

Homeless in Denbighshire?

- What the Council can do
- Where to go for help

This leaflet explains how the Council will help you if you are homeless or likely to become homeless.

First steps

If you think you will become homeless and haven't got the means to find your own accommodation – get advice.

The Council has a Housing Options Service in Ruthin and Rhyd and there are independent advice agencies that can also help.

The Housing Options Service may be able to prevent you becoming homeless or move to more suitable accommodation. See our leaflet *Housing Options and Advice Services in Denbighshire*. If you are under 25 and single, see our leaflet *Young Single and Homeless in Denbighshire*.

Not all people want help finding a new home, but the law says that some people have more legal rights than others.

So who will the Council help?

We will give advice to anyone who wants help finding accommodation. But the Council doesn't have to give everyone a home, or temporary accommodation. We have legal duties to help people who are HOMELESS, in PRIORITY NEED and who are NOT INTENTIONALLY HOMELESS. If you do not have a LOCAL CONNECTION with Denbighshire we will normally refer you to a local authority where you are connected (if it safe to do so). This can be explained to you when the time comes.

You may be in priority need if you are:

- pregnant
- have dependent children living with you
- are VULNERABLE because of age, health, physical disability, mental health to the extent that you will come to harm if you are homeless.
- Are homeless in an emergency such as flood or fire
- Are 16/17 years old
- Are a care leaver over the age of 18 but under 21
- A single person suffering domestic or other violence
- Are homeless after leaving the armed forces

- Are a former prisoner homeless after release from custody AND you have a local connection with Denbighshire.

WE WILL CHECK ALL THIS INFORMATION

Will I get a Council House?

Not necessarily. There is a very limited amount of Council housing available anywhere in Denbighshire and it may not be possible to house you in the area of your choice. This will be explained to you.

The Council can carry out its legal duties to house you by nominating you to a housing association, or sometimes we may have to use the private sector (with your permission) if there is no social housing in the area you want. Becoming homeless does not always get you to the top of the list for housing because housing has to be allocated according to the law and other people may be ahead of you. If you have rent arrears with the Council or a housing association this may mean you have to wait longer or pay off the arrears before getting an offer.

What Information will I need to provide?

Just as you do when you apply for housing benefit – you have to provide information to prove your circumstances.

We will normally expect you to prove who you are and provide a birth certificate if you are under 18. You will have to prove that any children in your household are your dependents and you will normally have to provide proof of homelessness and where you have been living. You will have to tell us why you are homeless and we will check whether you have deliberately made yourself homeless (this is called INTENTIONALITY).

What happens if I get temporary accommodation?

The Council may provide you with temporary accommodation while it makes further inquiries about your case. If you need SUPPORT we have a scheme called GIFT. You will have to PAY THE CHARGES for your accommodation (normally through claiming housing benefit – and we will help you to do this).

You will also have to stick to any rules of the accommodation and live there as your only home. You will have to INFORM THE COUNCIL if your CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE. Again, this will be explained to you at the time. You may be asked to move to other accommodation as time goes on.

What happens when the Council has finished investigating my case?

You will get a notification of the Council's decision in writing. If the Council accepts you, you will be given the appropriate number of points on the housing list and advised on the likelihood of getting an offer in your areas of preference. You will sometimes have to wait a long time until you get an offer.

You will normally only get ONE OFFER and this may or may not be in your first choice of area.

If the Council does not accept you, the Council will have to EXPLAIN WHY and you will normally have a right to have the decision REVIEWED. This information will be in the letter.

But if I'm accepted as homeless, surely I'll be top of the waiting list?

The Council only has to give you additional points, but if there are other households ahead of you they will get offers first.

We have already said that there is not a lot of Council or housing association properties becoming available. People are not moving out of Council housing as much as they used to and there are very strict financial rules which make house building very difficult for social landlords (Council or housing associations).

Many areas (especially rural villages) do not have any at all because people have exercised the Right to Buy. If you want to be housed quickly or live in another County all together, the only way we can usually help you is through a deposit with a private landlord. Quite a number of our homeless applicants currently choose this option.

So that's the reality! It's not easy is it? We know that - and we will always try to explain the BEST OPTIONS FOR YOU.

You can get INDEPENDENT ADVICE about any of the issues in this leaflet and at ANY STAGE of your application. There is a list of organisations giving advice and help below.

The Council Offices dealing with Housing Options Advice and Homelessness are:

North Denbighshire:

64 Brighton Road, Rhyl, LL18 3HP Tel: **01824 706000**
(Mon -Thurs 9.00-5.00; Fri 9.00 - 4.30)

South Denbighshire

Council Offices, Wynnstay Road, Ruthin LL15 1YN.; **01824 706000**
(Mon -Thurs 9.00-5.00; Fri 9.00 - 4.30)

Independent Advice – North Denbighshire

(Please do not travel to these offices without telephoning for an appointment or advice about opening hours)

Shelter Cymru: Unit 5, Station Buildings, Bodfor St, Rhyl **01745 361444**

Citizens Advice - Independent Advice 11 Water St., Rhyl **01745 334568**

Money Advice Unit: **01745 814 338**

Independent Advice – South Denbighshire

(Please do not travel to these offices without telephoning for an appointment or advice about opening hours)

Shelter Cymru: PO Box 2293, Wrexham **01978 317911**

Citizens Advice;

Denbigh: 23 High Street, **01745 814336**

Ruthin: The Old Fire Station, Market St, **01824 703483**

Llangollen 37 Hall Street **01978 860983**

Money Advice Unit: **01745 814 338**

Other

Rhyl Women's Aid 26b Wellington Road, Rhyl **01745 337104**
Glyndwr Women's Aid (Denbigh) **01745 814494** (24 hr)

Rhyl Night Shelter/Resettlement Project – 68 Wellington Road, Rhyl
01745 361 728. Night shelter for 18+ years, help with finding accommodation and access to bond scheme (16+)

Canolfan Dewi Sant Centre, Clwyd St., Rhyl. Advice, help, lunch.
Open 9.00-5.00 pm every day including Saturday and Sunday
(except Wed closed from 1.30 pm). Multi agency services including DIP,
NACRO Housing, Probation, CAIS and STARS. Also offering basic skills
& IT training. Tel: **01745 345900**

Denbighshire Supported Lodgings for 16-21 year olds – supported lodgings
in households offering family style placement. Eirianfa Community Centre,
Factory Place, Denbigh LL16 3TS Tel: **0845 051 8282**

24 Hour Help

Denbighshire Council Out of Hours:
(Genuine emergency homelessness only **01745 351205**)

Wales Domestic Abuse Help Line **0808 801 0800**

Wales Drug and Alcohol Helpline **0800 633 5588**

Shelterline: **0808 800 4444**

Childline: **0800 1111**

*For full information about the Council's Services and voluntary agencies in
Denbighshire visit the Council's website on www.denbighshire.gov.uk*