

## Social Housing Advice for Young People Under 25

Social housing in North Somerset is in short supply and there is a high demand for the limited number of housing association properties that become available. This means that you can wait a long time before being offered a social housing tenancy, if ever. The private sector allows you to choose from a range of accommodation types and locations. The main option available to you as a young person is Supported Housing.

### Supported Housing

While many people would like their own place, this is often not possible when renting. It can be very expensive to rent your own flat or house. There are two ways to find cheaper accommodation: look for rooms in shared houses or rent with a friend.

Shared accommodation is often very central in location and can be found relatively cheaply. Bills are shared which means that it can be much cheaper to rent in an otherwise expensive location. Likewise, lodgings in an owner's home is often much cheaper. You have less rights as a lodger but the rent in advance and deposit is often much lower.

### Supported housing schemes for young people

**Weston Foyer**, St Ives Road, WsM, BS23 3XX Tel: 01934 413587  
Self-contained flats for 18-30yr olds. Low level support

**Knightstone Housing Association**, 84 Severn Road, WsM, BS23 1DU Tel: 01934 644992  
Shared accommodation for 16-25yr olds. Medium to high level support

**Stonham Housing Association**, 83 Locking Road, WsM, BS23 3DW Tel: 01934 642735  
Shared accommodation for 18-25yr olds. Medium to high level support

### Chapter 1 Housing Association

**Triangle Project** Shared accommodation in Clevedon 16-25yrs. Medium to high level support. Tel: 01934 412912

**Graham House** Shared accommodation & self-contained units for males and females 16-25yrs. Medium to high level support. Tel: 01934 416804  
Graham house also has a Mother & Baby Unit for young mums. Tel: 01934 412912

**Elim H/Association**, Tudor House, Watery Lane, Nailsea, BS48 2AX Tel: 01275 854739  
Shared accommodation for 18-25yr olds. Low level support.

### Connexions

They offer advice and info on learning and training, and work with people under 19 years of age. Your connexions worker is your allocated worker from your last secondary school and remains with you until your 19<sup>th</sup> birthday. They hold a drop-in service every working day from 1pm until 4.30pm Mon-Thu & until 4pm Fri at 45 The Boulevard, WsM, BS23 1PG, Tel: 01934 644443. To be able to start any claim for Income Support or JSA, as a young person you will need to have a meeting with Connexions first.

### Benefits

New claims for benefits can be made through Jobcentre Plus by phoning **0800 0556688**. Enquiries about existing claims can be made on **08456 088597**. If you are claiming certain benefits you can apply for a Budgeting Loan to cover the first month's rent in advance or Community Care Grant for help with furniture. You can do this at the Jobcentre or by phoning the new claim number above. You can apply for a Crisis Loan by phoning **0800 0328349**. **IF YOU ARE UNDER 18 you will need a Face to Face appointment with the U18's Advisor at the Jobcentre.**

### **Sources for finding private sector vacancies**

There are many ways to find accommodation in the private sector. Landlords advertise and it is a good idea to look in as many places as possible. Try to widen your areas of choice as much as possible. The smaller an area you wish to rent in, the less likely you will be to find somewhere or the less choice you will have, especially in rural areas.

### **Trading papers**

These are usually published weekly and carry classified type adverts for many different things including rented accommodation. It is also worth searching the websites of on-line only trading sites and the local websites of national trading newspapers.

The Midweek Mercury is delivered free on Wednesdays or can be collected from the Mercury office on Waterloo Street, WsM. It carries classified ads for rented accommodation.

### **Newspapers**

*Weston & Somerset Mercury & Clevedon Times* Tel: 01934 422522  
[www.thewestonmercury.co.uk/content/property/](http://www.thewestonmercury.co.uk/content/property/) On sale weekly every Thursday.  
*Clevedon Mercury* Tel: 01275 335140  
[www.clevedonmercury.co.uk](http://www.clevedonmercury.co.uk) or <http://property.thisissomerset.co.uk/> On sale Fridays.  
*Evening Post* Tel: 01934 629934  
[www.epost.co.uk](http://www.epost.co.uk) On sale Thursdays with local property section.  
*Western Daily Press* Tel: 01934 644368.  
[www.westpress.co.uk](http://www.westpress.co.uk) On sale daily.

### **Notice boards and shop windows**

Cards placed in newsagents' windows advertise flats or rooms at the cheaper end of the market. You should go round the area you are interested in regularly to check if new ads have been put up.

### **Word of mouth**

Friends, family and workmates often tend to be a good source for finding out about accommodation. As such, it's a good idea to let as many people as possible know that you are looking for somewhere to live.

### **Letting Agencies**

Letting Agencies let and manage rooms, flats and houses on behalf of private landlords. Most agencies advertise in the local press, Yellow Pages and the Thomson Local Directory. We have a list available – please ask at reception. It is advisable to visit a number of different agencies to increase your chances of finding accommodation. Agencies can be expensive as they often charge fees, and they may carry out credit and reference checks.

### **Websites for rented accommodation**

There are many more sites advertised on the specialised web sites than ever make it into the local papers. These cover houses, flats and rooms in shared accommodation. You can browse by location, type or price and register your details to be emailed when a suitable property is listed.

<a href="http://www.gumtree.com">www.gumtree.com</a>	<a href="http://www.housepals.co.uk">www.housepals.co.uk</a>	<a href="http://www.fish4.co.uk/iad/lettings">www.fish4.co.uk/iad/lettings</a>
<a href="http://www.spareroom.co.uk">www.spareroom.co.uk</a>	<a href="http://www.findaproperty.com">www.findaproperty.com</a>	<a href="http://www.friday-ad.co.uk">www.friday-ad.co.uk</a>
<a href="http://www.flatmateclick.co.uk">www.flatmateclick.co.uk</a>	<a href="http://www.torent.co.uk">www.torent.co.uk</a>	<a href="http://www.rightmove.co.uk">www.rightmove.co.uk</a>
<a href="http://www.mondaytofriday.com">www.mondaytofriday.com</a>	<a href="http://www.easyroommate.com">www.easyroommate.com</a>	

**The local libraries have free internet access for members. It is free to be a member. Ask the staff for help if you are unsure about how to use websites and the internet.** If you do not have email, you can sign up for a free account with companies such as [www.yahoo.co.uk](http://www.yahoo.co.uk), [www.hotmail.com](http://www.hotmail.com).

### **Help with a deposit**

If you are under 18 you may need a Guarantor for any tenancy you find.

If you are over 18 The Woodspring Deposit Guarantee Board (WDGB) can often help with a bond for single people who are on benefits or a low income. It is a paper deposit guarantee agreed between WDGB and the landlord, allowing the tenant to move in without paying a large sum upfront. The tenant then pays a small amount into a fund every week, building up their own deposit. If the landlord claims against the bond for rent arrears or damage at the end of the tenancy, your money will be used to repay it and you will be charged any excess. To be eligible for a bond you must have lived in the area for at least 6 months and may be asked to provide a reference. Ask your housing officer for a leaflet if you would like more information.

WDGB hold a drop in on Mondays and Wednesday between 10am and 2pm at Somewhere to Go, St John's Hall, Boulevard, Weston-super-Mare BS23 1NA. Tel: 01934 617617. Call in or phone to make an application. They also hold appointments on Tuesdays and Thursday at Somerset House. Your housing officer can book you an appointment.

### **Housing Benefit**

If you are on benefits or a low income you may be eligible for housing benefit to help you pay your rent. Housing benefit is worked out using the Local Housing Allowance, and is based on who lives with the tenant, which area the property is in, how much money the tenant has coming in and what savings the tenant has. Payments are made direct to tenants but if you are vulnerable in any way or have previous debt problems you can ask for payments to be made to your landlord.

If you are under 25 and single you will probably only be entitled to a limited amount of housing benefit if you are not working. This is called the *single room rent allowance*, and is set by central government. The amount is that for 1 bedroom with shared facilities and around £70 per week. There are some exceptions, so ask your housing officer for further advice. You can check how much housing benefit you may be entitled to by using the benefits calculator on North Somerset Council's website, [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/benefitscalculator](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/benefitscalculator).

### **Credit Union**

Credit Union is a local finance co-operative that works on a 'not for profit' basis. They can offer low-cost loans to members. Tel: 01934 429573 for more information or to join.

The **Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB)** can assist with assessing what other benefits you may be entitled to, help you apply for them and appeal negative decisions. They have a drop-in service on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Fridays, 10am to 3pm at The Badger Centre, Wadham Street, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 1JY. Tel: 01934 836201. Telephone advice is available on Thursdays between 10am and 3pm on 0870 121 2017. [www.northsomersetcab.org](http://www.northsomersetcab.org).

### **Tenancy Support**

If you currently have a tenancy but are experiencing problems there are a variety of agencies that you can apply to for floating support. Ask your housing officer for more information and a referral form.

<b>CAMHS</b>	Childrens Services, Drove Rd, WsM	<b>01934 629660</b>	Offering counselling services for children & families. Family therapy
<b>Citizens Advice Bureau</b>	The Badger Centre, Wadham St, WsM	<b>01934 836201</b>	An Advice Service which helps people resolve their legal, money & other problems by providing independent & confidential advice
<b>Clevedon Contraception &amp; Sexual Health Clinic</b>	Clevedon Hospital, Old St, Clevedon	<b>01275 872212</b>	Contraception & sexual health service
<b>Connexions</b>	45 The Boulevard, WsM	<b>01934 644443</b>	To support in advice & guidance in education, training, employment & other related issues
<b>SAS (Substance Advice Service)</b>	57 Oxford St, WsM	<b>01275 888360</b>	Advice, counselling & support with alcohol & drug use/misuse
<b>WISH Clinic</b>	Weston General Hospital	<b>01934 881234</b>	Testing & treatment for all sexually related conditions including HIV testing & contraception
<b>Youth Offending Team</b>	57 Oxford St, WsM	<b>01275 888360</b>	To prevent offending of children & young people aged 17 & those who have been subject to detention & training orders.
<b>Jobcentre Plus</b>	Carlton Street, WsM Under 18 advisor	<b>01934 433800</b> <b>01934 433866</b>	Support, advice & guidance in employment & training
<b>NADA (North Somerset Against Domestic Abuse)</b>	PO Box 285, WsM	<b>01934 627841</b>	Confidential support & counselling for victims of domestic abuse
<b>HomeChoice &amp; Advice Team</b>	Somerset House, WsM	<b>01934 426330</b>	Advice & support with housing
<b>No worries</b>	GP clinics @ Sunnyside Practice, Milton Rd Surgery, Tudor Lodge & Yatton	<b>0800 282930</b>	Confidential Teenage Health Service for young people under 21. Relationships, sexuality, contraception & drug advice