

Housing Advice for Care Leavers



www.testvalley.gov.uk



TestValleyBC



@TestValleyBC

If you are a care leaver you may be able to get housing and other help from:

- Hampshire County Council and their district councils or
- The county where you spent two continuous years in care including before your 16th birthday.

Key Advice:

- The council that last looked after you remains responsible for you, even if you move to a different area,
- Hampshire County Council's Children's Services team is responsible for finding you somewhere to live until you turn 18
- If you are aged between 18-21, and homeless and a care leaver, Test Valley Borough Council's Housing Service or another borough within Hampshire can assist with advice and assistance.
- If you were placed out of county for two years continuous and part of this time was before your 16th birthday, you can approach that unitary or county council
- The help available will depend whether you are 16-17 years old or 18-21 years old

Housing and financial support for 16-17 Year olds

Housing

If you;

- Have already left care, and
- You have spent a total of at least 13 weeks in care since the age of 14, and
- Part of that time in care while you were 16 or 17,

You will be able to get help including somewhere to live from Hampshire County council. It does not matter if those 13 weeks were consecutive.

You will have different housing rights if you spent less than 13 weeks in care and need to contact Hampshire County Council for advice on this.

Financial Help

Most 16 and 17 year old care leavers are not eligible for benefits. The Children's services department at Hampshire County Council must help you by;

- Providing housing or helping you find and keep accommodation
- Support you financially by paying you enough for your rent, bills, travel costs for education and training, clothing, pocket money and childcare if you need it.
- Giving you any other support you need, such as help with continuing your education, finding work or dealing with personal issues.

You can only usually claim benefits if you are 16 or 17 year old care leaver and you are also a single parent or unable to work due to disability or illness.

You can find out more regarding benefit rules for care leavers. The organisation is Turn2US and can be found at www.turn2us.org.uk

Housing Help for 18-21 year old care leavers

If you are aged 18 to 21, you can get help from Hampshire County Council services and Test Valley Borough Council's Housing Options Service.

Test Valley Borough Council can advise you of your housing options and help you plan your housing journey. Your case officer will complete a personalised housing plan with you. This plan will agree reasonable steps that you and the housing options team will have responsibility in performing. The plan may also contain areas not directly linked to housing for example, employment steps.

When you turn 18 you may be entitled to benefits. You may be entitled to claim Universal Credit.

Personal Adviser:

Before you leave care you're given a pathway plan setting out what support you might need to live independently.

Find out more from www.gov.uk about pathway plans.

You're given a personal adviser whose job it is to make sure that you claim everything you are entitled to. They can help you with application forms for housing, benefits, and education and/or training courses. They should also help you with learning life skills, like how to budget.

Your personal adviser should stay in contact with you and provide ongoing support and help until you turn 21 or until your 25th birthday if you are still studying full time.

Get advice if you don't have a personal adviser. You may be able to get one even if you didn't get one while you were still in care.

What suitable accommodation is available for care leavers?

Housing for Multiple Occupation (HMO's)

You could try to find housing in a multiple occupation property in the private rented sector.

You need to search for this accommodation with the support of your personal advisor and Test Valley Borough Council's housing service . They can also advise you how to apply for Universal Credit to help you with your housing costs. The best places to search for shared rooms are;

- www.spareroom
- Gumtree
- Local newspapers

You might be able to get help with a deposit or rent in advance through:

- a private rented sector rent deposit scheme administered by TVBC

Supported accommodation

If you are aged between 16-17 years of age, your social worker can refer you to the social work placement team who can refer you to supported accommodation across Hampshire. This is likely to be a room in a project/ hostel with shared catering and wash facilities. You will also receive support from a support worker based in the housing project who will be able to assist you with aspects such as budgeting, finding employment or training, access any necessary health professional and so forth.

If you aged between 18-21, the housing options service can refer you to Test Valley's Early Help Hub and they will consider a referral into supported accommodation.

Hampshire Homechoice

From the age of 16 you will be allowed to register on Hampshire Home choice for Test Valley Borough Council's housing register, this is for social and affordable rented properties.

You can apply by registering on the following website: <https://www.hampshirehomechoice.org.uk/>

You will need to provide the following documentation to prove you are eligible for our register:

- Proof of identification (Birth Certificate / Passport / Driving Licence)
- Proof of current address (Driving Licence / Utility Bill / DWP Award Letter)
- Proof of local connection (Evidence that you have been resident within the borough for a period of 12 months or more OR evidence that close family member (Mother / father / brother / sister) has been resident within the borough for 5 years or more.

You may also be asking for further information

Shared Ownership and Help to Buy

- www.radianhomes.co.uk/
- www.helptobuysouth.co.uk/

If you are ever homeless or threatened with homelessness or feel you would like further housing advice and assistance please do not hesitate contacting by either:

Telephone: 01264 368000

Website: www.testvalley.gov.uk

You can always use shelter's directory to find an advisor in your local area or call Shelters helpline on 0808 800 4444. Their website address is www.shelter.org.uk

Test Valley Borough Council
Housing, Health & Communities Service

Beech Hurst, Weyhill Road, Andover, Hampshire, SP10 3AJ
Tel: 01264 368000

Former Magistrates Court, Church Street, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 8AQ
Tel: 01794 527700

www.testvalley.gov.uk