



## HOUSING NEEDS - HOW WE CAN HELP

### Homelessness Approaches to East Suffolk Council from 3 April 2018

The legislation around homelessness changed with the introduction of the **Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA 2017)**. This will come into force on 3 April 2018.

This places more emphasis on the assistance each council in England can offer customers who have experienced or are about to experience homelessness.

This results in more customers being assisted as each council will no longer consider if a customer has a priority need or has made themselves intentionally homeless initially before they are assisted.

As such, from 3 April 2018, the council will make every effort to prevent or relieve homelessness after registering an application before it makes a final decision on the application.

This means that applications will be opened beyond the current statutory guidance, which is 33 working days, whilst the council tries to assist each customer in preventing or relieving their homelessness.

The council will also accept applications for those who are threatened with homelessness within 56 days to ensure that more people are assisted as soon as possible.

The council will make its decision for whether you are owed the full housing duty at the end of the relief stage if the homelessness has not been resolved.

This will be the council's new way of working with all customers from now on.

Please speak to any member of staff or visit our website and search for **Housing Advice for You** if you want further information about this new way of working.

**East Suffolk Council Housing Needs Team can help you if you are at risk of becoming homeless , or if you are likely to lose your home soon.**

***How can we help?***

Our housing needs service can help you in the following ways:

- We can assess your current housing situation and work out what your needs are.
- If you are worried that you might become homeless, we can give you advice on the next steps.
- You can be referred to us in a number of ways, including an online self referral or agency referral form. This service can help you if you have a physical or mental illness, if you are ex-armed forces and homeless, a care leaver and homeless or if you have been released from prison and have nowhere to live. Supported housing may be an option for you in these circumstances.
- We can help you make a housing plan so you can work towards the next steps to find a permanent home.

***Are you experiencing financial difficulty?***

Our team might be able to help you in these ways:

- With a one-off payment to assist with housing costs.
- With rent arrears to stop you being evicted by your landlord.
- If you have issues because of new benefit changes such as Universal Credit, the Bedroom Tax, Benefit Cap or Local Housing allowance.
- With budgeting and managing your money at home.
- With getting a smaller, more financially manageable home.

***Do you rent privately?***

- We can help if you are being harassed or threatened by your landlord, or if you have been locked out of your home, evicted or if the rent is being increased.
- We can visit you at home and work with you and anyone who might try to make you homeless, to resolve your housing problems.

## ***Finding a home***

We can help you with:

- your application to register with the council's Housing Register
- assessing and reviewing your priority need as a homeless household, including if you have extra or complex housing needs.
- looking at the housing options available to you, including temporary accommodation or private housing.
- finding somewhere to stay tonight, in an emergency, when you have nowhere else to go.
- reviewing a refused homelessness or council housing application.

## ***How can I get in touch?***

- **Housing Needs Service - Contact Information**

Housing Advice 0333 016 2000  
[Housing.needs@eastsoffolk.gov.uk](mailto:Housing.needs@eastsoffolk.gov.uk)

## ***Housing Application***

<https://www.gatewaytohomechoice.org.uk/>