

HOUSING ADVICE

VERSION 1 - MAY 2023

This information sheet has been produced to respond to the increasing number of Housing issues presenting on Family Connect Forms. Unfortunately, we are not able to change families living situations but can offer advice on how families can access support.



BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL HOUSING APPLICATIONS AND CHANGES TO HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY

There is currently a backlog of applications that are awaiting review/approval due to the volume of applications being made. We do not have a timeframe for application review, approval and rejections. The reality is the demand for social housing far exceeds stock available.

Unfortunately, whilst waiting for a Housing Application to be approved, families are unable to bid for properties.

When completing applications families need to ensure the form is being completed correctly. All relevant documentation/evidence need to be attached/included for example eviction notices and medical reports. Failure to do so could result in application rejection resulting in applicants will need to start the process again.

Families will receive confirmation of their housing application being approved via email or in writing with a bidding number so they can start to bid for properties.

To increase chances of finding a property Birmingham City Council advise families to expand their search areas.

It is important that families bid regularly and only on properties they are prepared to accept. Refusal of a property could incur an allocation of a lower banding in some cases, they will be removed from the housing register. Families will not be allocated housing on a first come first served basis, however it is important to bid regularly as this can positively impact on your position.

Three and four bedroom properties are the most sought after and families are waiting years. Birmingham City Council also advise to look at smaller bedroom properties which have two reception rooms, as one of these can be converted into a bedroom. Birmingham City Council will support in this process.

Should families need support in application completion, support organisations are listed below, this is not an exhaustive list.



KING EDWARD VI SHELDON HEATH ACADEMY

Educational excellence for our City

Housing

Below are three organisations who specialise in supporting families experiencing housing difficulties.

[Birmingham Advice Aid | Birmingham City Council](#)

Birmingham Advice Aid provides comprehensive advice around; Homelessness legislation, tenant rights, benefits, harassment, S21 notices, mortgage arrears, rights of occupation, welfare reform, illegal eviction, rent arrears, housing disrepair and much more.

<https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/housing>

Birmingham city council offer advice around housing options, homelessness, repairs fire safety and much more click on link above for more advice.

<http://england.shelter.org.uk>

Shelter helps millions of people every year struggling with bad housing or homelessness – and we campaign to prevent it in the first place.

TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

There have been changes to the Housing Allocation Policy and Band 1, now known as Band A, has the largest number applicants.

Families in temporary accommodation are regularly moved out of Birmingham. Families will be allocated a Housing Officer if they are Homeless / in Temporary Accommodation and will receive confirmation of who this is in writing, when they receive approval of their Housing Application.

Families will need to contact their Housing Officers / Temporary Accommodation Team themselves. Birmingham City Council will not speak to a third party. The Temporary Accommodation Team have interpreters available to liaise with families, if required. It is important that families build relationships with their Housing Officer.

Temporary Accommodation Enquiries - 0121 675 5531

Temporary Accommodation Enquiries - TAEnquiries@birmingham.gov.uk

Repairs for Temporary Accommodation can be made with details above, for more information and "book a repair" form see [here](#).

ACCOMMODATION FINDING SERVICE

Accommodation Finding Team (AFT) can support families in identifying an affordable private rental who work with Birmingham City Council families. Families need to contact the accommodation finding team directly.

When contacting the Accommodation Finding Team, families need to provide Homeless Reference Number, Housing Application Number, and any relevant documentation/evidence.

For more information, please email the Accommodation Finding Team AFT@birmingham.gov.uk or call on 0121 675 4885. This team can provide advice/information regarding Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) and Homeless Prevention Fund which may support with deposits or rent arrears.

Repairs, Mould and Condensation

Families/Tenants should contact Birmingham City Council themselves about Council and Private Landlords who are not maintaining/providing acceptable housing.

Birmingham City Council Repairs need to be reported to 0121 216 3330 or complete an online form [here](#).

If it is a Health and Safety risk (Front door lock broken etc) then an urgent repair can be requested, and they will aim to get it done within 2 hours.

Private Landlords s not maintaining an acceptable property standard 0121 303 5070.

[Request private tenant advice](#) | [Private tenant advice](#) | [Birmingham City Council](#)

Call Pest Control on 0121 303 6007

For Environmental Health call 0121 303 1112

Please share links below about how to control and manage damp in the home.

[Birmingham City Council - Mould and Condensation Advice](#)

[Home Group - Mould and Condensation Advice](#)

Cadent Foundation Green Doctor - Groundwork

Families can also be referred / self-referred to Cadent - The Green Doctor. Green Doctor can offer advice and sometimes free items such as: energy efficient bulbs, blankets, hot water bottles, clothes airers and reflective strips for the radiators.

Birmingham City Council Housing Pathways

I want to do a Housing Application

- Go to Birmingham Choice website www.birminghamchoice.co.uk . You will be asked for your NI number
- Complete part 1 of application to register
- Complete Part 2 of app (you will need previous addresses for 5 years)
- Make sure you upload any documents that will evidence your housing need (consultant letters, CIN or CP plan etc)

If you failed to qualify call Registrations 0121 303 7410 as they can say why and reopen if appropriate

Tips for Housing apps

- Exceptional need is when there is a risk to life or of serious harm and will normally need a Tier 1 from police. This won't be considered if incidents or threats are not reported.
- Medical - must be a medical condition that is being made worse by your current property
- If a child needs a separate bedroom due to any medical condition, this needs to be evidenced by a medical professional
- Child in Need – this is any child with an allocated Social Worker
- ASB – if BCC property this must be reported to the ASB team 0121 464 4700 or
online: https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20095/antisocial_behaviour_and_neighbour_disputes/565/antisocial_behaviour/3

I am homeless now or know I will be soon

- Contact the BCC Homeless Team (to do a homeless application) on 0121 303 7410. They are doing apps over the phone during Covid-19.
- If you are roofless on the day, they will arrange TA for you. This may well be outside Birmingham as TA properties are in very short supply. They have 56 days to assess the case and whether they are genuinely homeless. If they are found as 'intentionally homeless' they won't be able to join the housing register unless they have another housing need.
- If the homeless team take a homeless application, they will issue a letter with a homeless reference on it. This reference needs to be added to the Housing app. If it isn't added, then 'homeless priority' Band 2 won't be added.
- A homeless application can be made even if you aren't roofless, as BCC can give 'prevention duty' and they will try to prevent the homelessness from happening. Evidence is needed in the form of a letter from the landlord or a possession order etc. Again, a housing app needs to be done as well.

My housing app has closed. What do I do?

Call Registrations on 0121 303 7410 as they can see what the reason is and potentially open it up again for changes to be made. They can also reset passwords.

I've got rent arrears but want to join BCC Housing Register

- For a current BCC tenancy call Rents Team 0121 675 2006 to set up a repayment plan
- If the arrears are from a previous BCC tenancy call Former Tenancy Rent Team on 0121 303 3173 to set up a repayment plan
- If the arrears are from a TA property call TA Finance on 0121 675 5535
- If its from a Private tenancy, then evidence is needed to show that a repayment plan is being adhered to. This could be a bank statement.

Once the repayment plan has been adhered to for at least 3 months then a Housing app can be done. If the arrears are significant (£2000 plus) allow longer before doing a housing app. You will not be accepted onto the Housing Register with any arrears unless there is a repayment plan.

I have got problems with my landlord

BCC has a team that can support tenants with rogue landlords, longstanding repairs issues, environmental issues.

- Call the Private Tenancy Unit on 0121 303 5070

My BCC property is in disrepair with rats or mice

- All repairs need to be reported to 0121 216 3330. If it is a health and safety risk (Front door lock broken etc) then an urgent repair can be requested, and they will aim to get it done within 2 hours
- Call Pest Control on 0121 303 6007
- For Environmental Health call 0121 303 1112

I am having problems with my neighbour

- If either are BCC tenants call 0121 303 1111 to report it or online at: https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20095/antisocial_behaviour_and_neighbour_disputes/565/antisocial_behaviour/3
- If private tenant, call the Private Tenancy Unit on 0121 303 5070
- If a criminal offense has taken place call WMP on 101 or 999 in an emergency
- If it is a Housing Association tenancy this is a list of providers: https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/50113/advice_and_support/1223/housing_associations_advice

BCC Housing advice portal: [Start | Housing Advice | Birmingham City Council \(adviceaid.uk\)](#)