

Lewes District Council homelessness eligibility

Urgent advice may prevent you from losing your home and becoming homeless.

We always try to prevent or resolve homelessness. We follow five steps to decide what help we will give:

1. if you are eligible
2. if you are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 28 days
3. if you are in a priority need group
4. if you have not made yourself homeless intentionally
5. if you have a local connection to the area

If you fulfil all the five conditions listed above we have a duty to ensure reasonable accommodation is made available to you. This could involve us giving you advice or help for you to find accommodation yourself. If this is not successful we will provide you with temporary accommodation.

Permanent accommodation will either be in Lewes District Council accommodation, accommodation provided by a Registered Social Landlord or in the private rented sector.

If you do not have a local connection we can refer you to your local area.

If you have made yourself homeless intentionally we have a duty to provide temporary accommodation and give you advice to find an alternative home. Temporary accommodation will only be given to you for a reasonable time period, which could be around 28 days.

Emergency accommodation is only provided if we think you are homeless and have a priority need. You will be expected to pay towards the cost of emergency/temporary accommodation. If you are on benefits or a low income you may be eligible for help with this.

If you are homeless but do not have a priority need we may refuse to give you accommodation, but we will give you advice and assistance to find a new home.

Each homelessness applicant will be interviewed by a homelessness officer and their case will be individually assessed. We aim to give a written decision on your claim within 33 days, but this is dependant upon the complexity of your case.

Eligibility

You are eligible for assistance unless you are:

- Subject to immigration control (with certain exceptions); or
- We decide that (with certain exceptions) you are not habitually resident in the UK, the Republic of Ireland, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man.

You will be considered homeless if:

- You have been given notice to leave your home within 28 days.
- You or your family have no accommodation you are entitled to occupy;
- You have a home but we consider it unreasonable for you to go on living there,
- You have a home but you cannot gain entry

You will have a priority need if:

- You have a dependant child normally living with you; or
- You or someone living with you is expecting a baby; or
- You are 16 or 17 and have not previously been looked after by social services; or
- You are 18, 19 or 20 and have previously been in the care of social services; or
- You are escaping domestic violence; or
- We consider that you or someone living with you are vulnerable as a result of old age, mental illness/disability, physical disability or any other special reason; or

We consider that you are vulnerable because you:

- are over 21 and have been in care
- have been in the armed forces
- have been in custody or on remand
- have suffered violence or threats of violence
- You are homeless following a flood, fire or similar emergency.

We may find that you are intentionally homeless if you have:

- Given up accommodation that you could have stayed in; or

- You lost your accommodation due to your own actions

A local connection means:

- You have lived in the district for six months of the last year or three years in the last five
- You are permanently employed in the district; or
- You have close family that have lived in the district for over 5 years; or
- You have specialist medical or support needs which can only be obtained in the district