



www.gateshead.gov.uk

TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION WELCOME PACK



Welcome to Gateshead Councils temporary accommodation at XXXXX. The full address is:

XXXXXX

Whilst you are residing at XXXXX your Housing Options Caseworker will be carrying out investigations into your housing situation in order to ascertain your homelessness status. If you require an update on your application please contact Mark McCaughey on 0191 4332627. Your support worker whilst staying in temporary accommodation is and they can be contacted on 0191 433

If you would like this leaflet in large print, Braille, on audio cassette / CD or in a different language please call 0191 4332627.

General Information

Service Delivery: Support is available between 9.00am and 5pm Monday to Thursday, and between 9.00am and 4.30pm on Fridays. The Councils **out of hours service** is available in the case of emergencies on **0191 477 0844**.

Property Condition: Whilst you are residing in XXXXX it is your responsibility to ensure that the property, furniture, fixtures and fittings are kept clean and in good condition. Failure to do so could mean a breach in your licence agreements and could result in you being evicted from the property.

Rent: An application for Local Housing Allowance (sometimes called Housing Benefit) must be completed when you first enter the temporary accommodation and your support worker or caseworker will complete this application with you. It is your responsibility to ensure that your claim for Local Housing Allowance is processed fully. If further information is required by the Benefits section to process your claim you must provide this without delay. If your claim for Local Housing Allowance is not paid this could result in rent arrears, which in turn could result in your eviction.

If you are entitled to Local Housing Allowance you will still have to make a contribution towards the rental amount. Your support worker or caseworker will advise you of the amount you have to

pay. Your rent must be paid on a regular basis (weekly or fortnightly) and if it is not this could result in your eviction from the property. Your rent can be paid at Gateshead Civic Centre (1st floor, Community Based Services).

Money: If you are experiencing problems relating to debt there are people who can help. You can contact the following agencies for assistance:

Gateshead Citizens Advice Bureau
Regents Terrace
Gateshead
Tyne & Wear
Tel: 0191 478 5100

Gateshead Council Debt Advice Team
Gateshead Council
CBS
Civic Centre
Gateshead
Tyne & Wear
Tel: 0191 433 3994

Drug & Alcohol Services: For advice on any concerns that you may have in relation to drug or alcohol issues you can contact the following services. Both of them have a strict confidentiality policy.

N.E.C.A
Project Oasis
High Street
Gateshead
Tyne & Wear
Tel: 0191 490 1045

24/7
Jackson Street
The Interchange
Gateshead
Tyne & Wear
Tel: 0191 477 8888

Repairs: Any general repairs can be reported to The Gateshead Housing Company on 0800 4086008. You can

also report repairs to one of our wardens on 0191 4332627 or to your support worker.

Television Licence: If you decide to take a television to your temporary accommodation you will need a television licence. If you are found without a TV licence you may be taken to court and fined. A television licence can be purchased from a post office.

Health & Safety Information

Lone working: As your support worker will be working alone in your temporary accommodation it is important that we consider any risks posed to both you and your support worker during this time.

Using any information that we already have about you a risk assessment will be carried out prior to your support worker visiting you for the first time.

Racial Harrassment / Homophobia: You may feel discriminated or harassed because you are lesbian or gay, or you may suffer racial harassment. The agencies listed below provide support around homophobia.

Mesmac
11 Nelson Street
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 5AN
Tel: 0191 233 1333

STAG
13 Walker Terrace
Gateshead
Tyne & Wear
NE8 1EB
Tel: 0191 490 1669

FFLAG
7 York Grove
Wilder Street
Bristol
BS2 8HQ
Tel: 08456 520311

If you witness or suffer from racial or homophobic harassment in any form there are several ways that you can report it. It can be reported for you by a third party or you may report it yourself by calling into your local housing office where there are people that are trained to deal with your concerns. You may also report the incident straight to the police.

Fire Safety: Smoke alarms are provided in each property and you should test these on a regular basis (we recommend once per week).

Almost all fires within the home can be prevented. Here are some fire safety tips, which could help prevent a fire from starting in your property.

Kitchen safety: Chip pans and deep fat fryers are one of the most common causes of fires in homes in the UK. Never fill chip pans more than one third full of oil. Dry food with kitchen towels before putting it into the pan. Never put food into the pan if the oil begins to smoke, turn off the heat and leave the fryer to cool. Never leave a deep fat fryer (or any other pan) unattended.

If a pan does catch fire DO NOT MOVE IT & DO NOT THROW WATER ON IT. Turn the heat off if it is safe to do so, close the door to the kitchen, leave the property and call the fire brigade.

Keep the oven, toaster, pans, hob and grill clean. A build up of crumbs, fat and grease can easily catch fire.

Keep electrical leads and items such as tea towels and oven gloves away from the cooker and toaster.

Keep electrical leads and appliances away from water.

Electrics: Plugs & Cables – Check the maximum amps that the fuse in the plug can handle. Check for signs of loose wiring and faulty plugs or sockets such as scorch marks or flickering lights. Never overload sockets; use one plug in each socket.

Electric Blankets – Do not fold electric blankets and this may cause damage. Store them flat or rolled up to protect the internal wiring.

Only leave an electric blanket switched on all night if it has thermostatic controls for safe all-night use. If your electric blanket does not have a thermostatic control then unplug it before you get into bed.

Portable Heaters – Always position heaters so they are backed up against a wall, facing into the room. Don't place heaters near curtains or furnishings and never use them for drying laundry.

Lights – Don't position lights and bulbs near curtains and other fabrics.

Cigarettes / cigars: Never leave a lit cigarette / cigar unattended as it may fall onto furnishings or carpets and will soon catch fire. Do not smoke in bed, it's easy to fall asleep and set the bedding on fire. Always keep matches, lighters, cigarettes and cigars well out of reach of children.

Candles: Treat lighted candles as you would any other flame and never leave them unattended. Ensure they are extinguished completely before leaving the room, going to bed or leaving the property. Keep candles away from anything that could catch fire such as furniture and curtains. Candles and tea lights melt plastic surfaces such as bathtubs and televisions so make such they are placed on a heat resistant surface.

What to do if a fire starts: If possible close the door to the room where the fire is and close all the doors behind you as you leave the property. This will help delay the spread of fire and smoke. Before opening a closed door use the back of your hand to touch it. If it feels warm do not open it, as there will likely be a fire on the other side of the door.

Get everyone out as quickly as possible. Don't waste time collecting possessions and valuables. Telephone the fire brigade on **999**.

If escape routes are blocked and you can't open a window, break the glass in the bottom corner. Make any jagged edges safe with a towel or blanket. If you're on the ground floor or first floor use bedding to cushion your fall and lower yourself – Do not jump. If you can't get out of the property get everyone into one room and put bedding, towels or clothes round the door to block the smoke.

If your clothes catch fire do not run around. Lie down and roll around. Try to smother flames with a heavy material like a coat, blanket or a fire blanket.

Child Safety: If you are in a property with stairs and you have young children ask your support worker or warden for a safety gate. Always ensure that children are not left unattended as this may put them at a higher risk of hurting themselves.

Hazards: If you identify something, which you feel is a hazard or danger to yourself or your family, please inform the warden or your support worker.

Gas Safety: If you suspect that you have a gas leak there are certain things that you **MUST** do.

1. Open all of your windows and ensure that the area is will ventilated.
2. Do not turn on / off any electrical appliances, including the lights.
3. Do not use anything with a naked flame.
4. Call Gas Emergency Services on 0845 111 999 and then wait outside of your property.

A copy of Gateshead Councils Health and Safety Policy is available by calling the Civic Centre on 0191 4333000.

Local Information

Doctors Surgeries: The following is list of local GP's.

- St Albans Medical Group, Felling Health Centre, Stephenson Terrace, Felling, NE10 9QG. Tel: 0191 4692316
- Cope, Bonnington, Westwood & Dammers, 10 Bewick Road, Gateshead, NE8 4DP. Tel: 0191 4772296 / 4771536.
- Harris & Gilbert, Bridge Medical Centre, Gateshead Health Centre, Prince Consort Road, Gateshead, NE8 1NB. Tel: 0191 4783550.
- Ilyas, Panditi & Rizwi, Millenium Family Practice, Gateshead Health Centre, Prince Consort Road, Gateshead, NE8 1NB. Tel: 0191 4783678.

- Imam & Khan, Metro Interchange Medical Centre, 5 Walker Terrace, Gateshead, NE8 1HX. Tel: 0191 4772033
- Kennan, Daniels, Nutting, Greenough, Potter, Slowie, Bramhall & Ward, Central Gateshead Medical Group, Gateshead Health Centre, Prince Consort Road, Gateshead, NE8 1NB. Tel: 0191 4772243.
- Krishnan & Ray, 108 Rawling Road, Bensham, Gateshead, NE8 4RD. Tel: 0191 4203255.
- Kumar, Second Street, Bensham, Gateshead, NE8 4UH. Tel: 0191 4772430.
- Gateshead Walk in Centre, Bensham Hospital, Gateshead, NE8 4YL. Tel: 0191 4455454 (Open 7am – 10pm seven days a week. After 6pm and all weekend there is a GP out of hours service on site that can refer people directly to a doctor if this is deemed appropriate).
- Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Sheriff Hill, Gateshead, NE9 6SX. Tel: 0191 4820000 (A & E onsite).
- NHS direct. Tel: 0845 4647

Dentists: The following is a list of local dentists.

- K S Bamrah, 27 – 29 Jackson Street, Gateshead, NE8 1EE. Tel: 0191 4900818.
- Deckham Dental Practice, 294 Old Durham Road, Gateshead, NE8 4BQ. Tel: 0191 4773091.
- Bensham Dental Practice, 24 Saltwell Road, Gateshead, NE8 4XE. Tel: 0191 4771981.
- N Paterson, 2 Denmark Street, Gateshead, NE8 1NQ. Tel: 0191 4772438.
- Jane Temple, 27 – 29 Jackson Street, Gateshead, NE8 1EE. Tel: 0191 4900818.
- B M & N P Smith, 15 Regent Terrace, Gateshead, NE8 1LU. Tel: 0191 4772007.

Benefits and Advice Agencies:

- Gateshead Council Housing Benefit and Council Tax Enquiries. Tel: 0191 4334646.
- Pension Service Helpline. Tel: 0800 991234.
- Age Concern. Tel: 0191 4773559.
- Citizens Advice Bureau. Tel: 0191 4771392.
- Tax Credits Helpline. Tel: 0845 3003900.

- Crisis Loans. Tel: 0800 0328366.
- Community Care Grants: 0845 6088654.
- Job Centre Plus. Tel: 0191 2204000 / 0191 4514222 / 0191 45168000
- Post Offices. Tel: 08457 223344.
- Gateshead Council Debt Advice Team. Tel: 0191 4332642.

Libraries:

- Birtley Library, Durham Road, Birtley, DH3 1LE. Tel: 0191 4336101.
- Blaydon Library, Wesley Court, Blaydon, NE21 5BT. Tel: 0191 4336201.
- Gateshead Central Library, Prince Consort Road, Gateshead, NE8 4LN. Tel: 0191 4338400.
- Chopwell Library, Derwent Street, Chopwell, NE17 7HZ. Tel: 01207 561379.
- Crawcrook Library, Main Street, Crawcrook, NE40 4BN. Tel: 0191 4138164.
- Dunston Library, Ellison Road, Dunston, Gateshead, NE11 9SS. Tel: 0191 4335690.
- Felling Library, Tarlton Crescent, Felling, Gateshead, NE10 9HU. Tel: 0191 4336402.
- Leam Lane Library, Cotemedede, Leam Lane, Gateshead. Tel: 0191 4336428.
- Lobley Hill Library, Lobley Hill Community Centre, Scafell Gardens, lobley Hill, Gateshead, NE11 9LS. Tel: 0191 4336405.
- Low Fell Library, 710 Durham Road, Low Fell, Gateshead, NE9 6HT. Tel: 0191 4336408.
- Pelaw Library, Joicey Street, Pelaw, Gateshead, NE10 0QS. Tel: 0191 4336409.
- Rowlands Gill Library, Norman Road, Rowlands Gill, NE39 1JT. Tel: 01207 542372.
- Sunderland Road Library, Herbert Street, Gateshead, NE8 3PA. Tel: 0191 4336415.
- Whickham Library, St Marys Green, Whickham, NE16 4DN. Tel: 0191 4336424.
- Winlaton Library, Church Street, Winlaton, NE21 6AR. Tel: 0191 4336418.
- Wrekenton Library, Ebchester Avenue, Wrekenton, Gateshead, NE9 7LP. Tel: 0191 4336421.

Some of the libraries in Gateshead have free internet access.
Please call your local library for details.

Complaints & Compliments Procedure

Basically there are three steps to making a complaint. You may not have to go through all of these. It will depend on how satisfied you are with our response at the end of each stage. We handle most complaints following this process. However, depending on the nature of your complaint, we may deal with it differently. If this is the case, we will tell you straight away and tell you what to do.

Step 1 - Problem-solving

As soon as we get your complaint, we will try to sort it out quickly and informally by providing information or taking any appropriate action.

Step 2 - Investigation

If we cannot sort your complaint out immediately, we will send you a letter within three working days that tells you:

- who you can contact about your complaint;
- what we will do; and
- how long we will take to deal with it. This is normally within 20 working days. If this is not possible, we will tell you why and give you a date when you will get a response.

Once the investigation is complete, you will receive the results in writing from a senior manager.

Step 3 - Review

If you are still unhappy, you can ask our Chief Executive to look again at your complaint. Please do this within 10 working days of receiving the outcome. The Chief Executive will give you a full response within 20 working days. However, this may take longer if your case is complicated.

Your Other Questions Answered

If I am not happy with the way my complaint is being handled, is there anyone else I can contact?

Yes. You can contact the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO). We will give you details at any stage of your complaint with us. The LGO was set up by the Government to investigate complaints about councils. You can refer your complaint to the Ombudsman at any time during the course of any investigation we are carrying out, or after the investigation has finished. The Ombudsman's address is:

Local Government Ombudsman,
Beverley House,
17 Shipton Road,
York YO30 5FZ.
Phone: 01904 380 200
Fax: 01904 380 269
E-mail: enquiries.york@lgo.org.uk
Website: www.lgo.org.uk

I'm worried that if I complain, the service I receive will be affected.

Definitely not. We always aim to provide the best possible service to all our customers, and we will not change that just because we are investigating your complaint.

Is the information I give you confidential?

Any information you give us is covered by Data Protection guidelines. This means that we:

- will keep personal data safe and secure;
- will not share it with other organisations without your permission, unless the law says we must; and
- may use it to prevent and detect fraud.

I want to make a complaint, but want to stay anonymous - will you still look into it?

Yes. While it is helpful to us to know who you are so we can get in touch with you for extra details, we believe everyone has a

right to complain. As a result we will investigate anonymous complaints thoroughly.

I don't have a complaint, but want to give you my views on a service - how can I do that?

We appreciate any comments about our services - good and bad. You can give us your views at any time in writing, by phone, by e-mail or in person.

Making Your Complaint

You can make a complaint (or compliment) in a number of ways. You can:

- speak to your local Councillor;
- visit any Council office;
- print a copy of the [complaints and compliments form](#) from Gateshead Councils Website, complete it, and send it to us;
- phone us on: 0191 433 3000 (ask for the service area you need);
- e-mail us at: haveyoursay@gateshead.gov.uk;
- write a letter to:
Have your say
Gateshead Council
Civic Centre
Regent Street
Gateshead
NE8 1HH

You can also contact your local MP or get advice about your complaint from Citizens Advice. The address of the local office is:
Citizens' Advice Bureau
5-6 Regent Terrace
Gateshead
Tel: 0191 477 1392

Safeguarding Adults

What is a vulnerable adult?

A vulnerable adult is someone over 18 years of age who has a physical or mental condition that increases the risk of mistreatment and abuse by other people.

What is abuse?

Abuse is a violation of an individual's civil rights by another person. It may be a single or repeated act or lack of appropriate action occurring in any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which results in significant harm or exploitation.

Abuse may include:

- Physical / sexual attacks.
- Verbal abuse.
- Aggressive / threatening behaviour.
- Neglect by a person responsible for care / support.

What to do if abuse is reported to you.

Try and remain calm, listen patiently and treat the information seriously.

Reassure the person who is telling you their concerns or showing you an injury that they are doing the right thing.

Tell them what you will do next. As a service user you will need to contact a member of staff for appropriate action to be taken.

Remember to consider your own safety as well as others.

There may be occasions of serious crime and / or immediate threat to life and limb, which means you should call the emergency services on **999**.

Things **not** to do if abuse is reported to you.

You should never put yourself at risk.

Do not appear shocked, disgusted or angry or make judgmental comments.

Do not begin to investigate the situation or try to prove information is true.

Do not carry out intimate examinations unless this is explicitly part of your agreed role.

Do not speak about the situation to the alleged abuser or promise to keep what you have been told a secret.

A copy of the Safeguarding Adults Policy is available from the Civic Centre on 0191 4333000.