

Fact Sheet

A message from the Homeless Prevention Team
and
Outline of the Welsh Homelessness Legislation

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Colwyn Bay.
LL29 7AZ



A message from the Homeless Prevention Team:

We know that being homeless or at risk of homelessness is a worrying and stressful time. We are here to listen to you and do our best to help you. Please read this leaflet to help you understand the process of working with us. If you have any worries or questions, just ask us, we're happy to help.

The Homeless Prevention Officers pledge to you is:

“My job is to listen to you, treat you with respect and assist you to the best of our ability.

If you provide me with the documents and the honest, correct information that I need to assist you, then I promise to do everything in my power to help you.

If I can't help you, I will help you find someone who can.

I am not here to judge you; I am here to help.

Because you are treating me with respect, I will treat you with respect.

Let's work together to ensure a good solution for you.”

Outline of the new Welsh homelessness legislation

What can the Homeless Prevention Team do to help me?

The law on homelessness in Wales changed on 27th April 2015. If you are at risk of homelessness, you now have the right to be assisted at an earlier stage and we are able to assist in different. This means that we can help you if you are at risk of being homeless within 56 days.

In order to assist you, we need to ensure that you are 'eligible'. If you live in the UK, are a British citizen and have not recently spent time living in other countries you will almost certainly be eligible.

The assessment - What do I need to do?

The assessment is the first step in the journey for everyone we help. We need to understand your situation to be able to help you. To begin with:

- We will listen to you and find out all the information we need to know about your situation.
- We will make an **assessment** of your situation and we will **work with you** to identify what steps need to be taken to solve your housing problem.
- We may need you to bring back any items of paperwork. To be able to help you, we need you to be open and honest with us and provide information we ask for. We will also be open and honest with you, and we will treat you with **respect**. We will keep you informed about how your case is going.
- If you have any needs you think we should be aware of (e.g. debt, learning difficulties, mental health problems or anything you think is important) please don't be afraid to mention it to staff member.

What steps will you take to help prevent me becoming homeless?

The next step after the assessment depends on your situation. If you are at risk of homelessness, it might be that the best way to help you is to assist you to stay in your home.

- We will try to **prevent** you becoming homeless by helping you to remain in your own home where possible. If this is not possible we will help you find somewhere else to live that suits your needs.
- We will work with you to draw up a Personal Housing Plan, which will include all the steps that need to be taken to help solve your housing problem. Then we will help you put the Plan into action.
- We may not be able to identify all the steps for the Personal Housing Plan straight away. If we cannot draw up the Plan immediately, we promise to get back to you as soon as we can.
- The exact steps in the Personal Housing Plan will depend on your situation. Your Plan may include actions such as talking to your landlord to try to sort out any problems; mediation to resolve family arguments; help with start-up costs for a new tenancy; or referral to support services.
- If you need somewhere else to live, we may look at whether there is private rented accommodation that is suitable and affordable for you.
- We will ensure that your accommodation is likely to be available for you for at least six months.



What if I am homeless right now?

The next step after the assessment depends on your situation. If we agree that you are homeless we will work with you to find you somewhere suitable to live that you can afford.

- We will help you find somewhere else to live that suits your needs. To do this, we will work with you to put together a Personal Housing Plan. As part of the Plan, we may include looking at suitable and affordable private rented accommodation. We will ensure that the accommodation is likely to be available to you for at least six months.
- If you need somewhere to stay immediately, we will consider whether you qualify for temporary accommodation. We will provide temporary accommodation if we think you may be in a 'priority need group'.
- 'Priority need groups' are certain groups of people who in law have a particular need for assistance.
- Please note that prison leavers are no longer an automatic priority need group. However prison leavers may be considered priority need under another priority need category.
- We might refer you to another council to help you if you have a local connection to that area and none in Conwy. For us to do this, you need to fit the referral criteria.
- If we accept that you are homeless, we have to send you a letter saying that we will help you. We also need to send you a letter if we offer you temporary accommodation.

What if the Personal Housing Plan doesn't solve my housing issue?

If we haven't been able to help you find a home after 56 days, we might be able to offer you temporary accommodation. Our ability to do this depends on your situation.

- After you become homeless, the law states we have up to 56 days to work with you to help solve your housing problem. If we are not successful, we will consider what else we can do to find you accommodation.
- You may have a right to accommodation if you fall into a 'priority need group'. This may be in social housing or the private rented sector. We will ensure you can remain in the accommodation for at least six months.
- **People in priority need groups do not automatically get social housing after 27th April 2015. Social housing is in very high demand and Private Sector accommodation is the most realistic option.**
- If you reject an offer of accommodation we have made, this will in most cases end our duty to help you. **Please take independent legal advice before rejecting any offers of accommodation.**
- We might also end our duty to help you if we feel you haven't been cooperating with us, for example if you make no effort to complete a task you agreed to do, do not respond to letters or phone calls, or you fail to attend interviews arranged for you to assist you to resolve your housing problems.



What if I want a second opinion?

If you do not agree with what we have done, you have the right to ask for a review of the steps we have taken. Before you do this you may wish to speak to Shelter Cymru or Citizens Advice, who will give you free, independent advice on the best course of action.



Shelter Cymru

☎ 01792 469400

www.sheltercymru.org.uk

📍 Unit 5, Station Bldg.,
Bodfor St, Rhyl, LL18 1AT



Cyngor ar Bopeth

☎ 0344 477 2020

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

📍 Eryl Wen, Eryl Place, Llandudno,
Conwy LL30 2TX



Dewis Cymru is a place for information about well-being in Wales.

If you would like information that can help you think what matters to you, along with information about local organisations and services that can help, you can visit the Dewis Cymru website at www.dewis.wales

This website will help you access local support services and find information and advice. It is a single, clear and reliable point of access

We are happy to consider your input into the service and we may contact you for feedback at some point. We hope that you will spare the time to assist us in improving our service.



Version 2 – Sept 2018