

Help if you have been, or are being RELEASED FROM PRISON or YOUTH DETENTION



What is this fact sheet about?

This fact sheet provides information to people who are seeking housing advice from Cambridge City Council, and who have been, or are being released from prison (or youth detention accommodation). It contains information on support that is available to you, and ideas for finding somewhere to live. We understand that a record of offending can make it harder for you to secure accommodation if you need it, and so you may need extra help.

Threatened homelessness

You will be considered to be threatened with homelessness, if you have no accommodation that you have a right to return to (or cannot safely return to) on your release, if your release will occur within 56 days. This means you can approach any local authority in England, and make a homeless application. The council will assess your needs, and draw up a Personal Housing Plan, to help you resolve your housing problem, perhaps using some of the options described below.

If you are homeless now

If the Council cannot prevent you becoming homeless, and you have nowhere to go now, a Housing Advisor will decide if you have a priority need. If there is a reason to believe you are in priority need, you will be provided with temporary accommodation while the situation is investigated further. The Housing Advisor will consider whether you are more vulnerable than an ordinary person, and will take into account the effect on you of your imprisonment, in making this assessment. However, if we cannot establish a local connection with Cambridge City Council, you may be referred to another local authority with which you do have a connection. The local connection rules can be found on the Council's website here:

https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/sites/default/files/home-link_factsheet_local_connection_rules.pdf. There are no prisons in Cambridge City, but if you are detained within a local authority area, this will not give you a local connection to that area.

Whether Cambridge or another Council accepts a duty to relieve your homelessness, that Council will work through your Personal Housing Plan with you, and decide what housing is suitable. If nothing can be found within 56 days, the Council will go on to consider whether they owe a duty to offer accommodation. This duty will be owed if the Council decides you are in priority need, and are not homeless as a direct result of something you have deliberately done, or not done. In some circumstances, if you knew that your offending would result in the loss of your last settled home, you may be considered to be 'intentionally homeless'. This means the Council would not have a duty to provide housing directly.

Hostels and Supported Housing

There is a hostel in Cambridge that locally-connected single homeless people can present to. It is called **Jimmy's**, and is located at 1, East Road, Cambridge CB1 1BD.

Once you are a guest at Jimmy's, you can be considered for 'move-on' supported accommodation.

The Council's Housing Advice team has the ability to refer suitable applicants to a 10-bed supported housing scheme for ex-offenders, called the **Jubilee Project**. All residents are required to be engaged in work, or other meaningful activity, for at least three days a week.

Single Homeless Service

If you have very low support needs, and your primary issue is housing only, it is possible that you would be eligible for the **Single Homeless Service**. This service links eligible single people to rooms in shared houses. You will need to undergo a detailed assessment for your suitability.

Getting on the housing register (Home-Link)

Affordable housing is in very short supply in Cambridge. However, we do accept applications onto the **Home-Link** scheme from anyone who is eligible, and who can demonstrate a local connection to the city. If you are locally connected, you can apply even if you do have accommodation you can return to, but you want to move. Go to <http://www.home-link.org.uk/>.

Help with Private Renting

Many people struggle with raising a deposit for private rented accommodation. There are a couple of options for help: **Change grow live (cgl)** administer loans for deposits for park homes. Homeless clients of the Street Outreach team can be considered for this service. Cambridge City Council also has a rent deposit guarantee scheme known as the **Access Scheme**.

Employment and Training

We know that your ability to find and keep somewhere to live will be affected, if you don't have a job, or job prospects. The Council can refer you to **New Horizons** or **CHS Group**, for targeted help with getting you job-ready.

We also have a scheme to top up your Housing Benefit for a limited period, if you are prepared to work with CHS' employment services to increase your income. This is called **HB+**.

Protocol agreed with HMP Peterborough

Cambridge City Council is one of a number of agencies that have agreed a process for prison release with HMP Peterborough. Each person should be allocated a 'Case Manager', which could be an Offender Manager, Resettlement Officer or the St Giles Trust. This person will liaise with the relevant Council, and ensure you have the advice you need.

If you need to contact us

Visit:

Customer Services Centre,
Mandela House,
4 Regent Street,
CB2 1BY

Email to: housing.advice@cambridge.gov.uk,
or

Post to:
PO Box 700,
Cambridge
CB1 0JH.