

## **If you need housing advice or are homeless: Former members of the regular armed forces**

The Housing Advice Centre is part of Newcastle City Council and offers a free, confidential advice service to anyone that has housing problems. We aim to help people to keep their home or help them to find one that meets their needs. We can help you to understand the different options that are available in Newcastle to solve your housing problems.

Staff at the Housing Advice Centre can:

- prevent a homelessness situation from occurring, wherever possible
- explain the processes of homelessness prevention
- assist in locating alternative accommodation, such as a housing association, local authority or privately rented property
- provide you with information and advice on your options

There is a wide range of advice and support available in Newcastle. The Housing Advice Centre can help you, or the person you're working with, to understand the different options available to solve housing problems. The earlier you get in touch, the more likely it is that you can get help.

**Phone:** 0800 1707 008 (Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 12 noon and 1pm to 4.30pm)

**Email:** [housingadvicecentre@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:housingadvicecentre@newcastle.gov.uk)

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

**In person:** Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Newcastle City Council's Housing Advice Centre staff are only providing telephone or email advice. The Housing Advice Centre building will not be open for face-to-face advice until further notice. This will help us all to reduce the risk of spreading coronavirus. Please call or email using the contacts above

If you need to contact someone after 5pm or at weekends because it is an emergency and you have nowhere to stay that night phone the out-of-hours service on **0800 1707 008** (Press 2 for the Operator and ask for the Emergency Homeless Officer)

As a member of the regular armed forces community, you may be entitled to additional priority for social housing if you have an urgent housing need. This may mean you are able to secure settled accommodation more quickly than people with similar circumstances to you but who are not members of the regular armed forces community. Newcastle City Council's lettings policy states that former and serving members of the regular armed forces, as well as their bereaved spouses and civil partners, will be considered in "urgent need" of housing in particular circumstances and given a higher priority banding when bidding for properties. You can read that policy online at [www.newcastle.gov.uk](http://www.newcastle.gov.uk) (search 'lettings policy'). The relevant information is on pages 25 to 28.

The full website link to the lettings policy is:

[www.newcastle.gov.uk/sites/default/files/wwwfileroot/housing/new\\_allocations\\_and\\_lettings\\_policy\\_march\\_17.pdf](http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/sites/default/files/wwwfileroot/housing/new_allocations_and_lettings_policy_march_17.pdf)

## Other support available

### Your Homes Newcastle Armed Forces Outreach Service

Your Homes Newcastle (YHN) has an Armed Forces Outreach Service which helps veterans to make the transition from military life to civilian life. The service also supports serving members of the regular armed forces and their families. Their Outreach Officer, Steve Lambert, is based alongside the YHN housing options service at Newcastle City Library. He can provide useful advice and support to former or serving members of the regular armed forces, as well as to bereaved spouses and civil partners.

**Phone:** 0191 277 1297  
**Email:** [steve.lambert@yhn.org.uk](mailto:steve.lambert@yhn.org.uk)

### SSAFA (the Armed Forces charity)

SSAFA can give practical housing advice and support to veterans and their dependents. Their advisors offer impartial guidance around housing issues for those who have left the regular armed forces. This includes homelessness, housing benefits, accessing social housing, tenants' rights, mortgage arrears, repossession and eviction. They can also signpost you to other organisations for help.

Advisors also work together with their volunteer network to try and source financial assistance that might be needed to solve your housing problems, for example, finding money for a deposit or to help with mortgage arrears.

**Phone:** 0191 222 0803  
**Email:** [Tyne.Wear@ssafa.org.uk](mailto:Tyne.Wear@ssafa.org.uk)  
**Website:** [www.ssafa.org.uk](http://www.ssafa.org.uk)

### Joint Service Housing Advice Centre

If you are still in the regular armed forces, you can get specialist advice before you leave from the Ministry of Defence's (MOD) housing information and advice service – the Joint Service Housing Advice Office. The Joint Service Housing Advice Office also runs the MOD Referral Scheme which may help you to find a social housing home if you are:

- married or a separated spouse still living in services family accommodation, or
- single and living in a hostel within six months of leaving the regular armed forces

There is more information about the above online at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) (search Joint Service Housing Advice Office).

### Veterans UK

The MOD also run the Veterans UK helpline which gives advice on issues including emergency accommodation, benefits, pensions, loans and grants, finding a job, retraining, health issues, welfare concerns, service records and medals.

**Phone:** 0808 191 4218  
**Email:** [veterans-uk@mod.uk](mailto:veterans-uk@mod.uk)

This information was accurate at the time of publishing (February 2021)