

SCH provide a homeless service on behalf of Solihull council. If you are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days we can:

- Provide personalised advice and guidance.
- Work with you, and third parties, to try to prevent you from becoming homeless.
- Help you to find accommodation if you are homeless
- Signpost you to organisations that may be able to offer specialised help and support.

Our Home Options team are here to offer you guidance, advice and assistance on your housing options, where you are at risk of losing your home or have become homeless already. This will be tailored to your individual circumstances and housing need, helping you make informed decisions about your housing options.

Information and Advice

We will:

- Provide information about our homelessness service on our SCH website, which you can access anytime at your convenience, and
 - ✓ has a link to Solihull Home Options
 - ✓ A click onto our Housing Pathways Charts, giving clear ways on support and homeless prevention if you are for example a prison leaver, discharged from hospital or armed forces, have a mental illness or physical difficulties and more.
 - ✓ Access details for Birmingham & Solihull Women's Aid services, supporting women experiencing domestic abuse.
- Offer year round high quality:
 - ✓ Home Options Advice – 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday and
 - ✓ Emergency homeless assistance outside of office hours 365 days a year.
- Have Home Options staff who are knowledgeable, highly-trained and professional to give advice and assistance on your home options.

Initial assessment

We will:

- Speak with you about your housing difficulties over the phone and book you an appointment with a Housing Officer if you may be homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days. This appointment will be within 5 working days, or the same day if you have nowhere safe to stay that night.
- Signpost you to St Basils Youth Hub if you are a single person aged 16-24 years for specialist advice and support focused on your needs.
- Assign a Housing Officer to your case who will carry out a full assessment with you. This will be done remotely wherever possible whilst our Coppice Way Office remains closed.
- Make it easy for you make your application and provide documents through Housing Jigsaw, our customer portal, where you can also see your personal housing

plan and letters. We can support you to access your Jigsaw account if you need.

- Take account of your specific needs and vulnerabilities, and offer additional support where needed.

If you are homeless or threatened with homelessness

We will:

- Agree a Personal Housing Plan with you, confirming our information and advice, and the actions we both agreed to take to help prevent, or relieve, your homelessness.
- Update your Personal Housing Plan with you at least fortnightly to monitor the progress of our agreed actions to assist you stay in your home, or find a new home.
- Look for housing solutions with both private and social landlords, and if appropriate, temporary and supported accommodation.
- Give you advice and guidance around privately renting, including support with assessing affordability.
- Assess if you're eligible for financial assistance to help you secure private rented accommodation.
- If you've secured a private rented property through our Solihome scheme, we'll make a settling in call within 7 days of moving in, and then keep in touch with you every three months, for a year.
- Offer suitable temporary accommodation for you if we have reason to believe you are eligible, homeless, and in priority need.
- Provide you with advice and support to help you to find accommodation where we do not have a legal duty to provide you with temporary accommodation.
- Carry out keeping in touch visits at your home or temporary accommodation, update you on your application and discuss move on options with you.
- Respond to any communication we receive from you within five working days.
- Notify you of any decisions on your homeless application in writing, and within legal timeframes.
- Inform you of your right to review our decisions, and inform you of the outcome of the review (carried out by an external independent reviewer) within 56 days of receipt of your review request.
- Use customer feedback and your experiences to review and improve our service to customers.

Working with partners

We will:

- Refer you to partner agencies that may assist if you need additional help or support.
- Pro-actively work with support workers from other agencies to prevent or relieve your homelessness.
- Work with the Homeless Outreach Team, to ensure that you are provided with appropriate support to find accommodation if you are rough sleeping.

Access to our service

We will:

- Offer quality home options advice by phone between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays and team training days.
- Offer face to face assessments and will work with you remotely (telephone assessment) if needed. Note: at present our customer facing walk-in office remains closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Provide emergency assistance outside of office hours 365 days a year to supporting those who have nowhere safe to stay.
- Whenever possible, the same person will deal with your case from start to finish. You will be given their name and told how to contact them.
- Offer face to face and telephone assessments.
- Work with you remotely wherever possible to ensure everyone's safety during the pandemic, while our Coppice Way office remains closed.
- Make sure our services are fair and accessible to all, regardless of background, identity or circumstances and aim to prevent discrimination.
- If you have a disability or impairment or do not have English as your first language, we will work with you to find the best ways to communicate.
- You may request to be interviewed by a person of the same gender, if you prefer.
- Treat your personal details confidentially and use them in the right way.
- If you are referred to us by a professional, we will provide feedback to them within 10 working days.
- Treat you with dignity and respect and carry out our discussion in an informed and professional manner.
- Listen to you, and respond fully to any questions you may have. We will be open and honest and explain our legal duties and policies.
- Treat your concerns with understanding and sensitivity.
- Keep in touch with you to let you know how your case is progressing.

We ask you to

- Be respectful and polite to our staff, we will always do our best to help you.
- Not use offensive language or violence to our staff, support workers or other customers.
- Be honest with the information that you provide.
- Have documents ready to verify your circumstances to enable us to process your assessment quickly.
- Provide any further information that we ask you for within 10 working days.
- Be on time for any appointments that have been arranged to avoid delays to other customers waiting.

- Tell us if you need any help or support with any aspect of the homelessness process.
- Keep us informed of any changes to your personal details that may affect the services we provide to you.
- Complete any actions and undertake any reasonable steps that you have agreed to in your personalised housing plan to assist with your housing circumstances within the timescales agreed with your case officer.
- Give us feedback about your experience with us to help us learn and improve our services.

How will we keep a check on our Service Standards

We will:

- Carrying out quarterly audits of case work and carry out case reviews to check we are meeting our promises.
- We will regularly report how we are doing to our SCHape Residents' Panel – made up of customers who scrutinise our service.
- Use feedback from surveys, compliments, complaints and general comments to improve our service.

How we will update you on how we are doing

In our Annual Report we will tell you how well we have performed against our 2020/21 targets for the homeless service. Our targets are to:

- Achieve prevention or relief for 50% of households who approach us.
- Keep stays in temporary accommodation below 112 days.
- Keep stays in budget hotels below 10 days.

We will provide up-to-date information

- about our services through our quarterly newsletter.
- on our website at www.solihullcommunityhousing.org.uk
- on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for you to see what we are up to.

We will review our Service Standards

When we:

- Review our KPIs as part of our annual service delivery plan.
- Update our policies or review our services.
- When your valued feedback is telling us we need to look at things again.