

Homelessness prevention and advice

Drop in to a council One Stop Shop to see a Housing Options and Homelessness Officer who will give you confidential advice to prevent you from becoming homeless or about what to do if you are already homeless.

Help us to give you the right advice by bringing relevant documents for example a tenancy agreement, notice to quit or legal papers.

Drop in: One Stop Shop, Bath

Drop in: The Hollies, Midsomer Norton

Drop in: One Stop Shop, Keynsham

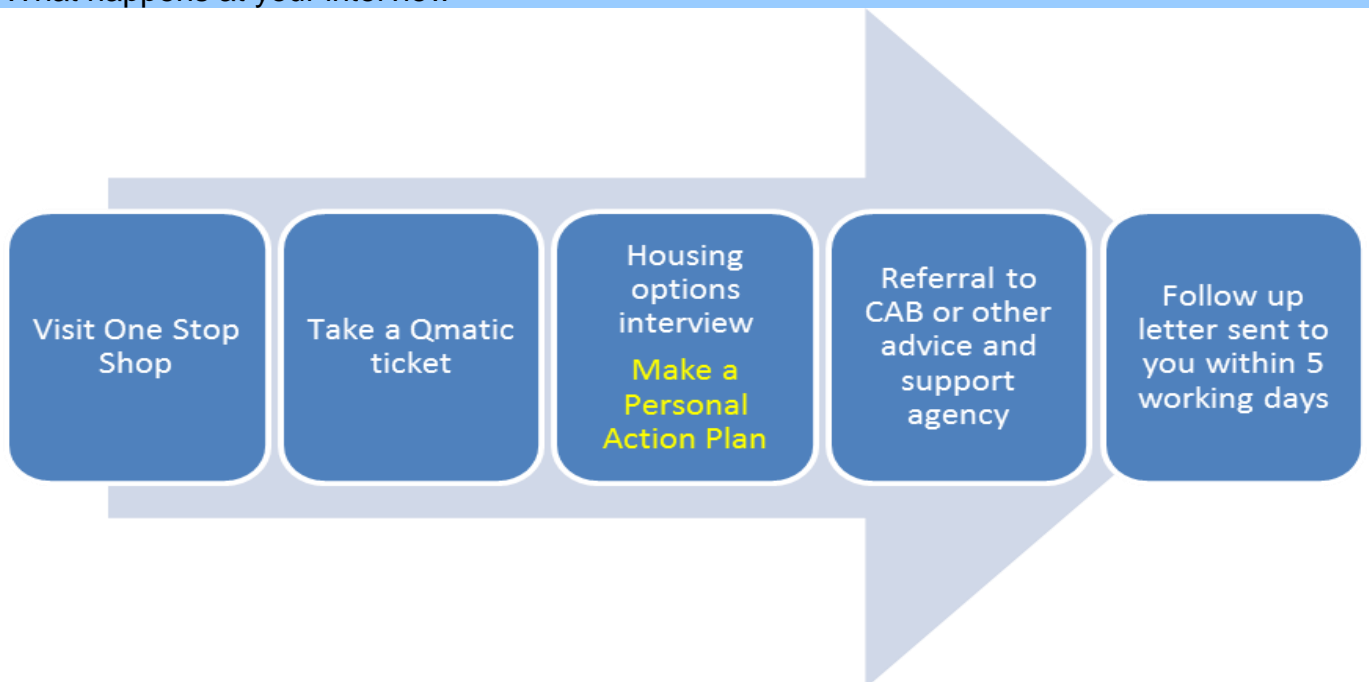
For opening times and directions see the council website.

If you need help outside of office hours, contact the emergency duty team on 01454 615165

Email: housing@bathnes.gov.uk

Call the Housing Options team on 01225 396296

What happens at your interview



Our service standards

In addition to the council's corporate service standards which you can see on the website:

- We will do our best to prevent you from becoming homeless
- We will help you access welfare rights and money advice
- We will mediate with your landlord or mortgagor on your behalf in order to prevent or delay homelessness
- We will give you advice and information to help you find accommodation.
- If you have nowhere to stay and you ask for assistance we will tell you on the same day whether we have a legal duty to sort out temporary accommodation for you
- If you are not eligible for our temporary accommodation we will help you find alternative emergency accommodation, such as a refuge, nightshelter or friends or family
- We will not discriminate against anyone because of their age, disability, gender, race, religion or sexual orientation
- We will treat you with respect and deliver our service in a way that meets your needs
- You will walk into a reception area that is clearly signposted, accessible, clean, tidy and pleasant to use at all times and we will provide a private area for confidential enquiries
- You will be able to identify every member of staff, who will wear a name badge at all times
- Women can ask to see a female adviser; men can ask to see a male adviser
- You can ask for an interpreter, support worker or friend to help you

This document/publication/leaflet can be made available in a range of community languages, large print, Braille, on tape, electronic and accessible formats from the Information Officer (information_officer@bathnes.gov.uk) - Tel (01225 477983) Minicom (01225 477043)

Assessment of housing duty

We must be sure of all the facts before we can decide what other help we must give you. We will ask you to complete and sign a form and provide evidence of relevant facts. If you are eligible for assistance, have nowhere to live and we think you have a priority need for housing we will offer you temporary accommodation while we make a decision and to give you time to find somewhere else to live.

- Eligible for assistance: We will ask for proof of identity for example full birth certificates or passports for all the people in your household and evidence of child benefit for any children in your care
- Homeless or threatened with homelessness within 28 days: Where have you lived for at least the last five years and the reasons why you have had to leave accommodation?
- In priority need: Because of your age, special circumstances, children or some other reason

Decision on housing duty

Once we have all the information we need we will write to you, usually within 33 days from when you applied for help, with our decision. If you don't have a local connection with this area we will ask another local authority to provide accommodation for you.

Safeguarding your belongings

If you are homeless or going to be homeless try to store your furniture and belongings with friends and relatives, ask them to help look after your pets as they are not usually allowed in temporary accommodation.

If this is not possible you will have to pay for storage or kennels, the Housing Options and Homelessness Team can help you make arrangements.

Reviews

You have a right to request a review of a decision within 21 days of being told any of the following apply:

- you are not eligible for assistance;
- you are not homeless;
- you do not have a priority need;
- you have made yourself intentionally homeless;
- you do not have a local connection with Bath and North East Somerset and are referred to another local authority;
- you have been asked to accept an unsuitable place to live and the homelessness duty towards you has come to an end.

Your request can be made by contacting the Homelessness Review and Policy Officer who must reach a decision on your request for review within 56 days of the date of your request. You will be asked to provide reasons why you think the decision is wrong, if you fail to submit any further information, the decision will be reviewed on the basis of all available, relevant information.

If you think our reviewed decision is legally wrong, you can appeal to the County Court within 21 days of being notified. If the court agrees with you, it has the power to change our decision.