

Housing Options & Advice in Merton

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Notice of Disclaimer

Probation services cannot comment on, or accept any responsibility for the suitability of either vacancies, potential tenants, or any other matters arising out of, or incidental to, any enquiries made or contracts or letting agreements entered into. Housing Benefit can be claimed from the appropriate authority. You will not necessarily be given the full rent asked for by the landlord.

Please note that if you are 34 or younger then a single room rent will apply.

You are advised to complete a Housing Benefit form (LIB HCTB1) prior to the signing of a tenancy agreement to make certain you are aware of the amount the property is worth for housing benefit purpose.

Your Housing Benefit award will then be based on your circumstances, taking into consideration your income, savings, number of people in your household and your rent.

Whilst every effort has been made to give you correct information, some providers and/or contact numbers may have changed and will be updated in due course where new details are provided to us.

Squatting Law

The rules about squatting changed on 1st September 2012. Squatting is when you move in or stay somewhere without the owner's permission.

Up to now, if someone was squatting, for example, in an empty house or a flat, and the owner wanted to get them out, they generally had to use the civil law and go to court to get permission to evict the squatters. This would have been at the owner's expense.

However, squatting in residential properties is a new criminal offence. This means that the owner doesn't have to go to court to try and evict a squatter - they can just call the police. The police have the right to arrest squatters. It doesn't matter whether someone has been squatting for a long time in the same place or has only just moved in. A squatter can be arrested for squatting in all types of residential buildings, such as houses or flats, but also places like caravans and mobile homes.

If someone is found guilty of squatting, they could be sent to prison for up to six months or have to pay a fine of up to £5,000, or both.

It's not squatting if you had a tenancy which has come to an end but you haven't yet moved out, or if you've fallen behind with your rent. In these kind of situations, your landlord will still need to go to court if they want to evict you or get their money back.

Advice about renting in the private sector

One of the main advantages of renting privately is that you can choose where you would like to live and the type of property you would like to live in. You can choose between furnished and unfurnished accommodation. Renting also means that it's easier to move to other areas.

How do I find somewhere to live?

There are a number of private letting agents operating across London who will be able to help you with finding somewhere to live.

Estate Agents in Merton

To see a list of estate/lettings agents in Merton go to :-

<http://www.rightmove.co.uk/estate-agents/Merton.html>

You can also find information about private properties to rent through;

- adverts in shop windows and supermarkets,
- Loot
- local papers
- If you have access to the internet there are some good websites showing rooms and properties available for rent. If you do not have access to the internet you can also use the free internet service which is offered in most libraries.
A good starting point is to use a search engine type into the search box the basic details of what you are looking for, for example, type 'properties to rent in Merton (or the area you would like to live in).

What about a deposit or rent in advance?

Most private landlords require at least 4 weeks rent in advance.

It can be difficult to find the money to pay rent up front, especially if you are on a low income. You may be able to apply for a budgeting or crisis loan to assist you with the rent in advance.

Applying for a budgeting loan

- you can apply for a budgeting loan if you or your partner have been getting income support, income based job seekers allowance or pension credit for at least 26 weeks,
- how much you can borrow will depend on your personal circumstances, with the maximum amount being £1,500,
- the loan is usually paid direct into your bank or building society account,
- the loan is an interest free loan which you have to pay back and is usually payable by direct deductions from the amount of benefit you receive,
- to apply you need to fill out form SF500 which you can get from your local Jobcentre Plus office. The form comes with notes to help you fill it in.

If you are unable to get this type of help you may be able to ask for financial help from family or friends. Some landlords will also be happy to make an arrangement for you to pay extra with your rent to build up a deposit. If this is the case remember to get receipts for any extra payments. Renting a room in shared accommodation will also be cheaper than renting a self contained property. You may decide to go into shared accommodation whilst you save enough money to be able to afford self-contained accommodation.

How can I pay the rent?

If you are receiving benefits, or are working and on a low income, you may be entitled to help with paying the rent: This is called housing benefit which is paid as a Local Housing Allowance (LHA) to assist you in paying your rent.

Local housing allowance is not based on the property you live in, but is usually based on;

- where you live,
- who you live with,
- the amount of savings you have and income you receive.
- The amount you are entitled to may also be affected by other things, such as how much the rent is and whether anyone else living with you is expected to contribute to your rent.

Why was Local Housing Allowance brought in?

LHA has been introduced nationwide. It gives tenants more choice in where they live and it's fairer too. This is because with LHA:

- you are entitled to the same amount of benefit as people in the same circumstances as you
- you can find out how much benefit you can get before you rent a property
- you can decide how much of your benefit you want to spend on renting a property
- you can usually get your benefit paid to you. It is up to you to pay the rent to your landlord
- you can find out about your benefit more quickly than before.

How do I get my benefit if Local Housing Allowance applies to me?

Usually you will have your benefit paid directly to you. It will be paid directly into your bank or building society account, if you have one, or by cheque.

If you do not already have a bank or building society account, you may want to set one up. That way you can arrange to pay the rent to your landlord automatically, using a standing order.

You can get advice about opening and running a bank account from any bank or building society. You can also get advice from a welfare organisation such as Citizens Advice – your local CAB's are listed further in this booklet.

It is up to you to pay the rent to your landlord. If you don't pay your rent, you may be taken to court and evicted from the property.

Can I have my benefit paid direct to my landlord?

Your benefit will be paid to you unless you are likely to have difficulty paying your rent, or it must be paid to your landlord.

If you are worried about managing your money, ask your Offender Manager for help. In some cases they can make a request to Housing Benefit so your rent is paid direct to your landlord.

What will happen if I use my benefit for something else?

Your benefit is there to help to pay your rent with. If you do not use your benefit to pay your rent, your landlord may take you to court or try to evict you and you may lose your home.

Changes of circumstance

If you are getting Housing Benefit and you move to a new address, get a job or any other circumstances change, you should tell the Housing Benefit Office straightaway. You may need to make a new claim for housing benefit.

Recent Changes to Local Housing Allowance

Single and under 35

If you are single, aged under 35 and renting in the private sector (not social housing), you might be affected by a change in housing benefit assessment criteria that took effect in January 2012.

From January 2012, anyone under 35 will only be able to claim housing benefit on a shared accommodation rate to help with their rent (rather than being able to claim for self-contained one-bedroom accommodation).

This means you may only be entitled to the lower rate of housing benefit for a room in shared accommodation if all of the following apply:

- you are a single person
- you are occupying a one-bedroom self-contained accommodation in the private rented sector
- your housing benefit is due to be reviewed from January 2012 onwards
- at the date of the review you will be aged over 25 or over but under 35 years, and
- you are not covered by any of the exemptions on sharing accommodation.

Previously, single people who are aged under 25 could only claim a shared accommodation rate to help with their rent (unless certain exemptions apply). This was amended as part of a number of changes to welfare in 2012 and 2013.

Advice and help with your finances

The Turn2us Helpline – www.turn2us.org.uk

The Turn2us helpline is a free, confidential, secure and independent service that helps people in financial need access the money available to them. If you are an individual who needs help with using our services, call us on 0808 802 2000 and speak to one of our helpline advisers, who can:

- Help you check your eligibility for welfare benefits and access the forms you need
- Assist you with grants searches to find possible grant-giving charities that may be able to support you, based on your personal circumstances and background
- Support you with a grant enquiry and making an application
- Put you in touch with other services that may be able to help you.

The Money Advice Service – www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk - tel: 0300 500 5000

Opening times Mon – Friday 8am – 8pm

Saturday 9am – 1pm – Closed Sunday & public holidays

The CCC

The Consumer Credit Counselling Service (CCCS) is a registered charity that provides free and anonymous advice over the phone and online to over 350,000 people per year. They provide fee-free debt management plans and other debt solutions.

Phone the CCCS Helpline for free on 0800 138 1111 (Monday–Friday, 8am–8pm; Saturday 9am–3pm)

National Debtline

National Debtline provides a free, confidential and independent helpline for people with debt problems in England, Wales and Scotland. They give expert advice over the telephone and via email and will send you a free self-help information pack.

Phone National Debtline free on Tel 0808 808 4000 (Monday–Friday, 9am–9pm; Saturday 9.30am–1pm).

Merton Citizens Advice Specialist Services (money)

326 London Road, MITCHAM, Surrey, CR4 3ND

Telephone: 020 8640 3194 (Money Advice)

Money Advice telephone service: 2.00-4.00 Mondays & 10.30-12.30 Thursdays

Contact Local Housing Benefit Office to find out Local Housing Allowance (LHA) – or look on the internet

LHA is the amount you may expect to get from housing benefit depending on your circumstances

Ring Letting agencies, look in local Newspapers, shop window advertisements, search internet.

Book appoint to view property

View property

Suitable for your needs and accepts Housing Benefit?

No

Continue search

Will Housing Benefit cover the costs?

No

Start search again

Ask Landlord/Agency to write a letter stating all the costs you are liable to pay, rent-in-advance, fees etc (This letter is to be included with your budgeting/crisis loan if needed).

Complete a crisis/ budget loan form for four weeks rent in advance and hand in at: *local Department for Work and Pensions (DSS) Job Centre Plus or call 08000327952*

Will DWP assist you with the budget loan?

No

Make an appeal

Sign the tenancy agreement and pay the rent in advance.

Yes

**Complete the Housing Benefit form and take it, along with the relevant documents to be assessed to:
*The Housing Benefit Office where the property is located***

Other places you could look for properties

- Loot newspaper – which is published on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
- Loot website – www.loot.com/property
- Other websites - www.gumtree.com/london_houses_to_rent_offered

www.fish4.co.uk/lettings
www.houseladder.co.uk
www.moveflat.com
www.froglet.com
www.intolondon.com
www.findaproperty.co.uk
www.hbaccepted.co.uk
www.primelocation.com
www.easyroommate.com
www.net-lettings.co.uk
www.aroomtolet.co.uk
www.reallymoving.com
www.londonhomelet.com
www.spareroom.co.uk
www.simple2rent.co.uk
www.thepropertycompany.co.uk
www.rent-let.vivastreet.co.uk
www.dsslondon.co.uk
www.flatmateclick.co.uk
www.roombuddies.com
www.roomster.com
www.flatsharedirect.com
www.aroomtolet.co.uk
www.zapmeta.com
www.u-room.com
www.housing-help.co.uk
www.tenantstips.co.uk
www.housingbenefitlandlords.co.uk
www.propertyfinder.com
www.vebra.com
www.hotproperty.co.uk
www.rightmoves.co.uk
www.findaproperty.co.uk

www.homeswapper.co.uk (for swapping properties)

- Homeless in London website: www.homelesslondon.org
- Newsagents windows and supermarkets for advertisements
- Local newspapers
- Estate agents and letting agents in your area of choice

LOCAL HOUSING ALLOWANCE RATES
April 2014 – March 2015

Broad Rental Market Area (BRMA)	Room	1 Bed
Central London	£131.27	£258.06
Inner East London	£98.16	£254.80
Inner North London	£94.07	£258.06
Inner South East London	£91.52	£196.23
Inner South West London	£90.75	£244.06
Inner West London	£106.29	£233.83
Outer East London	£73.62	£180.00
Outer North East London	£72.26	£154.83
Outer North London	£87.15	£192.00
Outer South East London	£81.03	£154.83
Outer South London	£79.29	£160.79
Outer South West London	£81.64	£207.69
Outer West London	£79.24	£168.98

Tips on privately renting in Merton (35 and older or with dependant children).

1. Let lots of agents know what you are looking for so you get a really good selection to choose from.
2. Inform the agent of your criteria (location, budget, furnished/unfurnished, occupation date requirement, tenancy period and any other aspects that are important to you).
3. Expect to pay a deposit of at least one months rent, possibly more. Possibly some administration charges.
4. You may be required to provide references.
5. Ensure you read and understand the tenancy agreement. The Citizens Advice Bureau may check this for you. (see following pages for CAB details). Clarify what is NOT included in the rental fee, such as council tax, utility bills, ground maintenance etc.
6. Examine the inventory prepared by the agent and keep a copy.
7. Notify defects in writing as soon as they become apparent (even if you do not want them remedied).
8. Establish what is covered under maintenance (boilers, refrigerators, radiators etc.).
9. Usually, you will not have to deal with the landlord directly. Should you have any problems or queries, direct them to your agent first.
10. Other issues to consider are, parking, neighbours, noise levels, public transport availability etc.

Contact information for shared private accommodation:

For those under the age of 35 years old and have no dependant children.

If you are under the age of 35 and you do not have any dependant children it is likely that you will only be entitled to the 'Shared Accommodation Rate of Housing Benefit. This is because you are expected to live in shared accommodation or a bedsit.

In order to find shared accommodation you will need to look in News Agents' noticeboards, the local newspaper and on the internet. When looking at an advert you will need to bear in mind who the advert is aimed at and whether or not you would 'fit in'. For example, if a property is advertised as 'great for a city professional' and you are at college, it is likely the property would not be suitable for you.

Refer to the page of useful websites that lists numerous sites where you can find private listings. These are a great resource for finding accommodation quickly.

Contact Information for 60 and older

Seaside & Country Homes

www.housingmoves.org

This scheme is open to households living in Council or Housing Association housing in Greater London where at least one member of the household is aged 60 or above. In cases where other members of the households are under 60 years of age they must be either the partner, joint tenant or registered carer of the lead applicant. The scheme is unable to consider applications where there are more than two persons on the application. Further information and application form available on line.



Citizens Advice

the charity for your community

The Citizens Advice Bureau Service offers free, independent and confidential advice. It started out in 1939 as an emergency service, and has since evolved into a professional national agency. The CAB gives advice and helps solve problems, including debt and consumer issues, benefits, housing, legal matters, employment, and immigration. Advisers can help fill out forms, write letters, negotiate with creditors and represent clients at court or tribunal.

Morden Citizens Advice Bureau
7 Crown Parade
Crown Lane
MORDEN
Surrey
SM4 5DA

Telephone: 0844 243 8430

Fax: 020 8715 0550

Web site: www.mertoncab.org.uk

Advice sessions

Many bureaux now have a short introductory interview to help decide how you can be best advised. You may then be asked to make an appointment. If the bureau is open only for appointments or specialist advice this will be indicated in the notes.

Mon: 10.00 - 14.00 14:00-15:00 for Information Only

Tue: 10.00 - 14.00 14:00-15:00 for Information Only. Legal Advice from 7pm

Wed: 10.00 - 14.00 14:00-15:00 for Information Only. Legal Advice from 7pm

Thu: 10.00 - 14.00 14:00-15:00 for Information Only

Telephone advice times

Unless indicated otherwise an adviser should be available by phone though this may be for an introductory interview only to help decide how you can best be advised.

Mon: 10.00 - 14.00

Tue: 12.00 - 15.00

Wed: 10.00 - 14.00

Thu: 12.00 - 15.00

Mitcham Citizens Advice Bureau
326 London Road
MITCHAM
Surrey
CR4 3ND

Telephone: 0844 243 8430

Fax: 020 8685 9483

Web site: www.mertoncab.org.uk

Advice times as Morden above

Streatham Hill Citizens Advice Bureau
1 Barrhill Road
Streatham Hill
LONDON
SW2 4RJ

Telephone: 0844 243 8430

Fax: 020 8678 6593

Web site: www.mertoncab.org.uk

Mon:	10.00 - 14.00	14:00-15:00 for Information Only
Tue:	10.00 - 14.00	14:00-15:00 for Information Only. Legal Advice from 7pm
Wed:	10.00 - 14.00	14:00-15:00 for Information Only. Legal Advice from 7pm
Thu:	10.00 - 14.00	14:00-15:00 for Information Only

Telephone advice times

Unless indicated otherwise an adviser should be available by phone though this may be for an introductory interview only to help decide how you can best be advised.

Mon: 10.00 - 14.00

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Merton Citizens Advice Specialist Services (money)
326 London Road
MITCHAM
Surrey
CR4 3ND

Telephone: 020 8640 3194 (Money Advice)
020 8687 8386 (LSC)

Web site: www.mertoncab.org.uk

Advice times/ sessions

Money Advice telephone service: 2.00-4.00 Mondays & 10.30-12.30 Thursdays

Other agencies that give advice

There are several advice services that can provide advice and support to homeless people in London but it is always best to get advice and support from a local service. If you are not able to get any advice locally you might find it useful to contact Shelter's Free Housing Advice Helpline on 0808 800 4444. This is a national helpline that can explain your housing rights and give advice on homelessness and any housing problem. Providing homeless people/rough sleepers and those with support needs with advice/information and shelter during the days.

If you have not already done so you should contact Merton's Homeless Persons Unit to see if they have a responsibility to provide you with housing or any other support. The Housing Options Centre should also be able to give you information and advice.



Housing Options

Community and Housing Department
3rd Floor
Merton Civic Centre
Morden
SM4 5DX

Telephone: 020 8545 3636

Email: housingadvice@merton.gov.uk

Housing Needs - 4th Floor, Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden, SM5 5DX -
Telephone: 020 8545 3733

LB Merton – www.merton.gov.uk - Rights for homeless people

This is a guide to what you are entitled to under the law and how Merton may be able to help you.

The 1996 Housing Act, Part VII (as amended by the 2002 Homelessness Act) sets out the legal duties that all local authorities have towards people who are homeless.

We have a legal duty to make sure you have somewhere to live if:

- You are homeless, and
- You are eligible, and
- You have a priority need, and
- You are not intentionally homeless

All applications have to be investigated to check whether the council has a legal duty to help you. Homelessness law is very complicated and there are very specific definitions of the above categories.

Homeless

We will consider you to be homeless if:

- You have nowhere to live;
- You have been living somewhere, but you have no legal right to stay there and have been told to leave;
- You have somewhere to live, but cannot get into it;
- You have somewhere to live, but someone else who lives there has been violent towards you, or is likely to be violent towards you;
- Your home is a caravan, or a houseboat and you have nowhere to legally park it, or moor it;
- You have somewhere to live, but nowhere for the people who normally live with you;
- You have been made homeless as a result of an emergency, such as fire, flood or some other disaster.

We will consider you to be threatened with homelessness if you are likely to become homeless within the next 28 days.

This may be because:

- You have been taken to court by your landlord and the court has said you must leave, or
- You have been living with friends or relatives who have told you to leave

Eligible

Certain categories of person are not eligible for assistance under the homelessness legislation, because they do not usually live in the UK or are subject to some form of immigration control. You are likely to be eligible for assistance if:

- You usually live in the UK and are not subject to any form of immigration control;
- You usually live in the UK and are subject to immigration control, but your right to stay here is not subject to any time limit or condition(s);
- You have been given refugee status, or leave to remain here, as a result of an application for asylum;
- You are an EU National with a right to reside or who is registered on the Workers Registration Scheme (this is for nations that joined the EU in 2004).

Eligibility is often very complex and you should take advice on this issue. Households who are not eligible for assistance from us may be eligible for assistance from social services.

In priority need

You may be in priority need for accommodation if:

- You are 16 or 17 years old;
- You are 18 to 20 years old and were looked after, accommodated or fostered between the ages of 16 and 18;
- You have dependent children who are under 16, or under 19 if they are in full time education, who live with you;
- You, or any member of your household is pregnant;
- You are at risk of violence;
- You have been made homeless as a result of fire, flood or some other disaster;
- You are vulnerable.

To decide whether you are vulnerable we have to apply a specific legal test that has been established in homelessness case law that defines vulnerability.

You may be vulnerable because:

- You are an older person;
- You suffer from mental illness, disability, or physical illness;
- You are at risk of domestic or other violence;
- You are over 21 but used to be looked after, accommodated or fostered by social services;
- You have served a custodial sentence or served in the armed forces.

If you are a priority need group you must also meet the eligibility criteria to be entitled to assistance.

Intentionally homeless

We may consider you to be intentionally homeless if you have become homeless as a result of something you have deliberately done, or failed to do. There are two areas we may consider.

The first area is:

- The applicant must deliberately do something, or have failed to do something, the consequence of which s/he has ceased, or the likely result will be that s/he will have to cease, occupation of accommodation, which was or is available;
- It must have been reasonable for the applicant to have continued to occupy accommodation, and;
- The applicant must have been aware of all the facts before deliberately taking, or failing to take, the actions referred to above.

The second area of intentionality is:

- The applicant enters into an arrangement under which s/he is required to cease to occupy the accommodation;
- It must have been reasonable for the applicant to have continued to occupy the accommodation;
- The purpose of the arrangement is to enable the applicant to become entitled to assistance under Part VII of the 1996 Act, and;
- There is no other good reason why s/he is homeless or threatened with homelessness.

We are unlikely to consider you intentionally homeless if we decide that:

- It was not reasonable for you to stay in your last home;
- You left home because of violence or fear of violence;
- Your home went with your job and you lost it through no fault of your own, or you gave it up for good reason,

Each application is looked at individually on its merits.

What is a local connection?

We also have to establish if you have a local connection with the borough. If not, we have to establish if you have a local connection with any other borough in England, Scotland or Wales.

Local authorities have agreed guidelines to help them decide whether you have a local connection with their borough. You may have a local connection if:

- You have lived in the borough for six out of the last 12 months
- You have lived in the borough for three out of the last five years
- You have permanent employment in the borough;
- You have a close relative who has lived in the borough for the last five years (e.g. mother, father, sister, brother, son or daughter).

We may refer you to another council and ask them to assist you, if:

- You have no local connection with the borough, but do have a local connection with another council;

We have to make sure that the other council has agreed to assist you before sending you there. While these arrangements are being made, we have a duty to offer you interim accommodation if this is required.

We will not force you to return to an area where you are at risk of violence.

If you have no connection with any area, we may still have a duty to house you or help you to obtain accommodation.

What assistance can you give me if my application is denied?

If we decide that we do not owe a duty to provide you with interim or temporary accommodation (because you are not eligible, not homeless, not in priority need or because you made yourself intentionally homeless), we will give you advice and assistance on how you may find a place to live.

If you receive a negative decision on your application, you can request a review of the decision within 21 days of the decision being made. The review must be completed within 56 days of your request, though the Council will complete the review as quick as possible. The review will be carried out by a senior officer who was not involved in the original decision.

Rent Deposit Scheme

Under the Rent Deposit Scheme, we will pay a deposit to a private landlord on your behalf. This will enable you to rent a home in the private sector. These properties are often in residential streets rather than estates and usually have gardens.

This scheme is only available to:

- customers we have placed in temporary accommodation;
- customers we have accepted a responsibility to provide housing for

If you think you may qualify and are interested in finding out more about this scheme, please contact the Housing Options Team

Young single homeless people in Merton

There are a number of schemes that operate in the borough that provide accommodation for young single people, and these are detailed below. Each scheme has varying selection criteria and an offer different services and levels of support. There is a great demand for vacancies in all the schemes.

To be referred to a scheme you will need to contact the Housing Options Team who will provide an initial assessment of your case and forward your referral to a nomination panel that meets once a month and decides what scheme, if any, to refer you to. The panel is made up of council representatives and other housing providers and agencies.

The schemes operating in the borough are as follows:

Grenfell Housing Association

The Grenfell foyer is a dispersed foyer for young single homeless people aged 16-24. Accommodation is in shared houses of two to four people. Each person has their own room and shares communal facilities. The scheme is located in the three boroughs of Merton, Wandsworth and Kingston and applicants must have a connection with one of these boroughs. Applicants must also be prepared to engage in education or training opportunities. Tenants stay for up to two years and follow a planned programme of resettlement. At the end of their stay the aim is to support the tenant into further accommodation, this is usually in the privately rented sector. Grenfell run their own training courses from their central office which is based in South Wimbledon.

Grenfell housing association also runs two housing projects for young single homeless people. One seven-bed three-storey house accommodates young people aged 18-25, often living independently for the first time. Tenants have their own bedroom and share a kitchen and bathroom. They are offered low support for up to two years and are then supported into move-on accommodation. The other project comprises 16 bedsits and shared bathroom facilities for young people aged 18-30. A "responsible tenant" lives in this scheme. Length of stay is up to one year. Referrals to Grenfell can be made directly or through the Housing Options Team.

Contact us : Grenfell Housing Association, 16 - 20 Kingston Road, South Wimbledon SW19 1JZ

Telephone: 020 8545 2588 Fax: 020 8545 2599

Website: www.grenfell-housing.co.uk

Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness (KCAH)

KCAH houses 35 homeless men and 8 homeless women with low support needs. Accommodation is in nine shared houses in the borough of Kingston including a three-bed women only house, a family house and eight men-only houses. There are also seven bedsits in a mixed block in borough. The accommodation is only open to clients of KCAH's own housing advice service and is designed to offer temporary housing while residents work towards long term resettlement. Residents are expected to work with support staff and agreed support plans with set targets to ensure their future employment and housing. Referrals to KCAH can be made directly or through the Housing Options Team.

Contact KCHA : 36a Fife Road

Kingston upon Thames

Surrey KT1 1SU

Telephone: 020 8255 7400 Fax: 020 8274 8405

Website: www.kcah.org.uk

Wandle Housing Association

Wandle housing association's supported housing for young people project provides supported accommodation for young single people aged 16-21. The accommodation comprises one shared house, 15 studio flats and includes one disabled adapted unit. All properties are located within the borough. Each tenant has an allocated housing officer who will work with the tenant to empower them to progress them towards independent living covering a range of support needs including access to welfare benefits, education and employment, budgeting, shopping and cooking, healthy eating, emotional and practical support and accessing any other agencies that will assist the tenant. Tenants can stay for up to two years.

Wandle housing association also provides supported housing for young mothers with one dependant child under the age of two at a six bed unit in Raynes Park, the scheme is staffed Monday to Friday between 9am-5pm and staff work with the tenants on independent living and parenting skills. Referrals to Wandle can be made directly or through the Housing Options Team.

Contact Us: 232 Mitcham Road
London SW17 9NN

Telephone: 020 8682 1177
Website: www.wandle.com

Merton Action for Single Homeless (MASH)

MASH is a short stay direct access emergency hostel for young homeless people aged 16-21 with shared rooms. MASH will only accept people who have a six month connection with the borough. Staff offer support through weekly one-to-one sessions to discuss each individual's progress. Maximum length of stay is 12 weeks and the project aims to move residents on to more permanent accommodation. Referrals to MASH can be made directly or through the Housing Options Team. (see page 22)

YMCA

Kingston and Wimbledon YMCA provides accommodation for 110 young single people aged 16-35 who are in housing need and have a local connection with the borough. 60 of these bed spaces are allocated to single homeless people, the remaining units are for students and workers on low incomes. All applicants must be committed to finding long term employment, education or training. Referrals are only accepted from our housing advice team and specific local housing agencies. All residents have a one month probationary period, life skills programme and formal reviews of their personal development plan. Staff provide help with literacy and numeracy, CVs, and finding work, training or college courses. Referrals to the YMCA are made through the Housing Options Team.

Contact Us: YMCA Wimbledon
200 The Broadway
Wimbledon
SW19 1RY

Website: www.kwymca.org.uk

Merton Sanctuary Scheme for Homeless people. Sanctuary Scheme - survivors of domestic violence.

Community and Housing Department
Merton Civic Centre, London Road
MORDEN
Surrey
SM4 5DX

Merton Sanctuary Scheme is a partnership between Merton housing, Safer Merton, Merton Police, Victim Support, MASCOT and the Fire Brigade. The scheme is an initiative that provides additional security measures for survivors of domestic violence. The scheme aims to help survivors exercise their choice to remain in their home, feel and be safe, and avoid becoming homeless, and is tailored to the needs and circumstances of the individuals involved (installing security measures to secure the home and for personal security ranging from changing locks or fitting a heavy duty front and/or back door, and even a safe room). The scheme is an alternative option to homelessness for victims of domestic violence. It is voluntary and open to: private sector tenants (landlords consent is required to fit additional security), owner-occupiers and housing association tenants.

Merton Sanctuary, Housing Needs, Tel: 020 8545 3714/3715/3718/4017.
Office Opening Hours : Monday to Friday - 9am to 5pm

How To Contact

Homeless Unit - telephone initially. Sanctuary Scheme - direct approach through the Housing Needs Department, or by referral from one of the referral agencies such as Police, Victim Support and MASCOT (experienced staff will assess whether you are eligible for the scheme).

Housing Needs - 4th Floor, Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden, SM5 5DX
Telephone: 020 8545 3733

Other useful numbers:-

Merton Victim Support Line - Telephone: 0845 303 0900

National Domestic Violence Helpline - Telephone: 0808 200 0247

Gypsy and Traveller strategy

Merton is developing a Gypsy and Traveller strategy in partnership with different local authority departments, voluntary agencies, other public bodies and service users across the borough. The purpose of the strategy is to identify and address the needs of Gypsies and Travellers within Merton.

Authorised site

In Merton we have a predominantly English Gypsy Traveller community, with a small community of Irish heritage Traveller families, and Eastern European Roma. They live in housing or on the Local Authority managed site.

In Merton there is one permanent site made up of 15 caravan pitches. This site is managed by Merton Priory Homes under a Service Level Agreement for Merton council.

You can make enquiries about vacant plots on site or how to get on the waiting list through the council or Merton Priory Homes Website <http://www.circle.org.uk/merton-priory-homes> - call 0300 500 3000

Merton Action For The Single Homeless (mash) – voluntary organisation

8 Wilton Road, COLLIERS WOOD, London, SW19 2HB

Contact : Avis Maxwell - Co Ordinator

Telephone 020 8543 3677

Fax 020 8543 7336

E-Mail mash.100@virgin.net

Website www.mertonaction.com

Area Served London Borough of Merton (must have local connection).

Services Offered

Short stay (12 weeks) housing project for homeless young people aged 16 - 21 years from London Borough of Merton. Hostel has 9 bed spaces in shared rooms. Residents are offered advice and referrals for housing and benefits.

Office Opening Hours - Monday - Sunday 8am - 11.30pm, but 24 hour cover for sleep in - in emergencies.

Public Transport Links - How to get to there

Colliers Wood Tube Station (5 minute walk). Buses 57 and 493 from Tooting Broadway and Wimbledon. 152 from Mitcham and Pollards Hill. 200 from Merton and Raynes Park.

Faith in Action - Homelessness Project Merton

Contact Information Salvation Army Hall, 109 Kingston Road, South Wimbledon, SW19 1LT

Phone 07843 280419 FREE 07843 280419

Email faithinaction@wimbledonguild.co.uk

Services Offered

Twice weekly drop-in for rough sleepers, people who are precariously housed such as squatters, those who are socially excluded, vulnerable and isolated or who have addiction issues. Advice on addictions, benefits, housing, mental health. Listening ear. Breakfast, lunch, showers, laundry, clothing.

Who the Project is For Rough sleepers, people who are precariously housed, socially excluded, isolated and vulnerable.

Area Served Merton and surrounding areas.

Opening Times Wednesday: 10am - 3pm drop-in

Friday: 10am - 3pm drop-in

Deptford Churches Centre

Speedwell Street, Deptford, SE8 4AT. Telephone 020 8692 6548

For adults who are vulnerable through homelessness, mental ill health, loneliness, severe poverty. 2 Low cost meals a day, free tea, coffee shop, soup all day, clothing store, shower, laundry facilities, GP, Housing advice, I.T Classes. Serves Deptford, Lewisham & surrounding areas.

Open Monday to Friday 9am – 3.30pm. Buses 47, 53, 177, 188, 199. Deptford Train station, Newcross tube/train station, Deptford DLR.

Crisis Smartmove – 0870 011 3335 OR 020 7713 7655.

Advice on schemes in your area (London) – providing possible help for those living in London who can not afford the deposit for private rented accommodation – have to be over 25 years old.

U-Turn - Women's Centre

Phone

020 7739 2950

Fax

020 7739 2950

Website

www.eturnproject.co.uk

Service offered

Support services for women sex workers and vulnerable women. Key work and advocacy, accompany women to HPU's, court, police and help women re-establish links with family. IT classes, range of training courses. Housing advice and sexual health advice sessions Wednesdays. Counselling Mondays. Showers, laundry, clothing store. Hot drinks, kitchen. Outreach work in Tower Hamlets and Newham.

Open Door Meal

Name of Project Open Door Meal

Region London

Description The Open Door Meal takes place 7-9pm every other Thursday & provides a hot meal, clothing and toiletries to more than 100 homeless and vulnerably housed people. It is run almost entirely by volunteers from St James the Less and other London churches.

Client Age Group All ages

Opening Hours 7:00pm to 9:00pm alternate Thursdays

Address St James the Less Church
Thorndike Street (off Moreton Street)
Pimlico
Westminster
London
SW1V 2PS

Telephone 020 7630 6282

Website <http://ccgi.stjamestheless.plus.com>

St Giles Trust - www.stgilestrust.org.uk – for support and advice

WIRE (Women's Information and Resettlement for Ex-offenders)

This service meets women on release from prison and provides practical resettlement support, particularly around housing, finances and engaging with other services, such as those helping with substance misuse and mental health issues. Women who leave prison are often vulnerable to negative pressures from ex-partners so caseworkers on the team are specially trained in dealing with these issues, particularly those involving domestic abuse. This small, highly skilled team are all trained, reformed ex-offenders themselves with direct experience of the criminal justice system.

SOS Project

This award-winning London-wide project offers intensive support to persistent and prolific young offenders to help them break free from crime - particularly gang-related crime. It works with young people both in prison and in the community, offering a tailored package of support for each individual to help them identify and realise alternative aspirations and goals away from a life of crime. It also works with young people at risk of getting involved in the criminal justice system.

Peer Advice Project

The Peer Advice Project aims to meet the large demand for advice services amongst the prison population by using an under-used resource - serving prisoners themselves. The Peer Advice Project was initially set up to address the high levels of homelessness amongst the prison population by training serving prisoners to act as housing advisors. However, in some prisons advisors cover other areas such as employment and training opportunities.

Meet at the Gates

Provides post-release support for prison leavers returning to London. Support workers meet their clients at the prison gate and offer help with accommodation and referrals to other support services.

Emergency housing support and private rented accommodation

Having somewhere safe and stable to live is essential for our clients to be able to move their lives forward. We offer a week-day emergency drop in housing support service for local homeless people at our Head Office in Camberwell. We also have a developing Private Rented Sector project which provides private rented accommodation for our clients.

Private Rented Sector Project

Housing support services

Running alongside our peer-based support is a housing casework service provided under the prison's Housing Information and Advice Service (HIAS) in partnership with St Mungo's. It offers advice on housing-related issues to both newly sentenced prisoners and those about to be released.

The services aim to support the resettlement of prisoners and reduce re-offending on release. These caseworkers work alongside our peer advisors and the prisons staff to provide prisoners with support.

For more information and leaflets on all the above, please visit www.stgilestrust.org.uk

Stonewall Housing - (Housing advice & support to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender)

We provide a free and confidential housing advice service to all LGB and T people of all ages in every London borough. Last year we were contacted by over 1200 people. It is the only service of its type in the UK and were awarded a legal service quality mark. The advice covers a range of issues such as homelessness, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic harassment, domestic abuse, forced marriage, immigration, landlord disputes, repossessions, evictions, successions, referrals and rent deposit schemes.

The advice line is open every day. On Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, the line is open from 10am – 1pm. On Tuesday, from 2pm to 5pm.

Drop-in surgeries take place from 2pm -3.30pm at the following venues

- Monday: Contemporary Urban Centre, 13a Great Chapel Street, W1F 8FL
- Wednesday: Origin Housing, St Richards House, 110 Eversholt Street NW11BS
- Thursday: THT Lighthouse South, 14-15 Lower Marsh, Waterloo, SE1 1BS

All of these services are available to clients and residents who use local services.



Women at the Well – is a charity in Kings Cross for vulnerable women.

<http://www.watw.org.uk>

Women at the well is a day centre in Kings Cross for vulnerable women who have problems relating to prostitution, homelessness, drugs, alcohol, mental health, offending etc

Women at the Well give help with basic needs, support and advocacy, life skills, health and wellbeing.

Opening Times

Monday 12 noon - 4pm
Tuesday 12 noon - 4pm
Wednesday 12 noon - 4pm
Thursday 12 noon - 4pm
Friday 12 noon - 4pm

Veterans' Support Service

Do you need help with the following?

- Advice on welfare benefits, including service pensions
- Housing Advice, and support with accessing accommodation
- Access to health



If you have ever served in the British Armed Forces, the Veterans' Support Service is here to support you and your dependants

VETERANS' SUPPORT SERVICE

Do you need help with the following:

- Advice on welfare benefits, including service pensions
- Housing advice and support with accessing accommodation
- Support with mental health issues, including PTSD
- Improving your physical health
- Getting into training, employment, and meaningful daytime activities
- Support with debt and money management
- Support around substance misuse problems

If you are a Veteran, a dependant of a Veteran, or you know a Veteran who is struggling, please give us a call; we may be able to help.

020 7385 2110

Emergency accommodation across London:

It is possible that if you become homeless you will not receive any assistance from the Local Authority, although you will receive advice. If you have been given an information pack from an officer of the Local Authority, it is likely that you would have been advised and assessed according to the relevant legislation. If you are told that you are 'not in Priority Need', this does not mean that the local authority does not recognise that you are homeless. It does however mean that the assistance you will receive will be limited. In order to prevent your street homelessness, please find below a list of hostels and day centre's which may be able to assist you.

Hostels across London

Please call ahead for opening hours and times of the different services. Many centers and hostels have restricted services over the holiday periods and year round most services are only offered at certain times.

Missionaries of Charity – Gift of Love – 112-116 St George'S road, SE1 6EU. Telephone- 020 7401 8378 OR 020 76201504.

Transport – Lambeth North or Elephant & Castle tube. Buses 12, 53, 18, 188, 344, C10. Single homeless men aged 30-60with low support needs, particularly those who have been rough sleeping.

9.30-11.30am & 4pm-6pm daily. Does not accept referrals on a Thursday and only accepts applicants after an assessment by the Sister-in-Charge. Minimum stay is 1 night, maximum is 3 Months. No Alcohol or smoking allowed in the building. Must be in by 8.30pm and must leave the house between9.30am and 5pm. Visitors must leave by 8pm.

Missionaries of Charity – Home of Peace – 179 Bravington Road, W9 3AR Telephone 020 8962631.

Single homeless women 18-60 years, with no or very low support needs. Prefer applicants to have a local connection to the City of Westminster, but not essential. Will not accept women with a history of violence or women who are unable to care for themselves for themselves. Does not accept referrals on a Thursday. Phone to check vacancies between 8.30am – 11am & 2.30pm – 7pm. Proof of ID will be needed, average of 2 weeks stay. No Alcohol or Smoking allowed in the building and residents are expected to be out between 10am – 4pm and in by 9pm.

Salvation Army - Booth House

Tel: 020 7392 9490 (Male)

Information: Must be referred by Tower Hamlets Council and must be assessed as having a local connection to the borough. Information: 18-60 year olds

Salvation Army - Edward Alsop Court

Tel: 020 7233 0296 (Male)

Information: Must be referred by Westminster Council and must be assessed as having a local connection to the borough.

Salvation Army - Hopetown

Tel: 020 7364 7151

Information: Must be referred by Tower Hamlets Council and must be assessed as having a local connection to the borough.

SPEAR Hostel

Tel 020 8332 7382

Information: Must be referred by Richmond Upon Thames Council and must be assessed as having a local connection to the borough.

St Mungo's

Tel: 0208 762 5500

Information: Large charity across London with numerous hostels across south London. (Have to be referred by Outreach)

The Marylebone Project - Bradbury House

Tel: 020 7262 3818

Information: Women only 18-59 years old. Not essential to have local connection although preferable.

Centrepoin, 54 Dean Street, London, W1D 6AE

Tel: 020 7423 6805

Information: Hostel for young single people aged between 16 – 25. This is the Centrepoin London Advice Centre number.

St Christopher's Fellowship, Lime Grove Resource Centre, 47 Lime Grove, W12 8EE

Tel: 020 8740 9182

Information: For young people and vulnerable adults.

St Louise Hostel, 33 Medway Street London SW1P 2BE

Tel: 020 7222 2071

St Louise Hostel is a 94 bed direct access hostel for single women over the age of 21. The accommodation comprises single rooms, shared kitchens and bathrooms. Bedrooms are equipped with a bed, chest of drawers and wardrobe. Launderette, TV Lounge, 24 Hour Security. Applicants in receipt of benefits are welcome to apply.

YMCA Accommodation

YMCA accommodation is usually available for those between the ages of 16-29 unless otherwise stated. Depending on demand each hostel may or may not require that you have a local connection to that area.

City YMCA: 2 Fann Street, London, EC2Y 8BR Tel: 020 7382 5360

Information: For those between the ages of 11 – 29 years old.

Dagenham YMCA: 1-11 Vineries Close, Dagenham, Essex RM9 5DA

Tel: 020 8595 8672

Information: Hostel for men and women 18 - 25

Hornsey YMCA: 184 Tottenham Lane, Crouch End, London N8 8SG

Tel: 020 8342 5114

Information: 18-30 year olds, must be referred by an agency such as Connexions.

Reading YMCA: Marlborough House, Parkside Road, Reading, RG30 2DD

Tel: 0118 957 5746

Romford YMCA: Rush Green Road, Romford, Essex, RM7 0PH

Tel: 01708 766211

Information: Hostel for single young men and women with support needs aged 18-30

Slough YMCA: 30 Ladbrooke Road, Slough, SL1 2SR

Tel: 01753 810 684

Waltham Forest YMCA: 642 Forest Road, Walthamstow, London, E17 3EF

Tel: 020 8509 4600

Information: Hostel for single young men and women with support needs aged 18-30

Watford and District YMCA: Charter House, Charter Place, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD17 2RT

Tel: 01923 353600

West Kent YMCA: Ryder House, 1-23 Belgrave Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 2BP
Tel: 01892 542209

West London YMCA: 45 St Mary's Road, Ealing, London, W5 5RE
Tel: 0300 1111 525

YMCA Thames Gateway: The Roundhouse, Overy Street, Dartford, DA1 1UP
Tel: 01322 220521

Day centres and other advice services across London that can help

As well as contacting the Council it can be very helpful to go to other local services that can give advice and support and make referrals to hostels or other support services.

999 Club – 21 Deptford Broadway, Deptford, SE8 4PA. Telephone 020 8691 7734, Deptford or New Cross Train stations, Deptford DLR, Buses 47, 53, 177, 225, X53

999 Club – All Saints, Monson Road, Newcross, SE14 6AH. Telephone 020 7732 0209. Monday to Fridays 10am – 5pm. Buses 21, 53, 172, 177, 225, X53, P3.

Church Army

Day center for homeless women
Address: 1-5 Cosway Street, London, NW1 5NR
Tel: 020 7262 3818
Until 12noon open for rough sleepers only.

London Irish Centre

Offer advice and assistance with various issues including benefits.
Address: 50-52 Camden Square, London, NW1 9XB
Tel: 020 7916 2222

Ace of Clubs

Mainly homeless people, others in need in the local community aged 16+ and unemployed people
Address: St Alphonsus Road, Clapham, SW4 7AS
Tel: 020 7720 2811

Manna Day Centre

Single homeless people and people in need.
Address: 6 Melior Street, London, SE1 3QP
Tel: 020 7403 1931
Can help with finding accommodation whilst attending centre.

The Spires Centre

For Homeless and Disadvantaged People
Address: 8 Tooting Bec Gardens, London, SW16 1RB
Tel: 020 8696 0943

Deptford Reach

Anyone over 16 who is vulnerable, disadvantaged, socially isolated, elderly excluded, homeless
Address: Speedwell Street, London, SE8 4AT
Tel: 020 8692 6548

West London Day Centre

Open each weekday morning 25+ only .
Can assist with benefits, food, clothing and counseling. Showers and a nurse on site.
Address: 134-136 Seymore Place, London, W1H 5DJ
Tel: 020 7569 5900

Broadway Day Centre

Provide a range of services from street to home for vulnerable individuals when they need it.
Address: Broadway Centre, Off Goldhawk Road, Shepherds Bush, London, W12 8EZ
Tel: 020 8735 5810

Vineyard Project

Mondays to Fridays is an open-access day centre for those in need of support.
Address: Congregational Church Crypt, The Vineyard, TW10 G1Q
Tel: 020 8940 2965

New Horizon Youth Centre

Work with vulnerable/homeless people aged between 16 - 21
Housing advice for young people, no restrictions and will work to resettle.
Address: 68 Charlton Street, NW1 1JR
Tel: 020 7388 5560

St Louise Hostel

130 beds in single and shared rooms. For women aged between 16 - 25
Address: 33 Medway Street, Westminster, SW1P 2BE
Tel: 020 7222 2071

Wayside Hostel

For women aged between 16 - 35
42 Croydon Road, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 0PQ
Tel: 01737 248304

Homelessness & Housing charities/organisations and agencies in London

Shelter – England.shelter.org.uk 24 hour helpline 0808 800 4444

In addition to its campaigning work, shelter runs a network of housing aid centres. They can provide advice & advocacy on all areas of housing law, Including homelessness, allocation of housing and security of tenure. Shelter also has access to hostel information including emergency accommodation & direct access hostels

Thames Reach – www.thamesreach.org.uk
An agency for homeless people in London.

CRASH – www.crash.org.uk
The UK construction industry Charity for helping homeless people

National Homeless Alliance - www.home-all.org

This organisation works with over 100 organisations in helping homeless people by providing them with information, advice and research.

St Mungos – www.stmungos.org.uk

A homelessness organisation with an abundance of links to 1000's of organisations, facts, services and info about their project.

Federation of black housing organisations (FBHO) www.fbho.org.uk

Telephone 020 7388 1560, 137 Euston Road, London, NW1 2AA.
Building a vibrant & dynamic black and minority ethnic social housing.

Housing mobility and exchange services (HOMES) www.homes.org.uk

0845 080 1089. 242 Vauxhall Bridge, London, SW1V 1AU.

An organisation which works with local authorities and registered social landlords throughout the UK, offering a range of services that help people move including tenants with special needs or disabilities.

Housing Services Agency (HAS) 020 7284 0293

140 Camden Street, London, NW1 9PF.

Promotes and carries out effective resettlement of single homeless people.

NACRO - Resettlement Advice Service

Nacro's Resettlement Advice Service reopened on Monday 3 September, providing quality information, expert advice and advocacy support. You will still be able to find answers to our most frequently asked questions and further advice on our website. You can also find basic information and advice about criminal records and disclosures on the DirectGov website.

Enquirers who are unable to find the answer to their questions on our website, can now call us on 0207 840 7200 - dialing Option 2 followed by Option 1.

The new Resettlement Advice Service will provide a number of specialist services including:

- the UK's only dedicated confidential helpline and online service providing expert advice and advocacy to serving prisoners, former prisoners and others facing severe barriers in various aspects of their lives as a result of their former offending.
- expert advice, training and strategic support to employers, educational establishments and other organisations working with ex-offenders, including risk assessment support for organisations seeking to employ or admit individuals with a criminal record, and Work Programme Contractors seeking to place ex-offenders into sustainable employment.
- a personalised research service, based on a unique national service level database which helps family professionals locate suitable housing, employment and other vital resettlement services for people leaving prison and relocating to different areas of the country.



What do I do if I become street homeless?

London Street Rescue helps rough sleepers off the streets and into accommodation.

If you are sleeping rough, you can call us on **0870 383 3333**.

About London Street Rescue

Every night of the year, we are out and about across the capital, acting as a safety net for some of society's most vulnerable men and women.

Our teams of outreach workers and volunteers find and engage with rough sleepers in a bid to help them off the streets.

We provide practical assistance, including:

- Help into emergency accommodation.
- Help into hostel accommodation/private. rented/The Clearing house/Supported housing.
- Help with ID and benefits.
- information and advice about support services.
- Assistance with linking in with health services.
- Street Rescue outreach workers prepare for a shift.

London Street Rescue helps people of all ages and with many different needs. These include people with poor mental or physical health and those with drug or alcohol problems.

Our teams are there for people who are not getting the services they need and are unlikely to seek help for themselves.

London Street Rescue's actions can act as a catalyst for change in people's lives. Getting rough sleepers into accommodation is often the first step towards them getting back on track and having a home of their own.

Our teams refuse to give up on people. We will work with individuals for as long as it takes to help them move away from a street lifestyle, no matter how complex their needs.

People sleeping rough are very vulnerable to the dangers of the streets. The actions of London Street Rescue can save lives.

Information taken from <http://www.thamesreach.org.uk/what-we-do/on-the-street/>



0870 383 3333

The No Second Night Out (NSNO) project was launched on **1 April 2011** as a pilot project aimed at ensuring those who find themselves sleeping rough in central London for the first time need not spend a second night on the streets.

Each week about 50 people are seen rough sleeping for the first time in London. Many of them are new to the capital. Our aim is to ensure there is a rapid response to new rough sleepers, and that they are provided an offer that means they do not have to sleep out for a second night. Other projects exist to support those already rough sleeping and living on the streets.

The Mayor of London has committed to end rough sleeping in London. To deliver this commitment he established the London Delivery Board (LDB) – a partnership body chaired by the Mayor’s Housing Advisor that brings together central London boroughs, government departments, the voluntary sector and key stakeholders. The outcome the LDB is seeking to deliver is that by the end of 2012 no one will live on the streets of London and no individual arriving on the streets will sleep out for a second night.

No Second Night Out began as a pilot project on the 1st April 2011 and operates across ten central boroughs represented on the LDB. From 1st June 2012 it is rolling out to all London boroughs.

No Second Night Out Assessment Hub

Name of Project No Second Night Out Assessment Hub

Project Type Housing Advice and Support

Region London

Description No Second Night Out is a pilot project focused on ensuring there is a rapid response to new rough sleepers, and will provide an offer that means they do not have to sleep out for a second night. Referrals by the public are welcome.

Client Age Group All ages

Opening Hours 24-hour reception

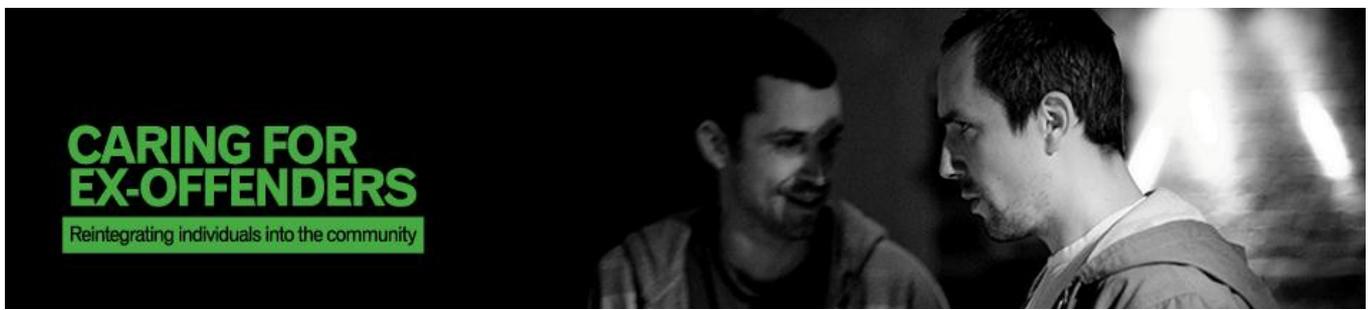
Address Camden
London

Telephone 020 7837 0970

Fax 020 7713 8034

Main Contact Becky Green

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



Information for Probation

Caring for Ex-Offenders provides a free and local service for ex-offenders to aid them in successful resettlement back into society and the subsequent reduction in risk of re-offending that follows. Our service is available to anyone about to be released from prison, recently released, or currently serving a community sentence; for the purpose of ease I refer to all the afore mentioned as ex-offenders throughout this document.

We link ex-offenders to a local CFEO community that provides the ex-offender with a mentor and a team of supportive volunteers who can aid them in successful resettlement. The mentor is there to help address attitudes and behavior and work towards change, setting goals and seeing them through. The rest of the community's team are there for any other needs that may arise, such as the need for accommodation, help with addiction problems, finding employment or education, filling out forms, improving family relationships, or simply friendship and a supportive community of people.

These may be fulfilled through the community's own programmes and facilities (some of our communities run employability schemes, debt advice centres, addiction recovery programs or supported housing facilities for ex-offenders), or for those that don't through signposting the ex-offender to the appropriate local agencies or charities that can help them according to their individual needs.

Through this support and regular mentoring over an extended period of time strong positive relationships are developed, combined with help with practical needs this process reduces the risk of reoffending by increasing the chance of successful resettlement. Essentially CFEO communities are there to facilitate the 7 pathways being effectively in place in an individual's life.

CFEO communities are local churches but this does not dictate the character of the individual we refer; they can be of any faith, or none, and the communities are committed to helping referrals regardless of their beliefs. This nonetheless adds another dimension to the support that can be given as these communities can aid ex-offenders spiritually if necessary.

Contact Us

If you have any questions regarding Caring for Ex-Offenders please do get in touch:

E-mail:

info@caringforexoffenders.org

Post: Caring for Ex-Offenders, Holy Trinity Brompton, Brompton Road, London, SW7 1JA

Phone: 020 7052 0332

Keep up to date with Caring for Ex-Offenders' work, news, training events, and more at our website: **www.caringforexoffenders.org**.

Here you can also download resources, including our Referral and Church Registration forms. via the website.

Process details:

The referral process begins with the initial contact between the individual wishing to be linked to a CFEO community and our central office, and then proceeds as follows:

1. An ex-offender who wishes to be linked to a CFEO community to get help with resettlement and societal reintegration completes one of our referral forms.
2. We obtain risk assessments relating to the individual concerned. For those still serving a prison sentence this will usually be from a Chaplain or Resettlement Officer and we will always obtain one from their Probation Officer.
3. We then contact a CFEO community on our network located in a suitable place for the ex-offender; preferably within a mile of where they are living or relocating to, and always within a reasonable travelling distance via public transport. We ask the community if they are in a position at that time to support the individual.
4. If they agree, we then pass on the ex-offender's details; including their risk assessments in order for the community to put in place any relevant safety precautions such as safe guards relating to interaction with children or vulnerable adults if necessary. If not, we try another community on our network until we find one that can offer appropriate support. We also inform the ex-offender that they have been linked to a community and provide them with their assigned mentor's name.
5. If the individual is still in prison then a member of the community's CFEO team contacts them whilst they are still in prison, visits if possible, and on release personally meets them at the gate; if the individual has already been released, or serving a community sentence, then the process jumps to point 6.
6. The mentor then meets with the ex-offender regularly and organises any help they may need from the wider CFEO team; such as help with job applications or benefit forms, help with addiction problems, or finding relevant help if none is available from within the community, etc. The Caring for Ex-Offenders staff are also available to answer queries and assist in any way possible.
7. CFEO contacts the mentor at intervals to assess the progress of the relationship and check if they need any further support. We can then update the prison staff and/or probation if they wish to hear how the individual is doing.

Community Training: CFEO communities often have experience of working with ex-offenders before joining our network but for those who don't, or who need additional equipping, we offer two forms of training in order to equip communities:

- 1 - CFEO training:
 - Setting up a CFEO Team
 - Relationship Building
 - Working with High Risk and Sex Offenders
 - Working with Statutory Organisations
 - Risk Management
 - Volunteer Supervision and Safeguarding
- 2 - Mentor training (Mentoring and Befriending Foundation accredited):
 - Communication Skills
 - Boundaries and Risk
 - Understanding Ex-offenders
 - If you have any further questions about CFEO, require additional details, or a copy of our referral forms then please do get in touch.

WHAT SUPPORT IS THERE FOR PEOPLE WITH NO RECOURSE TO PUBLIC FUNDS?

No recourse to public funds (NRPF) refers to people who are not entitled to access certain public services in this country. People with NRPF are those who are subject to immigration control and have no entitlement to welfare benefits, to Home Office asylum support for asylum seekers, or to public housing. NRPF includes:

Refused asylum seekers whose appeal rights are exhausted, people who have overstayed their visas, people on sponsorship visas, such as spousal visas.

Overseas visitors, people on student visas and other irregular migrants.

Some unemployed migrants from Central and Eastern Europe may also have NRPF.

Individuals with NRPF who become homeless have very few avenues for support that are accessible to them, and some may face destitution.

The Housing rights website at www.housing-rights.info/index.php gives information for recent arrivals in England for advisers about entitlements to housing, based on people's immigration status.

Homeless Link's website has information about entitlements to support at www.homeless.org.uk and guidance or organisations seeking to support individuals with no recourse to public funds.

Getting help

The regulations governing access to public services and funds is complex so it is important to get advice on individual circumstances as soon as possible. Day centres, CABx and local services for refugees and asylum seekers listed on Homeless London can provide advice on the limited accommodation and support options available for people with NRPF. Very few hostels or supported accommodation services can accept people with NRPF.

Homeless London has information about support for Central and Eastern Europeans - details available on www.homelesslondon.org/details.asp?id=QA65

Missionaries of Charity runs two emergency night shelters in London (one for men aged 30+ and one for women) that offer short term accommodation for those with nowhere else to stay and have no support needs. Some winter shelters that open during the cold weather may be able to accept people with NRPF. All these shelters are usually full and have few vacancies.

Returning to country of origin

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) runs a voluntary return scheme (Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme) details at www.homeless.org.uk to assist non-EEA nationals who have been in the asylum system at any stage (applying, appealing or refused) and who wish to return to their country of origin. IOM also runs a voluntary return assistance scheme for families and children (Assisted Voluntary Return or Families and Children)

Children & families Across Borders – www.cab.uk.net - can also assist vulnerable people to return home. Routes Home website – www.routeshome.org.uk - gives practical guidance for outreach staff and others involved in reconnecting Central and Eastern Europeans sleeping rough back to their home country.

Taken from Homelesslondon.org website – accessed September 2012

Getting into a hostel or housing project in Merton

Hestia supported flats – there are seven supported flats in Merton, managed and supported by Hestia staff.

Who are they for?

Offered primarily to MAPP cases.

How do I access?

Referrals should go via your offender manager. Completion of referral form required. Telephone Manager David Griffiths on landline: 020 8408 1507 or mobile: 07791145463 for application pack.