

Suffering a mental illness or impairment and threatened with homelessness

Stratford on Avon District Council's Housing Advice Team will ensure early identification of your housing problems, to try and prevent you from becoming homeless.

This will be achieved through partnership work and multi-agency working to prevent you from becoming homeless, through offering the necessary support and intervention you may require.

Help from the Council if you are single and homeless or threatened with homelessness

If you are eligible and you normally reside in the UK and you are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days, the Council is likely to have one of two duties to help you under the Homelessness Reduction Act. If you are threatened with homelessness the Council will have **a duty to help prevent you from becoming homeless. If you are actually homeless the Council will have a duty to assist you to relieve your homelessness**, but it may not be obliged to provide you with temporary accommodation whilst it does so.

If the Council accepts a duty to either prevent or relieve your homelessness you will be invited to complete a **Personalised Housing Plan** with a housing professional. This will outline the steps that both you and the Council will take to help resolve your situation. For the Council to be legally obliged to provide you with temporary accommodation it will have to be satisfied that **there is reason to believe you have a priority need**.

On the basis that you are suffering from a mental illness or impairment this Council could well accept that you are vulnerable and therefore in priority need for accommodation. This will be determined by your personal circumstances.

When considering whether you have a priority need the Council will look at whether you are vulnerable as a result of:

- Having a mental illness
- Having a learning disability or physical disability
- Being under 21 and having been in care
- Having been in the armed forces
- Having fled violence or threats of violence.
- Having served a custodial sentence

Vulnerable as a result of having a mental illness

Whether you are vulnerable as a result of having a mental illness will depend on the severity of your condition and how it affects you. You will need to tell the Council about any medication you take, any treatment you are receiving and any healthcare professionals that you are under. The Council may also ask you questions about how your condition affects you.

Stratford on Avon District Council will continuously review the advice and advocacy services available to you, and develop outreach support services according to your needs through the **Personalised Housing Plan** that will be completed in partnership with you and potentially your advocate.

The Council's Housing Advice Team will attempt to signpost you to main stream healthcare services where necessary and will refer you to local support services that specialise in supporting those with mental illness.

Support Services:

Stratford Community Mental Health Services

01789 415440

Together Warwickshire

Flexible mental health support service: <http://www.together-uk.org/our-mental-health-services/community-support/your-way/>

Springfield Mind

Wellbeing for Warwickshire offers free support at 7 Hubs throughout Warwickshire. For more information you can access their website: <https://springfieldmind.org.uk/services/wellbeing-hubs>

Big White Wall

Big White Wall is an online mental health and wellbeing service. More details can be found at: <https://www.bigwhitewall.com/v2/Home.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2f>

MHM Helpline

Mental Health Matters has a team of highly trained and experienced support workers who use counselling skills to provide you with emotional guidance and information. More details can be found at: <http://www.mentalhealthmatters.com/our-services/helpline-services/>

You can also contact their Coventry & Warwickshire helpline 24/7 on 0800 616171

Rethink Mental Illness

Support services for those experiencing mental illness. For more information see: <https://www.rethink.org/>

Emergency accommodation if you have no housing

You may need to use emergency accommodation such as a hostel, night shelter or bed and breakfast accommodation if you have nowhere to go. As mentioned above, the Council will only have a duty to provide you with emergency temporary accommodation if you are in priority need.

If you are not in priority need you will have to secure your own temporary accommodation. Hostels provide emergency temporary accommodation. Some are direct access, which means you don't need a referral from an agency to use them. There are no direct access hostels in the Stratford on Avon District so you may have to go out of area to secure a hostel such as Coventry, Leamington Spa or Birmingham. You can contact the Housing Advice Team on the number below for advice relating to emergency accommodation. You may wish to see if you can stay temporarily with a family member or friend whilst the Council offers you advice to resolve your situation.

Help finding housing in the private rented sector

You could try to find housing in the private rented sector. The Housing Advice Team will be able to advise you how to find out what housing is available locally and how to apply for Universal Credit or Housing Benefit to help you with your housing costs. You might be able to get help with a deposit and rent in advance through the Councils private rented sector rent deposit/bond scheme.

Apply for a housing association home

As a longer term option, you could also consider applying for a housing association home. Please note that there is a high demand for social housing in the Stratford on Avon District, and in particular one bedroom properties are in high demand, so some people who apply may not ever be successful with an offer of social housing. If you wish to be considered for social housing in the district you can register online at Home Choice Plus:

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

Useful support services for single homeless people

Stratford Link project

Stratford Link Project runs on week day mornings 10am-1pm.

This service is a free drop-in centre where rough sleepers and vulnerable people who may be homeless or at risk of homelessness can get a hot drink, a snack and link in with support services. There are also shower, bathing and clothes washing facilities available.

The link is located at 14 Waterside, Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 6BA.

Stratford food bank

<https://stratforduponavon.foodbank.org.uk/>

You can obtain a food bank voucher by contacting Stratford-on-Avon District Council Housing Advice team.

For more information on housing related support and accommodation based services within Warwickshire contact the Housing Advice Team on the number below and see Warwickshire County Council Website: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/hrs>

Stratford on Avon Housing Advice Team

The Council's Housing Advice Team can help you with either finding or keeping a safe and suitable home for you and your family. We have a team of housing advisors and homeless prevention coordinators who will work with you to explore all of your options.

Housing Advice Team

Elizabeth House
Church Street
Stratford upon Avon
Warwickshire
CV37 6HX

Phone: 01789 260861

Out of hours phone: 01789 267575

Email: housingadviceteam@stratford-dc.gov.uk