

The service can:

- Provide housing advice and support
- Provide advice on benefits and finance
- Refer you to specialised advisory and support services
- Work with you to create a personal housing plan with steps towards securing a permanent home
- Organise mediation with a landlord to prevent eviction
- Provide interim accommodation if you meet criteria
- Give guidance on accessing the Private Rented Sector and Coventry Homefinder
- Discuss and advise on other circumstances and issues relating to your housing situation

Please note that social housing will only be provided to those most in need.

You can access the Homelessness Prevention Service on **024 7683 4025** or by visiting the Customer Service Centre, 3 Upper Precinct, CV1 1FS. Visit www.coventry.gov.uk/homeless

Priority need for accommodation

Due to new homelessness legislation, you do not need to have a certain level of need (priority need) or have links to a council area (local connection) to access the Homelessness Prevention Service. Priority Need will only affect whether you are entitled to interim accommodation if you become homeless (the relief duty) or owed the main housing duty.

This means that we may provide you with short-term accommodation if you **meet a certain level of need**. This may be due to a vulnerability as a result of having served a custodial sentence, been committed for contempt of court or remanded in custody. We will look at your situation and any people who are dependent on you to make a decision.

For further details on what gives you a priority need or a local connection, call Shelter on **0808 800 4444**.

Homelessness Prevention Service



Prison Leavers

If you have recently been, or are currently, in prison, there are a number of things you can do to prevent yourself becoming homeless.



Coventry City Council

www.coventry.gov.uk

Help before you leave prison

The Through the Gate service should assign a Resettlement Worker in order to prepare you for release. They can help with:

- Housing benefit claims
- Rent arrears or eviction
- Referrals to suitable accommodation if you will be homeless on release

You can also apply for the following grants before release:

- £46 discharge grant
- Up to £50 for your first night's accommodation which will be paid to the housing provider.

Help if released on bail or with an electronic tag

Court or the prison service should help you organise a suitable address to stay at before you are released on bail or with an electronic tag.

You may be referred to the **Bail Accommodation Support Scheme (BASS)**. BASS provides short term accommodation and support to men and women on bail or being released from custody on home detention curfew. Call **0300 555 0264** for more information.

Probation

You should be allocated a Probation Officer in the area you are living in immediately after release. Depending on the length of your sentence and situation you may also be given a place in a probation hostel.

Your Resettlement Worker from prison should work with the Probation Officer to ensure that accommodation plans are put in place. Probation will give you housing advice and will be able to refer you to specialist hostels, supported housing and private landlords. They should also work closely with the Council.

Coventry's Homelessness Prevention Service can work with you and your Probation Officer to plan housing.

Coventry Youth Offending Service

The Coventry Youth Offending Service coordinates the provision of local youth justice services in partnership with several organisations. Call **024 7683 1414** for more information.

Where else can I get advice and support?

Nacro's Resettlement Advice Service can give practical advice for people with criminal records. Call **0300 123 1999**.

Women in Prison supports women to avoid and exit the criminal justice system. Call **0800 953 0125**.

St Giles Trust works with people facing severe disadvantages to find jobs, homes and the support they need. Call **0808 801 0600**.

Prisoners' Advice Service offers free legal advice and support to adult prisoners. Call **0845 430 8923** or **020 7253 3323**.

Are you homeless tonight?

The Salvation Army's Harnall Lifehouse may be able to give you a place tonight. You can self-refer by calling **024 7601 1770** or by walking in at Harnall Lane West, CV1 4EZ. They also run a day centre.

The Coventry Jesus Centre runs a drop-in service Tuesday to Thursday 9am-12noon and Sunday 9am-10.30am, where you can get breakfast as well as access to showers, laundry, clothing, advice and support workers. Call **024 7655 0033** or walk-in at 7 Lamb Street, CV1 4AE.

Shelter can help you find hostel services through their helpline: **0808 800 4444**

Accessing the Homelessness Prevention Service

You should contact the service if you are threatened with homelessness within 56 days or are already homeless.