

EX-ARMED FORCES HOMELESS ADVICE



HOMELESSNESS RIGHTS FOR EX-FORCES

You may qualify for help from Derbyshire Dales District Council if you are a former member of the armed forces and are homeless or threatened with homelessness. You will have to prove to the Council that you are eligible for housing assistance, and have not made yourself intentionally homeless.

Subject to you satisfying the above criteria, Derbyshire Dales District Council has to help you with both emergency and longer-term accommodation, if it is accepted that you are homeless and in priority need with regard to needing accommodation.

Derbyshire Dales District Council will consider if we can help you using both general rules that apply to everyone and special rules that apply to people who were in the forces.

GENERAL RULES FOR PEOPLE IN PRIORITY NEED

It can be easier to get help if you qualify under the general rules for people in priority need, for example, if you have dependent children or are pregnant. Derbyshire Dales District Council will also consider if you are vulnerable in some way. This may involve showing how a disability, mental health problem, addiction or other issue affects your ability to secure housing for yourself compared with other people who are rendered homeless.

GENERAL RULES FOR PEOPLE IN PRIORITY NEED

You should also be treated as being vulnerable (and therefore in priority need for accommodation) if you can show that your vulnerability is as a result of being a former member of the armed forces.

When deciding this Derbyshire Dales District Council may consider:

- how long you were in the forces and what role you had
- if you spent any time in a military hospital
- if you were released from service on medical grounds (and have a Medical History Release Form)
- if you have had accommodation since leaving service and if you have been able to obtain or maintain accommodation since you left
- how long it has been since you left service

To help support your case, you may need to provide medical evidence from the Ministry Of Defence, including a Medical History Release Form (if you were given one). It can be hard to establish that you are vulnerable.

RE-HOUSING IN THE AREA OF YOUR BASE

To be accepted as homeless in the local council area where you were based, you must be able to show that you have a local connection with the local area where your base was situated.

You may be able to show a local connection with an area if you:

- currently work in the area
- have lived in the area for six of the last 12 months or three of the last five years
- live with a partner who currently works in the area

If you have left the forces and are not yet working for another employer in the area, you won't be able to show a local connection through working in the area. However, you may still be able to show that you have a local connection, as the time you spent living or working in the area may still count.

You should also consider if you are able to show a local connection with this or another local council area where you have close family connections.

APPLYING AS HOMELESS BEFORE DISCHARGE FROM THE FORCES

Contact Derbyshire Dales District Council if you think you will be homeless after discharge from the services. We do not need to wait until you are made homeless before we can help you.

Tel: 01629 761311

Email: homelessness@derbyshiredales.gov.uk

Once you produce a letter of discharge or some other evidence that confirms the date of your discharge from the Forces, Derbyshire Dales District Council will begin to offer you help and support in securing accommodation. In the event that you have not sought any housing assistance from this council prior to your discharge from the Forces, you may need to stay in your accommodation as long as possible.

Defence Estates have to give you a Notice to Vacate before they can take you to court, in order that they can obtain a possession order. You can use any Notice to Vacate and any possession order that is obtained against you as evidence in support of your homelessness application.

VETERANS GATEWAY

www.veteransgateway.org.uk

0808 802 1212

The first point of contact for veterans seeking support, Veterans' Gateway is made up of a consortium of organisations and Armed Forces charities, including The Royal British Legion, Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association (SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity), Poppy Scotland, Combat Stress and Connect Assist.

Veterans Gateway put veterans and their families in touch with the organisations best placed to help with the information, advice and support they need, from healthcare and housing to employability, finances, personal relationships and more.

EX-FORCES: SINGLE, HOMELESS AND ON THE STREETS

In addition to the help mentioned above there is a range of services for people who find themselves homeless and on the streets, for example:

- Day centres are a useful source of practical support – they provide a warm place to stay during the day and may also be able to offer food, clothing, laundry facilities and showers
- The Royal British Legion might be able to help with a rent deposit contact www.support.britishlegion.org.uk or call 0808 802 8080
- SSAFA provide housing advice to people currently serving in the forces and ex services personnel and their families. SSAFA can be contacted through www.ssafa.org.uk or on 0800 731 4880

HOUSING SUPPORT AND ADVICE FROM VETERANS' HOUSING

www.veteranshousingadvice.org.uk

0808 801 0880

Veterans' Housing Advice (VHA) is a new service which provides clear pathways for ex-Service personnel in housing need throughout the United Kingdom to move into permanent homes.

It is provided in partnership with The Royal British Legion, Shelter and Connect Assist. Its main aim is to make accessing the services of charities easier through a telephone helpline open seven days a week from 8am-8pm. It can, for example, provide a housing intervention that negates the need to consider a rent bond or rent deposit.

This can also be accessed via the Veterans' Gateway on the number above, which is available 24/7.