

## Newcastle City Council Housing Services

### Hospital Discharge and Homelessness Prevention Protocol

### Housing Resource Pack

May 2007  
Reviewed November 2010

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## A) The homelessness legislation and how it works in Newcastle

### 1. Making a homeless application

**Housing Advice Centre: 0191 277 1711**

The homeless legislation (Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Act 2002) gives local housing authorities the duty to help people who are homeless. The main duties they have are:

- To prevent homelessness – for **anyone** who asks for help
- To deal with homeless applications, and make enquiries to help them decide if they have a duty
- To secure accommodation for people who are homeless or likely to become homeless within 28 days, in a priority group, and not intentionally homeless
- To give people advice and help, even if they are not yet homeless, are not in a priority group, or are intentionally homeless

Homelessness Prevention Officers should help to try to prevent homelessness at this point, by helping to find suitable permanent housing, but **may** say they cannot take a homeless application until there is less than 28 days before the person may become homeless.

#### **Priority homeless groups (for whom there may be a statutory duty to provide temporary accommodation and to secure settled housing)**

These groups are usually expected to be in priority need (but the legislation allows some discretion):

- Families with dependent children (under 16s or still at school/college)
- Households including pregnant women
- People who are vulnerable because of mental health problems, physical ill health, learning disability, old age, or another reason
- Anyone who is homeless because of a fire or flood
- Under 18s (unless in the Looked After system - “relevant children”)
- People aged between 18 and 21 who have been in care for at least 13 weeks (“relevant children”)
- People who are vulnerable as a result of leaving prison, forces, or care
- People who are vulnerable as a result of violence or threats of violence

Homelessness Prevention Officers (HPOs) at the Housing Advice Centre take homeless applications if the homelessness cannot be prevented in any other way.

For people in a priority group, they will arrange temporary accommodation. They then decide whether there is legal duty to secure accommodation, and if so, will work with the applicant to find the right sort of settled housing (through Your Homes Newcastle, Housing Associations, or private landlords).

For people not in a priority group, HPOs will try to find the best temporary accommodation and will advise people about how to find settled housing. They will work with the applicant and with Pathways Advice and Support Workers to arrange for the right help so the best solution is found for that person. Each morning, HAC staff discuss at their daily briefing the need for accommodation for anyone sleeping rough.

There is a weekly case management meeting which prioritises rough sleepers and discusses any problems helping people to move into settled housing with the right support. Contact the Housing Advice Centre, or the Newcastle Homeless Liaison Project.

## 2. Temporary accommodation in Newcastle

**Newcastle Homeless Liaison Project (NHLP) / Gateway Team: 0191 2771707**

NHLP keeps information on vacancies in all temporary accommodation in Newcastle, and for some services in the surrounding areas.

Referrals to this accommodation from statutory agencies in the City are made via the Newcastle Supported Housing Gateway, a single access point for these services through which assessments and referrals can be made. The Gateway matches clients to appropriate accommodation services and organises waiting lists according to client priority, to enable resources to be targeted at those most in need. Further information on the Gateway can be found at [www.newcastle.gov.uk/gateway](http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/gateway).

### “Emergency access” accommodation

Emergency access accommodation is accommodation where an interview process does not have to take place before the person can be housed. They may still ask questions, and may still refuse someone who is not suitable to share accommodation with others. A place can be arranged whilst the person is in hospital, but unless the bed is paid for, it cannot usually be kept vacant until the release date.

#### **Emergency access accommodation in Newcastle:**

- Salvation Army Men’s Hostel (City Road)
- Salvation Army Women’s Hostel (Cedar House)
- Stonham HA – The Foyer
- YHN Young People’s Service Hostel
- Tyne Housing Association - Byker Bridge House
- Elliott House, The Cyrenians
- Women’s Aid
- Panah (for black and Asian women fleeing violence)

For more information, see leaflets about finding a home in Newcastle, or the Newcastle Homelessness Forum website:

[www.newcastle.gov.uk/core.nsf/a/nhf\\_prevention\\_network](http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/core.nsf/a/nhf_prevention_network)

### **Other temporary / supported accommodation**

Other temporary or supported accommodation can be accessed after an interview. This may be able to be carried out whilst the person is in hospital.

#### **Non-emergency access accommodation in Newcastle:**

- Byker Bridge Housing Association flats
- The Cyrenians: Abbott House, Virginia House, Francis House, & Roycroft House
- Haven, Tyneside
- Simonside House, Depaul UK (young people)
- Cumberland House, Norcare
- Wavelength, Norcare
- Outpost (gay and lesbian young people)
- Praxis (people with mental health problems and substance misusers, women with children, and asylum seekers)
- St Vincent New Bridges
- Young People's Services Supported Accommodation
- Tyneside Foyer (young people)
- Semi-Independent Living Scheme (SILS) project (NECA supported housing for people recovering from drug or alcohol problems)
- Norcare Veterans Centre - Care for war veterans

Also

- Young Women's Christian Association - YWCA
- North East Nightstop

There are other schemes for people with mental health problems or learning disabilities.

All details of temporary accommodation, and phone numbers and addresses, can be found on the Newcastle Homelessness Forum website:

[www.newcastle.gov.uk/core.nsf/a/nhf\\_accommodation\\_directory](http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/core.nsf/a/nhf_accommodation_directory)

## **B) Helping people to obtain a settled home through Your Choice Homes (YCH)**

### **Applying to join YCH**

Newcastle has a Choice-Based Lettings scheme, called Your Choice Homes. It is run by Your Homes Newcastle (YHN - the Arm's Length Management Organisation) which manages the Council's housing stock.

#### **How Your Choice Homes (YCH) works**

- You apply to join the scheme
- You can only be refused access to the scheme if you are ineligible by law (people from abroad who may not have access to public funds) or because you are considered to be unsuitable to be a tenant because of your past behaviour.
- You may have to provide two references at this stage
- Your application is checked, and your references may be contacted

Then:

- You look out for vacant properties that are advertised weekly on Monday noon to Thursday noon (through housing offices, YCH in Saville Row, Newcastle, Your Choice Homes website, and in the Evening Chronicle)
- You "express an interest" by saying that you would like to be housed in a specific property (no later than noon on the Thursday)
- You can express an interest in up to three properties a week
- You are offered a property if it fits your size of household, you meet the conditions set for that house, and you have been in your current property the longest of all the households who can bid for that house and have bid for it at the same time as you
- If you have a welfare priority, you can use this to bid for a property for up to three months.

People who have been in hospital may need help with the following steps:

- Getting two references
- Getting the application verified (checked)
- Becoming eligible for YCH
- Finding out how to make a bid for a property
- Asking for help from one of the health team at YCH

#### **What to do if the applicant is ineligible for YCH**

There is an appeals procedure against a decision that the applicant is ineligible. The applicant must appeal in writing within 21 days of the decision, and a review of the decision is carried out within 21 days of YHN receiving the letter. It will usually help if their request for a review is supported by someone like a social worker or other adviser.

A leaflet has been produced to help people advising applicants who have been told they are ineligible. It is important to provide evidence to support the view that the person should be considered as eligible, for example by showing that:

- They are no longer involved in crime or anti-social behaviour
- That they have been a good tenant in supported housing or mainstream housing elsewhere
- They have paid the rent regularly, or
- They have repaid a good proportion of any rent they owed

### **Your Homes Newcastle (YHN)**

YHN manages Newcastle's Council housing, on behalf of the City Council. Decisions about letting houses and flats are made by housing officers in one of the 14 Community Housing offices. You can find out more on the YHN website:

[www.yhn.org.uk/home.aspx](http://www.yhn.org.uk/home.aspx)

### **Housing Associations**

Housing Associations are generally not-for-profit housing providers, regulated by the [Tenant Services Authority \(TSA\)](#), and partly funded by the Government through the [Homes and Communities Agency \(HCA\)](#).

You can apply directly to most Housing Associations as well as being nominated by the Council (usually reserved for homeless applicants) or applying through the Choice-Based Lettings Scheme, Your Choice Homes.

To find a list of Housing Associations working in Newcastle, go to either:

[www.tenantservicesauthority.org](http://www.tenantservicesauthority.org) (look in Finding a Home, List of Housing Associations)

or

[www.newcastle.gov.uk](http://www.newcastle.gov.uk) (look in Housing, then Housing Associations and Co-ops, then Joining a Housing Association)

## **C) The Prevention Network**

Housing Services and the Commissioning Team have worked with its partners to develop a range of new initiatives to prevent homelessness. These are:

- **Pathways to independence for over 18s**
- **Pathways to independence for under 18s**
- **Preventing Evictions Protocol (PEP)**

and also

- **A process for access into supported homeless accommodation**
- **A common process for reducing rough sleeping**
- **Improved support for applicants to Your Choice Homes (YCH), including guidance on helping applicants to be eligible for the YCH scheme**

A guidance note on each of the Pathways to Independence and the Preventing Repeat Homelessness and Evictions Protocol is in the Housing Resource Pack.

All documents can be found on the Housing Advice Centre website:

[www.newcastle.gov.uk/housingadvicecentre](http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/housingadvicecentre)

## Preventing Evictions Protocol

### **What is it?**

The Protocol came into place on July 1st 2006, and is the product of an agreement between Housing Services, Social Services, and Your Homes Newcastle (YHN). It sets out a series of good practice principles for staff to help to identify when someone moving into one of a YHN property is vulnerable, and what should be put in place to give them the best chance of sustaining their tenancy and preventing homelessness.

### **Who does it help?**

The Protocol identifies which groups of people might be most at risk of homelessness in the future. This includes anyone who has been homeless and lost a tenancy on a previous occasion (repeat homelessness cases), people leaving institutions (children who have been in care, people leaving prison or hospital, or the forces), offenders, and people who have an additional problems: drug and/or alcohol problems; mental health problems; or a learning or physical disability. It also includes older people and refugees. The guidance gives advice about how to recognise that someone may be vulnerable, for example because they already have a support worker supporting them, and explains how best to find out which agencies are involved with the tenant.

### **What does it ask agencies to do?**

Having identified any possible risk to the tenancy, YHN staff are asked to put a flag on the tenancy record so that anyone who works with the tenant can see that support might already be in place or might be needed. YHN staff are also advised about developing good links with other agencies, and the guidance sets out what each type of agency is able to do when supporting a vulnerable tenant, and suggests ways of working together, including setting up good communication channels, if problems do arise.

Any agency working with a new YHN tenant is asked to ensure that the local housing office knows that the agency is involved, who the contact person is for this tenant, and how to get in touch with them. It is important that all agencies share information which might help to ensure that the tenancy is not put at risk; for example, if one agency has been unable to get in touch with the person, it is useful to let others know about this and ask the housing management staff to keep an eye out or make particular efforts to see the tenant.

Agencies are also asked to share housing support plans and key elements of risk assessments, so that everyone working with the tenant can be aware of what to look out for as signs that the person is not coping with independent living.

The Protocol sets out what should happen if a tenancy is seriously at risk. This includes checking with other agencies in case they may be able to do more with a client they are already working with, or may not know about someone who is vulnerable. Finally, the Protocol guides all agencies about what should happen if the tenancy is to be brought to an end.

**Any problems with the Protocol should be relayed to YHN, Social Services, or Housing Services. The Protocol can be viewed on the Newcastle Housing Advice Centre, Commissioning Team, and YHN websites.**

For further information, or information about training, or to discuss any problems putting these new policies and practices into place, please contact the Homelessness Prevention Project on **0191 277 1731** or **0191 277 1733**.

**Website addresses**

[www.newcastle.gov.uk/housingadvicecentre](http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/housingadvicecentre)

[www.newcastle.gov.uk](http://www.newcastle.gov.uk)

<http://www.yhn.org.uk/home.aspx>

## Pathway to Independence for Over 18s

### **What is it?**

This Pathway is aimed at helping people 18 or over who are staying in supported housing to gain settled housing (with support as necessary). It is part of a set of documents agreed between the Council's Housing Services, Commissioning Team, Your Homes Newcastle (YHN) and Social Services. It also involves the part of YHN which looks after applications for Council and other social housing, Your Choice Homes (YCH).

### **Who does it help?**

This Pathway will help people to move on from supported accommodation, and address the reasons why people are excluded from mainstream housing and secure housing through Your Choice Homes.

### **What does it ask agencies to do?**

Agencies working with people who have been homeless or who are staying in temporary or other supported accommodation are asked to support their service users to apply to join the YCH scheme at the earliest possible date. In particular, where the applicant is told they are ineligible to join the scheme (because of rent arrears or past anti-social behaviour), agencies are expected to help the person to address these issues. This can be done either by providing evidence that there has been a commitment to pay off rent arrears regularly over a period of time, or that the person's behaviour has improved, or by helping the person to tackle these issues so that they can reapply.

The guidance on ineligibility is designed to help agencies working with vulnerable people needing settled housing to address problems that lead to them being seen as not eligible for Your Choice Homes. It explains the way that these decisions are arrived at, and what can be done to achieve either a review, or a reversal because the applicant can demonstrate that the circumstances no longer merit that decision.

Once the applicant becomes eligible, agencies working with them (Pathways Assessment Agencies) are also asked to assess the person's skills for independence, help them to prepare for independence, and help the person to bid for tenancies through YCH. If they are still unsuccessful after two months, a referral may be made to YCH through the Welfare Priority Referral Form, which asks for a summary of any support needs and a note of these support needs are to be met in future.

Once the person is allocated a tenancy, agencies providing support will need to liaise with housing officers, including YHN Advice and Support Workers, and to ensure that any problems with the tenancy are shared between the various people involved with the tenant. This will help to prevent future homelessness (as described in the Preventing Evictions Protocol).

**Any problems with the Protocol should be relayed to YHN, Social Services, or Housing Services. The Pathway, guidance on addressing ineligibility, and the Welfare Priority Referral Form can all be viewed on the Newcastle Housing Advice Centre, Commissioning Team, and YHN websites.**

For further information, or information about training, or to discuss any problems putting these new policies and practices into place, please contact the Homelessness Prevention Project on **0191 277 1731** or **0191 277 1733**.

**Website addresses**

[www.newcastle.gov.uk/housingadvicecentre](http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/housingadvicecentre)

[www.newcastle.gov.uk](http://www.newcastle.gov.uk)

<http://www.yhn.org.uk/home.aspx>

## **Pathway to Independence for Under 18s**

### **What is it?**

In September 2007, 16 -17 year olds became eligible to join the Your Choice Homes (YCH) scheme to access social housing in the city. Young people can still apply as homeless, but the Pathway Plan makes better use of supported accommodation and other resources. It also helps young people in housing need who are not homeless to move into independent accommodation and out of supported accommodation.

The Pathway is part of a set of documents agreed between the Council's Housing Services, Commissioning Team, Social Services and Your Homes Newcastle (YHN). It also involves the part of YHN which looks after applications for Council and other social housing, Your Choice Homes (YCH).

### **Who does it help?**

It helps people under 18 who are homeless or who are in urgent housing need.

### **What does it ask agencies to do?**

The first step towards helping this group is taken by YHN Young People's Service, (YPS) whose staff see all under 18s who come into the Housing Advice Centre in Pilgrim Street for help with housing problems. YPS staff offer advice and help aimed at preventing homelessness, and mediation between the young person and the people they are staying with, and will assess the housing, support and other needs of each person. If a homeless application needs to be made because there is no other option for resolving the housing problem, Homelessness Prevention Officers will do that and will arrange temporary accommodation if needed, in conjunction with YPS workers.

For young people under 18 who are not homeless but have an urgent need for housing, YPS will offer mediation, support and may direct the young person towards supported housing, or offer help to access YCH through a management let. Anyone who applies for housing directly to YCH will have their application and needs assessed by YPS.

To help with the assessment, agencies working with under 18s (Pathways Assessment Agencies) are asked to assess the person's current skills for independence, and identify what is needed to help them get ready for managing a tenancy successfully. The Pathway will mean that these assessments will be made on a consistent basis across all agencies. Agencies are asked to identify what they are doing in practical terms to help the young person gain these skills, and this may include others who do not provide housing support but who help young people in other ways.

A checklist of life skills has been piloted by several agencies, and will be available for others to use. Agencies are asked to share key elements of Support Plans and to use the Welfare Priority Referral Form where an under 18 is not homeless but is in urgent housing need.

**Any problems with the Protocol should be relayed to YHN, Social Services, or Housing Services. The Pathway and the Welfare Priority Referral Form can be viewed on the Newcastle Homeless Forum, Commissioning Team, and YHN websites.**

For further information, or information about training, or to discuss any problems putting these new policies and practices into place, please contact the Homelessness Prevention Project on **0191 277 1731** or **0191 277 1733**.

**Website addresses**

[www.newcastle.gov.uk/housingadvicecentre](http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/housingadvicecentre)

[www.newcastle.gov.uk](http://www.newcastle.gov.uk)

<http://www.yhn.org.uk/home.aspx>

**D) The role of each organisation in Newcastle -  
What does each organisation do to help homeless people?**

**Newcastle City Council Housing Services**

**Housing Advice Centre  
Homelessness Prevention Officer (hospital discharge)  
0191 277 1711  
Office hours only (open 8.30am - 4.30pm, closed 12 noon – 1.00pm,  
and Wednesday mornings)**

The Housing Advice Centre is the Council's homelessness and housing advice service. Homelessness Prevention Officers (HPOs) aim to prevent homelessness for anyone from Newcastle who has a housing problem, and to deal with all homeless applications by helping people to gain access to suitable independent housing. They take homeless applications and must make a decision about whether the Council has a legal duty to help the applicant, but they try to help everyone to avoid homelessness, and give help to everyone to find housing options.

HPOs will also tell people where they can get independent advice, and how to appeal against a homelessness decision. **You can find more information about the law on homelessness in Appendix D.**

**For people leaving hospital, the Homelessness Prevention Officer (hospital discharge) at HAC will:**

- Assess the patient's need for housing
- Identify whether there is anywhere for them to return to (and negotiate for them to return if possible)
- Discuss options for housing, and work with the person to prevent their homelessness if at all possible
- Assess whether the person is likely to need help with living independently
- If temporary accommodation is needed, identify the most appropriate place, and look for a vacancy there, or in the next most appropriate accommodation available
- If the person is in a priority homeless group where there is a statutory duty (see below), book or reserve a bed
- If the person is not in a priority homeless group, reserve or identify a bed for someone leaving hospital, if the discharge is planned at least a day in advance, provided there are beds available
- If there is no accommodation available in Newcastle, the HPO will identify where there are beds outside Newcastle, using information from the Newcastle Homeless Liaison Project / Gateway (see overleaf), or look for the next vacancy
- Work out a pathway and what needs to happen next, for the person to get into settled housing, and work with the Advice and Support Worker to help the person to make the move into independent accommodation

- Engage the Psychiatric Nurse or Social Worker for homelessness, if the person has mental health problems

**Emergency Homelessness Service**  
**Out of hours homeless service**  
**5.30pm - 8.00am**  
**Contacted through the Civic Centre**  
**0191 232 8520**

**For people leaving hospital, the Emergency Homelessness Service will:**

- Assess the patient's need for housing and whether the patient is in a priority group (see below)
- Identify the most appropriate housing option and take responsibility for booking it if the person is in a priority homeless group
- If the person is not in a priority homeless group, identify the most appropriate housing options available and
- If there is any doubt over whether the person is in a priority group, the Emergency team will put the person in temporary accommodation
- HAC will then take over the case the following working day, and make a further assessment

**Newcastle Homeless Liaison Project (NHLP) / Gateway Team**  
**A clearing house for accommodation vacancies; the team also manages Newcastle Gateway**  
**Based at HAC**  
**0191 277 1707**

NHLP: Information is collated daily from accommodation providers across the North East. A telephone enquiry service operates Monday to Friday between the hours of 10.00am and 4.00pm. The service does not accept referrals from members of the public directly.

Gateway team: Day-to-day support is provided to Gateway operators. The team also organise training for operators and can provide further information on the Gateway to any interested parties.

**For people leaving hospital, NHLP / Gateway team will:**

- Keep a record of any vacancies in temporary accommodation for homeless people in Newcastle, and in other areas of the North East
- Provide information on what is available and suitable for any agency looking for accommodation for a homeless client
- Provide training, information and support to staff to enable them to refer clients to Newcastle accommodation services via the Newcastle Gateway

NHLP / Gateway team also keep a record of who is referred and admitted to, and discharged from, all temporary accommodation in Newcastle. This helps to compile statistical information and is used for strategic decisions.

**Specialist Health Visitor for the homeless works within the multi agency team at Hill Court (which is the city Council's temporary accommodation).  
Contact no. 0191 277 1746**

**For people leaving hospital and being discharged to Hill Court the Specialist Health Visitor will:**

- Assess the health needs of homeless households and liaise as necessary with the appropriate professionals
- Ensure that all residents in Hill Court are registered with a G.P., hence having access to Primary Care

## Your Homes Newcastle

**Pathways Advice and Support Workers, Your Homes Newcastle  
Contact through HAC or  
0191 277 1311 or 07866 761946**

Advice and Support Workers (ASWs) are part of the Your Homes Newcastle (YHN) Advice and Support Team. YHN now manages all Council housing in Newcastle on behalf of the Council. The Advice and Support Team helps people to sustain their tenancies by giving benefits, housing, and debt advice, offering support, and helping people to sort out practical things such as getting electricity and gas supplies, or furniture.

### **For people leaving hospital, the ASW (hospital discharge) will:**

- Develop a housing support package and work with a housing support agency to get this set up
- Make referrals to other services, for example to specialist floating support providers (such as those for people with drug and alcohol problems or mental health problems)
- Help patients to apply for permanent housing through Your Choice Homes or other housing providers, and to start paying off rent arrears or collect evidence of improved behaviour if they have been deemed ineligible for social housing
- Work with social work, health, and housing staff to assess what needs to be done to improve the condition or facilities for a patient whose home is thought to be unsuitable for them to return to, to help plan a move to another house, or to bring in other services or resources which would help the person to be able to remain in that home
- Help patients leaving hospital by:
  - Monitoring support packages to make sure they are working well
  - Liaising with other support providers and with social housing providers
  - Making links into daytime activities such as leisure and education
  - Providing benefits and debt advice
  - Working collaboratively with health and social care staff

### **For people leaving a mental health hospital or institution, YHN Mental Health Hub ASW's will:**

In addition to the points listed above the Mental Health Hub will:

- Working alongside the Homelessness Prevention Officers and the YHN mental health adviser and CPN for homelessness, go to visit the patient in hospital to assess their support needs and what would be the most suitable accommodation for them
- Carry out housing surgeries in particular hospital wards if needed

## **Your Choice Homes**

**Your Choice Homes  
6- 8 Saville Row  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
0191 277 2020**

Your Choice Homes (YCH) is the name of the Choice-Based Lettings scheme introduced by Newcastle City Council. It is a partnership between Your Homes Newcastle, Newcastle City Council, and Housing Associations, and private landlords from the Approved Register who have homes to rent in Newcastle. People who want to rent a home from one of these landlords apply to join the YCH scheme, and then bid for the home they want to live in.

People who have health problems which could be improved by a move into other housing, or who have particular health needs, can get extra priority through a health assessment.

Within the Health and Welfare Team in Saville Row there are three health advisers - Mental Health Adviser, Housing Occupational Therapist, and Specialist Practitioner (Health and Housing).

### **Mental Health Advisor**

#### **For people leaving hospital, the Mental Health Adviser for Housing will:**

- Visit the Wards weekly to identify accommodation needs, at the Hadrian Clinic and Collingwood Court, and other wards at St Nicholas' Hospital as needed
- Assess whether people would be eligible for medical priority on the grounds of mental health, by liaising with ward staff and other professionals such as social workers
- Liaise with in-patient staff in order to identify people needing help with housing
- Discuss housing and support options at meetings with ward staff

### **Occupational Therapist**

#### **For people leaving hospital, the Housing Occupational Therapist will:**

- Liaise with the hospital multi-disciplinary team
- Assess whether people would be eligible for medical priority on the grounds of physical health, by liaising with ward staff and other professionals
- Help to plan moves for people with physical health needs
- Organise adaptations to new homes to meet the specific needs of the patient

## **Specialist Practitioner (Health and Housing)**

**For people leaving hospital, the Specialist Practitioner (Health and Housing) will:**

- Liaise with the ASW
- Assess whether people would be eligible for medical priority on the grounds of physical health, by liaising with ward staff and other professionals such as social workers
- Help to plan moves for older people with physical health needs, and families

## **Newcastle Homelessness Services**

<p><b>Psychiatric Nurse Newcastle (Hill Court Homeless Services)</b> <b>West Park Centre</b> <b>At General Hospital</b> <b>Tel: 0191 256 3103</b></p>
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**For people leaving hospital, Psychiatric Nurse from Newcastle Homeless Services will:**

- Visits patients who are inpatients and identify any difficulties with discharge plans
- Gather information about people who are homeless, and liaise with HAC to help them to respond to homeless applications
- Work with Advice and Support Workers and HAC to identify suitable temporary or permanent accommodation
- Identify where Care Co-ordinators are already involved with the patient, contribute to risk assessments, risk management plans and offer advice on the possible accommodation options
- Work with ASWs from the Mental Health Hub to identify suitable options for independent housing, with support if necessary
- Work with ASWs from the Mental Health Hub to assess housing and support needs, and advice on support packages
- Take on the role of Care Co-ordinator for inpatients who are homeless when appropriate

<p><b>Mental Health Social Worker (Homeless Services)</b> <b>Hill Court, Pitt Street</b> <b>Tel: 0191 277 1737</b></p>
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**For people leaving hospital, the Mental Health Social Worker (Homeless Services) will:**

- Gather information about people who are homeless, and liaise with HAC to help them to respond to homeless applications
- Work with Advice and Support Workers and HAC to identify suitable housing options
- Identify where Care Co-ordinators are already involved with the patient, and contribute to risk assessments, advise on risk management plans, and devise care and support packages
- Work with ASWs (in the new team which will help people leaving hospital) to identify suitable options for independent housing, with support if necessary
- Work with ASWs (in the new team which will help people leaving hospital) to assess housing and support needs, and advice on support packages
- Assess and support people in Hill Court and will work with them until more long term support services are co-ordinated and commissioned
- Make referrals for individuals who may be at risk of eviction from their tenancy where there are concerns about a person's mental health or vulnerability

**Community Psychiatric Nurse**  
**Joseph Cowen Health Centre for Homeless People**  
**8 Wilfred Street, Byker**  
**Mobile: 07900 223465 or Tel: 0191 228 4929**

**Opening hours for Joseph Cowen Centre**

Monday 9:00am - 4:00pm

Tuesday 9:00am - 4:00pm

Wednesday 9:00am - 4:00pm

Thursday 9:00am - 4:00pm

Friday 9:00am - 4:00pm

No appointments are needed

**For people leaving hospital, the Joseph Cowen CPN will:**

- Meet with homeless people with mental health needs living in independent or supported accommodation, or who are street homeless (either at Joseph Cowen Health Centre or elsewhere), and continue to work with them if they are admitted to hospital, until a Care Co-ordinator is involved
- Work with Advice and Support Workers and HAC to identify suitable housing options
- Help ASWs to identify suitable options for independent housing, with support if necessary
- Help ASWs to assess housing and support needs and arrange support packages
- Refer people into mainstream mental health services
- Contribute to risk assessments, advise on risk management plans, and devise care and support packages
- Monitor the support provided to people who have been homeless, until a Care Co-ordinator is involved

## **Newcastle Hospitals NHS Trust**

**Hospital Discharge Liaison Facilitator for Newcastle Hospitals Trust  
0191 244 8900**

### **For people leaving hospital, the Hospital Discharge Liaison Facilitator will:**

- Act as resource and support for hospital staff in relation to the Hospital Discharge and Homelessness Prevention Protocol
- Be the contact person if there are concerns that the Protocol has not been followed
- Represent the Newcastle Hospitals Trust at review meetings regarding this Protocol

### **Nursing staff in all hospitals**

### **For people leaving hospital, nursing staff will:**

- Find out at admission whether the address given is the address the patient intends (and can) return to
- Refer the patient to their own local authority if they do not come from Newcastle
- Refer the patient to the Homelessness Prevention Officer (hospital discharge) at the Housing Advice Centre, if they do not have an address they can return to - as soon as possible after admission and no later than a week before discharge in most cases, two days before discharge in short stay wards, or that day for A&E
- Contact either the social work duty officer or the mental health social worker if the person states at some point during their hospital stay that they cannot return to the address from which they were admitted
- Inform the social work team if the patient is under 18 and may be homeless
- Contact the Housing Advice Centre if the patient is sleeping rough and wishes to get help to find somewhere to stay (and contact the Homelessness Prevention Project to fax them the patient's details if they do not wish to have help at this point)
- Refer patients to drug and alcohol treatment services if they wish to seek treatment

## Newcastle Social Services Department

<p><b>Hospital Social Work Team - all hospitals</b> <b>Tel: 0191 233 6161 / 0191 223 2507</b></p>
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### **For people leaving hospital, the Hospital Social Workers will:**

- Provide help to ward staff where a patient is not able to return home or has no home to return to
- Where people are unable to make a housing application without help, or have no family to help them, support patients in making housing applications, and make contact with housing services including Your Choice Homes, and other social or private landlords, and with Advice & Support Workers
- Contact Homelessness Prevention Officers at the Housing Advice Centre or the Emergency Homelessness Service to alert them to a potentially homeless patient, if they do not have an address they can return to - as soon as possible after admission, and no later than a week before discharge in most cases, two days before discharge in short stay wards, or that day for A&E
- Contact the Housing Advice Centre where someone is sleeping rough
- For under 18 year olds, make a referral to the Children and Families Team
- Liaise with landlords, health workers, and Advice and Support Workers where it is thought that a patient cannot return home because of the condition or facilities in their home
- Arrange for cleaning of the home where this is needed, in liaison with housing staff, environmental health officers, and ASWs
- Carry out community care assessments and arrange social care packages
- Refer patients to other services such as mental health services, and supported housing services, as needed

**E) Homelessness contacts in the North East region  
(Telephone numbers for homelessness service in general)**

**Tyne & Wear**

<p><b><u>Gateshead</u></b></p> <p>Gateshead Council Civic Centre Regent Street Gateshead NE8 1HH</p> <p><b>Telephone: 0191 433 2636</b></p>	<p><b><u>North Tyneside</u></b></p> <p>North Tyneside Council Unicorn House Suez Street, North Shields Tyne and Wear NE30 1BB</p> <p><b>Telephone: 0191 643 7739</b> <b>Telephone: 0191 643 2520</b></p>
<p><b><u>South Tyneside</u></b></p> <p>Library Building Prince George Square South Shields Tyne and Wear NE33 2PE</p> <p><b>Telephone: 0191 424 7961</b></p>	<p><b><u>Sunderland</u></b></p> <p>City Housing Advice Team PO Box 102 Civic Centre Sunderland SR2 7DN</p> <p><b>Telephone: 0191 561 7848</b></p>

**Northumberland**

<p><b><u>Alnwick</u></b></p> <p>1 Clayport Street Alnwick, NE66 1LA</p> <p><b>Telephone: 01665 511 686</b></p>	<p><b><u>Berwick</u></b></p> <p>Council Offices Wallace Green Berwick on Tweed TD15 1ED</p> <p><b>Telephone 08000 461451</b> <b>Telephone: 01289 301 833</b></p>
<p><b><u>Blyth Valley</u></b></p> <p>Homes for Northumberland Dinsdale House 75 Marine Terrace, Blyth Northumberland NE24 2LN</p> <p><b>Telephone: 01670 542 097</b></p>	<p><b><u>Castle Morpeth</u></b></p> <p>Castle Morpeth Housing Longhirst Hall Longhirst Morpeth, NE61 3LR</p> <p><b>Telephone: 0845 117 0020</b></p>
<p><b><u>Tynedale</u></b></p> <p>Homes for Northumberland Dinsdale House, 75 Marine Terrace Blyth, Northumberland NE24 2LN</p> <p><b>Telephone: 01670 542 097</b> <b>Telephone: 01434 652 338</b></p>	<p><b><u>Wansbeck Homes</u></b></p> <p>Wansbeck Homes Front Street West Bedlington Northumberland NE22 5TU</p> <p><b>Telephone: 01670 532 399</b></p>

## Teesside

<b><u>Hartlepool</u></b> Housing Advice Section Civic Centre Victoria Road Hartlepool TS24 8AY <b>Telephone: 01429 284 177</b>	<b><u>Redcar &amp; Cleveland</u></b> Belmont House Rectory Lane Guisborough TS14 7FD <b>Telephone: 01287 612 457</b>
<b><u>Middlesbrough</u></b> Erimus Housing 73-75 Corporation Road Middlesbrough TS1 1LY <b>Telephone: 0800 046 1600</b> <b>Telephone: 01642 266 522</b>	<b><u>Stockton</u></b> Homeless Options Services 16 Church Road Stockton on Tees TS18 1TX <b>Telephone: 01642 526 639</b>

## County Durham

<p><b><u>Chester le Street</u></b></p> <p>Civic Centre Newcastle Road Co Durham DH3 3UT</p> <p><b>Telephone: 0191 387 2058</b></p>	<p><b><u>Derwentside</u></b></p> <p>Council Offices Front Street Stanley DH9 0SU</p> <p><b>Telephone: 01207 218 909</b></p>
<p><b><u>Darlington</u></b></p> <p>Homeless Division Town Hall Darlington Co Durham DL5 5QT</p> <p><b>Telephone: 01325 388 544</b></p>	<p><b><u>Durham City</u></b></p> <p>Durham City Homeless Unit 17 Claypath Durham City DH1 1RH</p> <p><b>Telephone: 0191 301 8220</b></p>
<p><b><u>Easington</u></b></p> <p>Council Offices Seaside Lane Easington Village Peterlee Co Durham SR8 3TN</p> <p><b>Telephone: 0191 527 0501</b></p>	<p><b><u>Sedgefield</u></b></p> <p>Council Offices Green Lane Spennymoor</p> <p><b>Telephone: 01388 816 166</b></p>
<p><b><u>Teesdale &amp; Wear Valley</u></b></p> <p>Civic Centre Crook Co Durham DL15 9ES</p> <p><b>Telephone: 01388 761 614</b></p>	

## **F) Contact details**

If there are any problems regarding the Hospital Discharge and Homelessness Prevention Protocol or you would like copies or any training please do not hesitate to contact the Homelessness Prevention Project and ask for Sarah Blakey Tel: 0191 277 1733 or email [sarah.blakey@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.blakey@newcastle.gov.uk) or Michael Adjei-Mensah Tel: 0191 277 1731 or email [michael.adjei-mensah@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:michael.adjei-mensah@newcastle.gov.uk)

## **G) Where to get help with welfare benefits in Newcastle**

Newcastle has a number of agencies that give advice on welfare rights and welfare benefits. There is a paper directory called “**Where to get advice in Newcastle**”, or you can find information about where to get advice on the Council’s website at:

[www.newcastle.gov.uk/core.nsf/a/wr\\_nav2\\_advicenewcastle](http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/core.nsf/a/wr_nav2_advicenewcastle)

or by looking at the Newcastle Council for Voluntary Services website:

[www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk/publications/directory/directory.htm](http://www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk/publications/directory/directory.htm)

or by using the Community Legal Services website:

[www.clsdirect.org.uk/index.jsp](http://www.clsdirect.org.uk/index.jsp)

You can also find information on benefits on the national Citizens Advice website:

[www.adviceguide.org.uk/](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk/)

The Council’s website also contains limited information about benefits:

[www.newcastle.gov.uk/core.nsf/a/wr\\_otherhelp](http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/core.nsf/a/wr_otherhelp)