Housing Advice

People being released from Prison or Youth Detention Centres

If you are being released from custody you may be entitled to receive the services of support staff within the prison; this support is usually provided by organisations such as Shelter or NACRO although different prisons have different support services available. Alternatively, you may have an allocated worker from a Youth Offending Team, Probation Services or Community Rehabilitation Companies.

If you do have a support worker they should assist you to complete a formal referral or, Duty to Refer, into the Housing Options Service at Sefton. This referral might be asking for general assistance with your housing options or might be specifically due to their concerns around homelessness when you are released from custody.

To make an appropriate assessment of your housing needs the Council will need you to disclose your offending history so please be willing to do so. If you are not willing to disclose your offending history this may affect what options, we can offer you.

In any case your housing options are effectively

1.   Referral to the Council for a homeless assessment, and/or

2.   Referral to our Mainstay gateway system for access to temporary accommodation (hostels), and/or

3.   Applying for social housing via Property Pool Plus.

4.   Seeking a home in the Private Rented sector

Whichever route(s) you take the Council will do all it can to assist you, although we cannot guarantee that there will be accommodation available for you when you are released from prison and you might be referred to the emergency Sit-Up services across the borough, which are located in some of the hostels.

Property Pool Plus

You can apply for social housing through Property Pool. Should you apply to register, you must declare your offending history, and if you are found to be non-qualifying you have the right to appeal that decision. Being registered does not guarantee that you will be offered housing or how long that may take.

If you are not registered, you can do so online via www.propertypoolplus.org.uk

If you are registered, you should ensure that PPP is aware of your current circumstances and if you are able to place bids for available property.
You could try to find housing in the private rented sector. Our Housing Options service may be able to advise you how to find out what housing is available locally and how to apply for help with your housing costs.

You might be able to get help with a deposit through:

- our private rented sector bond scheme, or

- Applying to our Housing Benefits service for a Discretionary Housing Payment for securing private sector tenancy (if you are already in receipt or Housing Benefit or Universal Credit)

Short term supported accommodation may be available if you are homeless. Mainstay Gateway to Housing & Support was created to provide improved access to short-term Housing Related Support services for single persons. A number of local organisations provide temporary housing and support services. More information can be found at; https://www.sefton.gov.uk/housing/single-person-homeless-and-housing-support-services.aspx

Where to go to get help and Advice

For further information, or if you need help because you might become homeless, contact us on 0151 934-3541 and ask to speak to a housing options advisor.

You can come into see our Housing Options Service which is based at Magdalene House, Trinity Road, Bootle, L20 3NJ, between the hours of: Monday 10am - 4pm

- Tuesday 10am - 4pm

- Wednesday 10am - 4pm

- Thursday 10am - 4pm

- Friday 10am – 3pm

If you are in need of Out of Hours appointment please click here for details on how to do this.

Alternatively, if you live in the Southport area you may make your initial enquiry to the Southport Housing Centre, 68 Eastbank Street, Southport, PR8 1ES or on 01704 501256. Drop in for advice: Monday to Thursday 10am to 4pm, or, Friday 10am to 3pm.

Self-Refer

You are also able to self-refer to Sefton Housing Option Team by completing the registration form by following the link to **Sefton's Jigsaw Registration form**