

# Housing Advice for single people



**Havant**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Public Service Plaza, Civic Centre Road,  
Havant, PO9 2AX

## Key Advice:

- The council has a duty to try to prevent you from becoming homeless and to help you with your search for accommodation if you have to move
- The council will not have a duty to accommodate all single people but does have a duty to provide support and advice
- A detailed assessment of your housing situation will be undertaken with you, and a Personal Housing Plan created, if you are threatened with homelessness or homeless already
- The Personal Housing Plan will agree reasonable steps to try to prevent your homelessness or to secure alternative accommodation.
- There is a legal requirement for you to co-operate with the Personal Housing Plan and the plan can include advice around employment and training, income and expenditure, and support needs

## Housing Services – Havant Borough Council

Single people (and couples without children) make up a large proportion of those households seeking advice about housing at Housing Services. The council has a duty to provide advice and support and, if you are threatened with homelessness or are homeless, this will include carrying out a detailed assessment of your housing situation, your housing and support needs, and the creation of a Personal Housing Plan (PHP). The key aim is to try to prevent homelessness wherever possible and this can include reasonable steps for you to undertake as part of the plan.

If you are already homeless the council will have a duty to provide support, but this may not include providing accommodation. The detailed Housing Assessment will help determine whether emergency accommodation must be provided by the council. If the council does not provide you with emergency accommodation it will still offer support to help you try to find somewhere to live.

# Housing Options in Havant Borough

## Private Rented Sector

There is a good supply of private rented accommodation in Havant and the surrounding areas and this includes a large amount of shared housing. You will almost certainly be required to pay some start-up costs to secure accommodation and these costs tend to be much lower for shared accommodation than for self-contained accommodation such as 1-bedroom flats. Many landlords also prefer employed people and even part-time work could help in your search.

Here are details of some websites you may want to use in your search for accommodation:

[www.spareroom.co.uk](http://www.spareroom.co.uk)

[www.rightmove.co.uk](http://www.rightmove.co.uk)

[www.gumtree.com](http://www.gumtree.com)

[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

[www.roombuddies.co.uk](http://www.roombuddies.co.uk)

[www.flatmaterooms.co.uk](http://www.flatmaterooms.co.uk)

[www.housepals.co.uk](http://www.housepals.co.uk)

[www.portsmouth.co.uk/property/private-rentals/](http://www.portsmouth.co.uk/property/private-rentals/)

If your income is low, you may be entitled to support with your housing costs through Housing Benefit or Universal Credit. If you are under 35, the amount of support towards your housing costs will be based on the single room rent figure. In Havant, this amount is £299.17 a month (£69.04 a week). Your income may affect the amount of support you are entitled to.

You can use an on-line benefit calculator for guidance on housing support costs and other financial support you may be entitled to –

[www.entitledto.co.uk](http://www.entitledto.co.uk)

<https://benefits-calculator.turn2us.org.uk>

## Helping the Search

To help in your search for accommodation, consider the following:

- Can you provide a recent reference from a landlord or a character reference to show a new landlord?
- Plan how you will pay the start-up costs and manage rental payments

- If you have never lived independently think about how you could show a landlord how you can manage the accommodation successfully
- Most landlords prefer working households. If you are not working but are able to, make sure you are getting all the support you need to help you do so as this will increase your likelihood of securing accommodation
- Engage with support services, including Housing. Your Housing advisor could confirm this with a landlord to help secure accommodation
- In certain cases, Housing payments can be paid direct to a landlord. Speak to your advisor if you think this could apply to you.

You may be able to get help towards the start-up costs to secure accommodation through Housing Services. The accommodation must be suitable for your needs and can be inside or outside of the Havant Borough area. Any help with the start-up costs will be dealt with as a loan. Ask your Housing advisor for more information about this, or contact the Housing Services Team on 023 92446379 for more information.

## Hampshire Home Choice (HHC)

Havant Borough Council has no housing stock. Hampshire Home Choice is the register to apply for social housing in Havant. This includes many Housing Association landlords. You can apply to the scheme on the following website –

[www.hampshirehomechoice.org.uk](http://www.hampshirehomechoice.org.uk)

You will need to provide documentation to prove you are eligible for the scheme:

- Proof of identity, such as a birth certificate, passport or driving licence
- Proof of your current address, for example a Council Tax or utility bill or benefit letter
- Proof of your local connection to show that you have lived in the borough for 1 year or 3 years out of the last 5, or evidence to prove a close relative (e.g. parent, brother or sister) has lived in the borough for over 5 years

Hampshire Home Choice is an internet service and you will need access to a computer to use it fully. You can apply to Hampshire Home Choice from the age of 16 and it is a good idea to apply as early as possible. Please note the wait for housing through the scheme is often very long and will not resolve your housing need help quickly. Once you are accepted on the scheme, you should make sure you keep your application active by completing a yearly renewal.

Any offer of accommodation through Hampshire Home Choice will be decided by the landlord of the property. Debts to the council or social landlord, records of anti-social behaviour, and convictions for criminal behaviour may be a barrier to accessing accommodation through Hampshire Home Choice.

## Emergency Accommodation

If you cannot find private rented accommodation and you have nowhere to live you may need to secure emergency accommodation such as a hostel, night shelter placement or bed and breakfast. Your Housing Advisor will be able to give you advice on what the council can do to help. The council will not have a duty to accommodate all single people but will help support in the search for somewhere to stay.

### Hostels and day centres in the local area -

**Hope House**, Milton Road, Portsmouth, PO3 6BA. T: 023 92736544

**Central Point Day Centre**, 22-24 Kingston Road, Portsmouth, PO1 5RZ. T: 023 92298791

**Chichester Night Shelter**, St Joseph's, Hunston Road, Chichester, PO20 1NP. T: 01243 537934

**Chichester Day Centre**, St Cyriac's, The Old Glass Works, Chichester, PO19 1AJ. T: 01243 775925

**Winchester Churches Night Shelter**, Jewry Street, Winchester, S023 8RZ. T: 01962 862050 (Agency referral only)

**Fareham and Gosport Hostel**, 101 Gosport Road, Fareham, PO16 0PZ. T: 01329 281995

Please be aware, some of these providers will require you to have a connection to the relevant area.

## What will the Housing Service do for you?

- Provide support and advice about your housing situation
- If you are homeless or threatened with homelessness, we will carry out a full assessment of your situation, and create a Personal Housing Plan to prevent or relieve homelessness
- Work with private sector landlords, support agencies, family and friends and any other relevant parties to prevent the loss of accommodation or to help find alternative accommodation
- Where required, ensure you can access help with any other support needs you have
- Help you manage your Hampshire Home Choice account so you can access Social Housing accommodation

## Special Circumstances

### Care leavers

The help available for Care Leavers will vary depending on whether you are 16-17 or 18-21 years old.

16-17-year olds – if you have left care, and have spent at least 13 weeks in care since the age of 14, including some time in care between 16 or 17, you will be able to get help, including somewhere to live, and financial support, from Hampshire County Council.

18-21-year olds – you will be able to seek help from Hampshire County Council, Havant Borough Council, or another local authority within Hampshire.

Pathways Advisor – before you leave care you will be given a Pathway Plan setting out what support you might need to live independently. A personal advisor will help ensure that you get all the help you are entitled to receive. The advisor will provide ongoing support until you are turn 21 or until your 25<sup>th</sup> birthday if you are studying full time.

Hampshire Home Choice – you will be able to register for Hampshire Home Choice from the age of 16.

### Ex-Offenders and people being released from prison

The council will offer support and advice to help you and will have a duty to try to prevent the loss of accommodation or to try to help to relieve homelessness. This does not mean Housing will provide accommodation to all ex-offenders or those being released from prison. The council will determine what duty is owed as part of its detailed assessment.

Offenders who have served a sentence of 1 year or longer will be released on licence and supervised by the Probation Service until the end of their sentence. The probation officer can offer support to help find accommodation. From June 2018 NACRO (National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders) will operate the bail and support scheme (**BASS**) which offers accommodation to people on bail or on tag, who have no suitable alternative. For more information contact the Resettlement Advice Service on **0300 123 1999**.

### Other Support needs

Many single people who approach Housing for advice require additional support but may not be linked with appropriate services or may not be engaging with them. If you receive a Personal Housing Plan you may be asked to work with other services or be referred to them by Housing as part of our agreed efforts to prevent the loss of accommodation or to help with your search for securing alternative accommodation.

Additional support could include help with employment, training, mental health, or substance misuse issues.

If you are given a Personal Housing Plan, there is a legal requirement to co-operate with the reasonable steps set out in the Plan.

## Support Services

**Two Saints** – provides community support for single homeless people. Drop-in sessions are available at several locations – speak to your Advisor for details.

**Shelter** – provide free housing advice. T: 0808 800 4444 or [www.shelter.org.uk](http://www.shelter.org.uk)

**Jobcentre Plus** – support with employment and welfare benefits 0345 6043719

**Orion Centre** – support service for alcohol and substance misuse 0300 124 0103

**MIND** - mental health support service 0300 123 3393

For more information on support services available locally –

<https://www.connecttosupporthampshire.org.uk/home>