

Housing Advice Newsletter



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About this Newsletter

Welcome to our first Housing Advice Newsletter, specially designed for customers and the public. Its purpose is to keep you informed about housing and homeless issues. We hope that you find it useful and would welcome any feedback that you may have. Please feel free to contact us (contact details provided below) with any suggestions.

Contacting Us

You can contact us by a variety of methods:

Housing Client Services

Telephone: 01287 612444

E mail: housing_clientservices@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk

Homelessness Prevention

Telephone: 01287 612440

E mail: gareth_burgess@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk

Fax: 01287 612451

Housing Area Services

Telephone: 01287 612455

E mail: housing_eho@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk

Fax: 01287 612463

Snail mail: Housing Services
Belmont House,
Rectory Lane,
Guisborough,
Yorkshire,
TS14 7FD.



What do we do? Where can you see us?

Our services cover a wide range of housing issues, from providing advice and where necessary assistance on finding a place to live, to dealing with problems with your landlord or rented property.

If you want [advice on finding a home or you are experiencing difficulties in keeping your current home](#) e.g. if you have rent arrears or you have been served with a notice to quit, you should speak with our Housing Client Services team. You can contact them on 01287 612444. We also offer appointments at the following locations:

- **Belmont House** (Council Offices), Rectory Lane, Guisborough. **Wednesday & Friday mornings.**
- **Spencerbeck Housing Office** (Coast and Country Offices), Ellerbeck Way, Spencerbeck. **Tuesday mornings.**
- **Grangetown Housing Office**, (Coast and Country Offices), Kingsley Road, Grangetown. **Thursday afternoons.**
- **Connexions Offices**, Dawson House (behind Redcar Library), Redcar. **Monday afternoons.** (These sessions are suited to persons who are under 25 years old).
- Officers are also available for home visits. Should you require any further information please contact us (details shown above).

If you are experiencing [problems with your rented property](#) e.g. the landlord wont carry out necessary repairs, you should speak with our Housing Area Services team – they can be contacted on 01287 612455.

How long will I have to wait for a council house?

The Council does not own any houses – they were all transferred to a Housing Association, Coast & Country Housing in 2003.

If you need a home and you meet the legal requirements which mean the Council has to find you a home (please note not all people will meet the legal requirements) the Council applies to all the housing associations who have houses in this area. The wait for housing association houses is often long.

Currently, you will have to wait approximately;

3 years for a 1 bedroom flat in Redcar.

1 year + for a 2/3 bedroom house in Skelton.

Its not all bad news though, we can find you a home quickly using private landlords. This also means you will have greater choice over the location/area you wish to live.



What do you think about private rented housing?

The fact is a lot of people have a negative impression about renting privately, but just like people say there are “good” and “bad” tenants there are “good” and “bad” landlords. The good news is that we are working with “good” landlords to help make sure that they provide healthy, safe and modern homes. These Landlords can join the Councils **Landlords Charter** and be recognised for their high standards and good reputation.

We can also help you connect with these landlords to find a home. As far as security goes, we look at each person’s situation individually. Many Landlords want long term tenants and if that’s what you are looking for we take that into consideration before we make any referrals. It’s all about working together!

What about a Bond?

The other thing that might put people off renting privately is getting a **Bond**. This is usually equal to 4 weeks rent and it protects the landlord against damages or arrears. It can be very difficult to get private rented accommodation if you don’t have a Bond but we can help here too. If you qualify, you can get help from the Councils new **Bond Guarantee Scheme**.

If you want help finding a property in the private sector or if you have a property lined up and just want to find out about our Bond Guarantee Scheme call the Housing Solutions Team on 01642 456999 to find out more.

Sanctuary Scheme

Our Sanctuary Scheme has been running since January 2007 and has been a great success.

The scheme is provided to allow victims of domestic abuse to remain safe in their homes, prevent homelessness and the need for temporary accommodation and reduce the disruption to family life that moving home can cause.

The main feature of the project is the creation of a ‘Safe Room’ also known as the ‘Sanctuary Room’, which consists of having an internal door replaced with a solid core door, reversing it, to open outwards so that the doorjamb acts as an additional barrier. Additional bolts, hinges and a door viewer are also added. Additional security can also be provided i.e. window locks, anti arson letterboxes, fire security equipment, panic alarms and/or phones connected directly to the police.

Each scheme is tailor made to accommodate the needs and circumstances of the individuals involved. An experienced Crime Prevention Officer, Fire Brigade Personnel and a Housing Solutions Officer will carry out an assessment at your property.

All applications for this scheme must be made via a referral process. Please contact the Housing Solutions Team on 01642 456999 for further information.



Are you a young person living at home and experiencing problems? Do you think you may have to leave home soon?

We work with many young people who are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless. We will provide you with independent and realistic advice about your options.

Experience has shown that in the majority of cases the best place for a young person is at home with their family. The reality of moving to your own place is often very different from what you expected. A large number of young people feel isolated, lonely and struggle with the day to day issues of running a home.

We have a free mediation service which can help families deal with their difficulties, enabling you to stay at home until you are ready to move on. We can also provide you with information on long term planning for moving into your own place. The mediation service is provided by UNITE an independent, neutral organisation with over 14 years experience of offering mediation services. Their services are confidential and impartial.

If you wish to find out further information regarding the mediation services we offer please contact us as detailed above. Alternatively, you can contact the homeless mediation service directly at:

UNITE Ltd
Southlands Centre,
Ormesby Road,
Middlesbrough,
TS3 0HB

Tel: 01642 311633/327583 (ext 370)
Email: enquiries@unite-mediation.org
Internet: www.unite-mediation.org

The Homelessness Strategy

Every Council is required to have a homelessness strategy – it helps us plan services. The services it covers are those which help people to find housing and services which help people to keep their homes/stay with their family.

Our current Strategy was written in 2003 and is due to be renewed. If you would like to have an input into the new strategy or you have ideas about what services we should develop please contact;

Stella Forrest Housing Client Services Manager
Telephone: 01287 612403

E mail: stella_forrest@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk

Fax: 01287 612451

Rented property problems

The Housing Area Services Team provide advice to both tenants and landlords regarding repair, maintenance and management of private rented accommodation. Our aim is to ensure that private rented housing in Redcar and Cleveland is safe and provides a healthy home environment.

The **Housing Health and Safety Rating System** is used to assess the condition of properties with a view to identifying hazards to occupants.

Examples of hazards include

- Excess cold
- Damp and mould growth
- Falls

If you have any concerns regarding the condition of your home, the Housing Area Services team can offer advice and if necessary will visit and investigate. You can contact them on tel. 01287 612455.