

## Help and Support

We can refer you to an organisation that may be able to offer you help and support:

NOVAS Group – floating support for single people aged 16-65

Shelter – support for all housing related issues

Housing Support Services – floating support for families with children

Home Start – support, friendship and practical help for families with at least one child under 5

West Somerset Domestic Abuse Support Service – support for people who have been victims of domestic abuse

Don't forget

The sooner you come to us with a problem, the more we are likely to be able to help you.

## CONTACT THE COUNCIL



**Phone us** on 01643 703704  
Monday to Friday between 8.30am and 5pm

**Emergency:**  
Careline 0800 0831404  
(5pm - 8.30am)



**Write** to us at: West Somerset Council, West Somerset House, Killick Way, Williton, Taunton, Somerset, TA4 4QA



**In Person** at the Minehead Customer Centre, 1-3 Summerland Road, between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday, or the Council Offices at Williton between 8.30am and 5pm Monday to Thursday, and 8.30am to 4.30 pm on Friday



**Email** us at  
[customerservices@westsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@westsomerset.gov.uk)



**Download** forms, leaflets and information from our website at  
[www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk](http://www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk)



## A Guide to West Somerset's Housing Advice and Options

This document can be made available in large print, Braille, tape format or in other languages upon request

## Who do we advise?

We advise anyone who has no home, whose home is at risk or who needs assistance with:

- Tenancy problems eg rent arrears, being asked to leave
- Mortgage arrears
- Problems because you are living with family or friends
- Relationship breakdown, including domestic abuse
- Disrepair problems
- Not knowing what housing options are available

## How do I access the service?

In person - You can make an appointment to see a Housing Officer either at our offices at West Somerset House, Killick Way, Williton or at our Customer Centre at 1-3 Summerland Road, Minehead. To make an appointment phone 01643 703704 and ask for the Housing Department. Appointment times are between 9.00am and 4.00pm Monday to Friday.

If you are unable to get to our offices, we may be able to offer you a home visit. In some circumstances we will need to carry out a home visit, eg disrepair problems, family asking you to leave.

By phone - We may be able to help you over the phone. You can phone us on 01643 703704 and ask to speak to a Housing Officer.

Website - You can access our website for information on housing at [www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk](http://www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk)

In order for us to give you a good service, it is important that you provide us with full and accurate information about your housing circumstances.

## What services do we offer?

We provide a free and confidential service. You can talk over your problems with a Housing Officer who will help you to make an informed decision about your housing options.

We also offer a range of practical help:

## Preventing homelessness

Where it is reasonable for you to remain there, we can work with you to try help you to keep your home.

## Advocacy

We can talk to the person asking you to leave your home and try to negotiate an agreement to enable you to remain. This could be your landlord, relative, friend etc.

## Tenancy

We have powers to prosecute to stop harassment and illegal eviction.

We can also act if your rented home is in poor repair and is affecting your health.

## Mediation

This is a free service run by an independent agency. It gets both sides together to identify the issues and negotiate an agreement beneficial to everyone. This could be between a family member, a friend or partner. It is very helpful if you try to discuss issues between you, but end up arguing.

## Financial advice

We can look at your finances and possibly help you to maximise your income. If you have debt problems we can direct you to West Somerset Advice Bureau. They may be able to negotiate down your debts, which could help make your home affordable to you.

If you are over 60 you may be able to get help from the Finance and Benefits (FAB) team based in Bridgwater. You should contact Somerset County Council on 0845 345 9133 if you wish to find out more about this service.