

Let's talk about...

# Housing Options To Prevent Homelessness

Chester & District Housing Trust are committed to providing support and assistance to customers who are faced with acute housing need or are threatened with homelessness



## Your housing options

Chester & District Housing Trust are committed to providing support and assistance to customers who are faced with acute housing need or are threatened with homelessness.

Chester & District Housing Trust has changed the way people access housing in Chester through the development of Homechoice our choice based letting scheme and the restructure of the Homeless Service to accommodate the new Housing Options Service. Through these changes we have made the process of getting advice about your housing problems and housing options more simpler and more helpful to you.

Because of the massive shortage of housing in Chester we cannot offer a house to everyone who has a housing problem but we can

work with you to see if we can find you an alternative solution. If you think you will become homeless we will try everything to prevent this from happening. Everyone that is threatened with homelessness will be offered a housing options interview where we will explore a range of housing options for you.

Our key priority is to prevent the incidences of homelessness. This leaflet describes a range of options for you to consider if you feel threatened with homelessness, it also advises you of the procedures



involved should you make a homeless application.

Please see back of leaflet for Chester & District Housing Trust contact details.

## What Services can the Housing Options Team offer

- Advice & assistance for people looking for somewhere to live
- Realistic and up to date in-depth advice on housing and how to pay for it
- A range of tailor made solutions for priority group applicants with practical assistance if appropriate
- Assistance with keeping your home
- Up to date information on alternative and emergency accommodation
- Personal referrals to other services if we are unable to assist you
- Ensure that all outcomes, decisions and advice given by the Housing

Options Team are followed up in writing to you.

- Chester & District Housing Trust has a menu of options available in order to assist you. These include:

## Access to the Private Rented Sector via a Rent Bond / Rent Deposit Scheme

- On a referral from the Housing Options Team Chester & District Housing Trust's Private Sector Tenancy Liaison Officer will advise you on pursuing a property in the private sector, perhaps assist you initially with a rent deposit (which has to be paid back) and help you sustain the tenancy.

## Problems with your Landlord or Tenancy

We can provide you with advice and assistance for example:

- Your rights to remain in your home.
- Your landlord keeps turning up at your home or letting himself in
- Disrepairs and housing standards
- Rents

### Family Disputes

We can discuss your situation and explore your options. We may refer you to another agency, such as mediation service.

### Problems with Debt

If you have money problems and these are affecting your ability to pay your rent or mortgage the Housing Options Team can advise and signpost you to various agencies that may be able to assist.



### Domestic Violence and Abuse

If you are suffering from physical or sexual violence, emotional or financial abuse or mental cruelty from someone known to you, or if you want to leave an abusive relationship but don't know how, we can help you

by providing advice and practical assistance. We can help you to find a place of safety if you are at risk. We can provide emergency accommodation 24 hours a day 7 days a week

### Living Plus

We work with our partners who provide supported housing and offer a number of referrals to the Living Plus scheme. This project is available to 16-25 year olds who are threatened with homelessness and who require supported furnished accommodation. A referral to this scheme is only made via the Housing Options Team

and the number of properties available are limited.

### Network of Support

The Housing Options Team can refer you to suitable floating support providers within the District who will support you in any type of tenancy with a view to you keeping your home.

However, should you consider that you cannot live independently and will require accommodation that offers support the Housing Options Team can assist with assessments and referrals to suitable temporary and more permanent supported accommodation providers.



## Our Promise to you

- We will do our utmost to prevent you losing your home.
- We will provide you with clear up to date information so you can make realistic choice on your housing
- We will develop a range of housing options for families and vulnerable single young people
- We can refer you to suitable floating support providers within the District who will support you in any type of tenancy with a view to you keeping your home.
- We will make clear to you at the interview what we can and cannot do
- We will use our initiative to try to solve your Housing problem
- We will advise you in clear easy to understand language

## If you are homeless

**Under Part V11 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) Chester City Council has certain responsibilities towards people who are either homeless or threatened with homelessness. Chester & District Housing Trust has agreed to assist the Council to perform its duties under the Act. This section explains our responsibilities and the help and service which we will provide to you.**

If you are homeless, that is if you have no accommodation that you can reasonably be expected to live in, that would be suitable for you and any other persons who might be reasonably expected to reside with you a Housing Options Officer may refer you to a Homeless Officer and an appointment will be arranged

for you to be interviewed. The Homeless Officer will need to establish certain facts in order to establish the Council's responsibilities towards you.

## What standard of service can you expect

### We will:

- Offer a formal homeless interview following a full housing options review where deemed necessary within one working day
- Undertake comprehensive investigations into your homeless application and seek to make a decision on it within 33 working days
- Keep you informed following a formal housing options or homeless interview on a weekly basis until we conclude our investigations and assistance
- Ensure that emergency housing and homeless advice and assistance is

available on a 24-hour, 7 days per week basis with trained officers via a dedicated contact centre

- Provide a suitable and safe environment in Customer Service interview rooms where you will be interviewed by polite and courteous staff
- If you have an appointment with a Homeless Persons Officer we will do our best to see you at the appointed time or, if not, within 15 minutes
- Provide a named case worker for each homeless person or family
- Be fair and consistent in applying homeless guidelines and criteria and in the way we treat all homeless applications
- Regularly monitor decisions made to ensure the whole process is fairly applied

If you want to know more,  
please contact us:

**Online:** 

Web: [www.cdht.org](http://www.cdht.org)  
Email: [info@cdht.org](mailto:info@cdht.org)

**By phone:** 

Freephone: 0808 100 7701  
Monday to Thursday  
8.00am - 6.00pm  
Friday 8.00am - 5.00pm  
Fax: 01244 305690  
Minicom: 01244 305500

**By visiting us at:**

**Registered Office**  
Centurion House  
77 Northgate Street  
Chester, CH1 2HQ  
Monday to Friday  
9.00am - 4.45pm



## Resident Involvement

We know it makes sense to involve our residents to help improve housing services. Here at the Trust we take every opportunity to give residents **a say!** Interested?

Find out how your views can make a change to the way we do things by contacting the Resident Involvement Team on Freephone 0808 100 7701.

**Also Available in:**

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