

Support for 16 and 17 year old young adults, who are homeless or threatened with homelessness

Who to Contact

Youth Homelessness & Housing Officers

Helen Walker, 07825 340628

helen.walker@cumberland.gov.uk

Lisa Williams, 07825 097991

lisa.williams@cumberland.gov.uk

Safeguarding Hub

0333 240 1727

National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS)

Tel: 0808 808 1001

www.nyas.net/

Your Rights

Children's Social Care is responsible for accommodating young adults aged 16 or 17 who are homeless or threatened with homelessness under the Children's Act 1989.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 has increased a local authority's duties to assess someone, who is homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days, to help prevent or relieve their homelessness.

You can find out more about your rights by speaking with NYAS and by looking at the following legislation:

Children's Act 1989;

Homelessness Reduction Act 2017;

Housing Act 1996.

Summary of our support

Home visits as part of getting to know you and understanding what you are good at and where you might need some help.

Referral to other support services.

Planned accommodation moves.

Temporary or emergency accommodation, if needed.

Discussion around how you can best be supported (Section 20).

Individual support packages, based on what you are good at and where you might need some help.

Are you homeless or threatened with homelessness?

Being homeless or being threatened with homelessness means having no fixed place to stay or no place where you feel safe and secure. If you are 16 or 17 years of age, with nowhere to stay and in need of some help, please get in touch with us and we will talk you through how we can help:

If you are faced with homelessness, you may contact the Safeguarding Hub on 0333 240 1727 and speak with a Social Worker. Support is available to all 16- and 17-year-olds who are homeless or may become homeless.

The Safeguarding Hub Social Worker will speak with you and give you advice on your options. Together you can think about the best solution for you. This might be staying in your current home with some extra help, as well as looking at emergency accommodation, if needed. Office Hours are:

Monday - Thursday: 9am - 5pm

Friday: 9am to 4:30pm

Outside of these hours you can contact the Emergency Duty Team on the same number (0333 240 1727) and they can also provide you with advice and along with you, help you to think about your best options. This may also include emergency accommodation if this is appropriate.

You can also contact the Youth Homeless & Housing team:

Helen Walker, 07825 340628,

helen.walker@cumberland.gov.uk

Lisa Williams, 07825 097991

lisa.williams@cumberland.gov.uk

What happens next?

We can talk you through the next steps but if you would rather talk to a teacher or another professional you know and trust, the first step is for them to help you to complete a First Contact Script and they can talk you through your options as part of this.

There are certain processes we need to follow to make sure you are getting the right support; this could include visiting you in your home and talking with your family and friends before making any decisions about where you are going to live.

We are interested in hearing about your story and understanding whether you need any extra support outside of your family and friends. In order to do this, we will need to get to know you better, find out what life is like for you, what you are good at and what you might need support or help with. This will be done by a social worker.

Do you have somewhere to stay tonight?

One of the first things you will be asked is whether you have anywhere to stay tonight, if you don't we are responsible by law to ensure you have a safe place to sleep. If you do have somewhere to stay tonight but you are worried about where you are living or that it might not be for the long-term, we can still offer you our help and support.

What does "being cared for" mean?

You will be given the option to become cared for by the local authority. Your Social Worker will explain more about this to you when you meet and they will answer any questions.

"Being cared for" (sometimes called "looked after") means that Children's Social Care are responsible for making sure that you have somewhere safe to live and providing you with the care and support you need to thrive.

Every young adult who is cared for will have their own Social Worker; they will get to know you and listen to your wishes and feelings. You will be invited to regular meetings with professionals, who can offer you advice and support; in these meetings you will be able to talk about how you are doing and they will help you to plan for your future.

Do I have a choice about being cared for by the local authority?

Yes, you do. An offer for you to become cared for will only be made if there is no other suitable way of

meeting all of your needs. It is very important that you understand what becoming cared for means, so that you can make an informed choice.

A Social Worker will have a discussion with you regarding Section 20 accommodation as part of them getting to know you better and working with you to make a plan. You will not be forced to become cared for, your consent is needed.

At all times, your Social Worker or Youth Homeless & Housing Officer will make sure you have all the information you need and that your views are recorded and considered. You can also choose to have an independent advocate. An advocate is someone who isn't employed by us to help you have your say. Your family may be included in your assessments and plan, if it is safe to do so.

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Anyone can become homeless due to circumstances, which may be out of their control