email: helpline@womensaid.org.uk / info@womensaid.org.uk

Website: www.womensaid.org.uk/

Women's Aid is the national domestic violence charity that helps up to 250,000 women and children every year. They work to end violence against women and children, and support over 500 domestic and sexual violence services across the country.

You may also need to access Legal support if you are fleeing your home due to domestic violence. Depending on the type of property you have and if you are co-habiting or married, you may have some rights to your current property. A solicitor will be able to advise you about applying for an occupation order or non-molestation order to keep yourself and your dependents safe.

For further information about occupation orders, please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/injunction-domestic-violence/eligibility-occupation>

Other emergency support

Harrow Foodbank

Tel: 020 8416 7344 | Email: info@harrow.foodbank.org.uk

Harrow Foodbank can offer emergency food for those in need. You need to be issued with a foodbank voucher first – call Harrow Foodbank to find the most appropriate agency.

Soul Kitchen Harrow

Email: soulkitchenharrow@gmail.com

Soul Kitchen offer occasional events locally in Harrow providing free hot meals to those that need it. For information about dates & venues please contact directly.

Support & Wellbeing Information Service Harrow (SWiSH)

SWiSH is for anyone in Harrow aged 18 years and over – those looking for help for themselves as well as carers and staff in local organisations. It can offer information or advice about a wide range of local services, including where to keep fit and

well, manage finances, join social groups, look for work, start a course, access help with housing or welfare benefits or apply for a personal budget. You can call the SWiSH helpline on 020 8426 0929, Mon-Fri, 9.30am-5pm.



This factsheet was produced by Mind in Harrow

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Registered charity number 1067480