



Your guide to temporary accommodation

Guidance and support for people
in temporary accommodation

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Checklist



During the first few days at your new accommodation, getting organised can make a big difference. To help, we have put together a simple checklist to ensure you have everything you need to settle in.

Your address:

Your Crawley Borough Council contact:

How to get in touch with them:

- ✓ Complete a '**change of circumstances**' update on your Universal Credit account
- ✓ Provide the documentation your **Housing Options Officer** asks for
- ✓ Make a separate claim for **Housing Benefit**. Your Homelessness Accommodation Officer should assist you with this
- ✓ Read though and make sure you understand your **housing license or terms and conditions**
- ✓ Check if you are **liable for Council Tax**. If you are, you can apply for **Council Tax Reduction** at [crawley.gov.uk/counciltax](https://www.crawley.gov.uk/counciltax)
- ✓ If you're moving into accommodation outside of Crawley, ask your accommodation provider or your Homeless Accommodation Officer if you are liable for a reduction
- ✓ Register with a **local GP and dentist**
- ✓ Make a **budget plan**



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1. Moving in: Your rights and responsibilities

Understanding emergency accommodation



What is emergency accommodation?

If you make a homeless application to Crawley Borough Council, your case will need to be assessed. During this interim assessment period, the council may offer you a place to stay in emergency accommodation if they have reason to believe you are:

- eligible for assistance, and
- in priority need, and
- homeless



What kind of accommodation will I be offered?

The accommodation provided will depend on what is available at the time. This may include hostel accommodation with shared facilities, such as a shared bathroom and/or kitchen, or hotel accommodation that does not provide kitchen facilities. The council will try to find accommodation that suits your immediate needs.



What happens if I have a pet?

A lot of emergency and temporary accommodation providers have a 'no pets policy'. Therefore, you will need to arrange and pay for boarding your pet(s) or ask friends/family if they are able to help.



Can I be moved into accommodation that is not shared?

We aim to move households with children out of bed & breakfast / hotel type shared accommodation within six weeks.



Will my accommodation be in Crawley?

You may be placed in accommodation that is not in Crawley. There is no limit on the time you can spend in this accommodation.

We move households into Crawley as and when properties become available. We make these decisions based on how long you have been outside of Crawley, whether we owe you a further housing duty, and other factors such as if you have support needs, are employed in the borough, or have children attending school in the borough.



Can I refuse my emergency accommodation?

We will only offer emergency accommodation if we believe it meets your needs. But we will listen to your reasons for refusing a property if you feel it is unsuitable for you. If we still agree that the accommodation we have offered is suitable, and we do not accept your reasons for refusing it, we may discharge our legal duty to provide you with emergency accommodation. This means that no further offers of emergency accommodation will be made by the council in response to your homeless application.



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Before you refuse any accommodation offered by the council, please consider seeking advice from organisations like **Shelter** and **Citizens Advice**.



Understanding temporary accommodation



What is temporary accommodation?

If your main housing duty is accepted, we are required by law to offer you temporary accommodation. This may be the same emergency accommodation that you are currently living in if it already meets your needs.



Will I be living outside of Crawley borough?

Households are moved into Crawley if properties become available. If you move into temporary accommodation, you may still be living outside the borough. The council prioritises moves into Crawley based on multiple factors, including how long a household has been outside the area and if they have additional support needs that must be met within the borough.



What happens when I move into temporary accommodation?

Once allocated temporary accommodation, you will be contacted by your new housing provider who will arrange a meeting with you. At this meeting, you will be asked to sign a license agreement and collect the keys. Your housing provider will go over the terms and conditions of your license agreement. Ask them to explain anything you do not understand.



Be aware: The documents associated with your accommodation are important, keep them in a safe place.



Top tip: Ask your housing provider how to contact them directly e.g., get their phone number. If you have any maintenance issues in your new accommodation, your housing provider is the person you will need to contact.

If you have any questions, please contact the Temporary Accommodation team by emailing homeless.accommodation@crawley.gov.uk or call **01293 438129**.



1. Moving in: Your rights and responsibilities



How long will I be in temporary accommodation?

How long you spend in temporary accommodation depends on whether you have a main duty accepted and how long it takes to secure yourself long-term accommodation.



How much will temporary accommodation cost?

Temporary accommodation is not free. It is your responsibility to pay for your temporary accommodation. If you are on a low income or receive benefits, you may be eligible for Housing Benefit. We can assist you with an application, but you will need to provide the relevant information for the application to be processed.



Can I refuse an offer on temporary accommodation?

We will offer you accommodation which we believe suits your needs. If you feel the property provided is unsuitable, you have the right to request a review. We will consider the reasons you have told us and, if we agree, we will provide you with a different offer of temporary accommodation.

If you refuse an offer of temporary accommodation, we may discharge our housing duty for you. This means you will be asked to leave your current accommodation and no further offers of housing will be made to you.

Before you refuse any offer of temporary accommodation, please consider seeking advice from organisations like **Shelter** and **Citizens Advice**.



citizens
advice



Be aware: It is your responsibility to ensure your rent is paid. If you miss your rent payments or are late paying you are in rent arrears which could **result in your eviction from temporary accommodation; our housing duty to you would then end.** It would also mean that you are limited when finding long-term accommodation as it might affect your ability to access social housing. It might also affect your access to the rent deposit scheme. To avoid this, remember to **pay your rent regularly and check the payments have gone through** on your rent account.



Will my temporary accommodation be furnished?

Some accommodation is similar to social housing in that it comes unfurnished, while others may include basic furniture. This means you'll likely need to arrange your own essentials, such as a bed, refrigerator, cooker, and washing machine.



1. Moving in: Your rights and responsibilities



Be aware: You may not be able to take all your

belongings into temporary accommodation with you. If you need help identifying storage options locally, your case officer can advise you further. However, we do not offer moving services; you will need to arrange this yourself and organise your possessions, whether you are placing them in storage or moving them into your new accommodation.

We may be able to assist you in placing a deposit and/or rent in advance on long-term private rented accommodation.



Top tip: You can look for PRS accommodation

outside of Crawley too, as there are many areas of the country that are cheaper, both locally and further away. The Council's website offers advice about how and where to look for private rented accommodation:



crawley.gov.uk/housing

Finding long-term, settled accommodation

If you are owed the prevention, relief or main housing duty, you will receive one offer of suitable housing. It may be into private rented or social housing.



Social housing

You can also find long-term accommodation by being on the housing register. Your Housing Options Officer should refer you to the Housing Needs Team for assessment.



PRS accommodation

Private rented sector accommodation (PRS) is often the quickest route to securing yourself housing. You will also get the choice to decide where you live and the type of property you live in.

When considering renting privately, it is important to assess your financial situation.



If you are claiming benefits then check the Local Housing Allowance to see how much you may be able to claim: lha-direct.voa.gov.uk

If you are eligible to join the housing register, we decide your banding by assessing your current housing situation and personal circumstances. You will be placed in one of the following bandings:

- A+ = emergency priority (only available in exceptional circumstances)
- A = very high priority
- B = high priority
- C = medium priority
- D = low priority



1. Moving in: Your rights and responsibilities

The Housing Allocation Scheme determines the size (number of bedrooms) and type (flat or house) of property you qualify for, based solely on your household composition. This is explained in the Housing Allocation Scheme: [crawley.gov.uk/housing](https://www.crawley.gov.uk/housing)



How long will I have to wait for social housing?

Your waiting time for social housing will depend on your banding, priority housing date, and the type and size of property you are eligible for. The demand for social housing is very high, meaning this process will take a lot longer compared to securing PRS accommodation.



How long did successful applicants have to wait for social housing?

Social housing is in high demand, and waiting times can be quite long, often lasting several years, as shown in the table below.

Property size	How many households are waiting for this size accommodation?	How many properties became available in 2024?	How long had successful applicants waited?
Studio and one bed	516	79	Up to four years
Two bed	729	114	Up to eight years
Three bed	613	71	Up to 10 years
Four bed	236	12	Up to eight years
Five bed	Included above	0	NA
Sheltered and extra care	410	83	Up to seven years



Be aware: If you are in rent arrears or

have a history of anti-social behaviour, your housing register application may either be rejected or you will have your banding lowered to band C. You want to avoid this happening, as it will make it even more difficult to secure long-term accommodation. This is why it is important to **pay your rent on time** and **check the payments have gone through** on your rent account.



Does social housing come fully furnished?

Only two per cent of social housing in the UK is furnished, compared to 29 per cent in the private rental sector. If you are offered social housing you will need to provide your own white goods, furniture and carpets.

If you have any questions, please contact the temporary accommodation team at homeless.accommodation@crawley.gov.uk or call **01293 438129**.



1. Moving in: Your rights and responsibilities

Useful resources and further advice



Visit Shelter:
shelter.org.uk



Visit Citizens Advice:
citizensadvice.org.uk/housing



Find out if you're eligible for housing assistance:
shorturl.at/9L08b



Find out if you're eligible to join the housing register:
crawley-homechoice.org.uk



More information on finding PRS accommodation:
shorturl.at/OZvXt



Check your Local Housing Allowance rate:
shorturl.at/ykC5M



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2. Managing your money

Taking control of your finances

Moving into temporary accommodation can be a stressful time. Learning how to manage your money more effectively can help reduce financial stress and greatly increase your chances of becoming more financially stable. The following suggestions may help you now or in the future.



How can I manage my money better?

Start by assessing your current financial situation. How much money is coming in? How much is going out? What do you need to spend money on? Are there areas where you could be spending less?

Creating a budget plan can help you track your expenses, make sure you are spending less than you earn and highlight areas where you may be able to save money.

A budget planner can answer three important questions:

- do I spend more than I earn?
- what can I afford to spend?
- if I keep spending like this, will I go into debt?



Top tip: Track your bills using a budget planner and pay them on time. Set calendar alerts to avoid late fees and interest charges.

Maximising your income



How can I cut costs and save money?

If you consistently spend more than you earn and are considering borrowing money to cover costs, it is important to first look at whether you can reduce your spending.



Top tip: It is easier and safer to decrease your spending on non-essentials than to quickly increase your income or borrow money.

Look into reducing your household bills e.g., switching utility providers, shopping for cheaper food brands, and getting better mobile phone and broadband deals. This can help you save money without having to drastically change your lifestyle.

Revisit your budget planner. If you are now currently spending within your means after reducing your household bills, you can begin to build an Emergency Fund. This replaces the need for emergency borrowing or credit cards and allows you to cover unexpected expenses, from surprise car repairs to replacing broken appliances, without having to pay interest.



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How do I avoid unmanageable debt?

If you are still spending more than you earn after cutting back on non-essentials and reducing household bills, then you run the risk of entering a debt spiral where more and more of your income goes to repaying your debts. It is important to claim everything you are entitled to in order to maximise your income and avoid needing to borrow money.

Use a benefits calculator to check what benefits you are entitled to (such as [entitledto.co.uk](https://www.entitledto.co.uk)). You can also use them to find out how moving into new work or moving jobs could affect your income and benefits.



What if I'm already getting a benefit or tax credit?

If you are already getting a benefit or tax credit, you may be able to claim other sources of help:

- an entitlement to Personal Independence Payment can provide a gateway to getting a Carer's Allowance or Blue Badge.
- Universal Credit may also entitle you to help with health costs, including free NHS prescriptions, dental treatment, wigs, fabric supports, eye tests, vouchers towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses, and help with cost of travel for NHS treatment.



What if I'm struggling to pay rent?

Anyone who requires assistance with housing costs and are currently claiming Housing Benefit or Universal Credit can apply for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP). DHPs are paid from a limited fund and are awarded in situations where there is considered to be severe financial difficulty.

You may get a DHP to cover housing costs for:

- a rent shortfall
- rent deposits
- rent in advance if you need to move home



Can I get help with my Council Tax?

If you need help paying your Council Tax, you can apply for a Council Tax Reduction at [crawley.gov.uk/counciltax](https://www.crawley.gov.uk/counciltax)



What if I need to borrow money?

Taking out a loan to help you manage everyday income and expenditure is not advisable. However, if you are in a crisis, there are a few things to remember:

- avoid using payday lenders as the interest rates are disproportionate and the repayment rates are high
- use caution with buy now, pay later schemes. They can tempt you to spend more, setting you up for more debt if you miss a payment



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- never use a loan shark. These are illegal lenders who charge very high interest rates and can use immoral methods to recover loan payments
- consider joining a credit union. Credit unions offer banking services to people who would otherwise struggle to access banking services
- if you are claiming benefits, check to see if you are eligible for budgeting loans or Universal Credit advance payment
- if you absolutely need to borrow money and are not eligible for budgeting loans, consider a loan from the Boom Community Bank. They can support you in setting up a savings account at the same time as taking out a loan



What is a Budgeting Loan?

Budgeting Loans are interest-free loans from the government that can help if you need money for essential household items.

Social Fund budgeting loans can be used to help pay for any of the following:

- furniture or household items (for example, washing machines or other white goods)
- clothing or footwear
- advance rent and removal costs when moving to a new home
- travelling expenses within the UK
- costs linked to getting a job
- improving, maintaining or securing your home
- maternity or funeral expenses

You can apply to borrow between £100 and £1,500. The amount you get will depend on:

- the number of people in your household
- any money you already owe to the Social Fund for previous loans
- your ability to repay the loan
- your savings

You only have to pay back the amount you borrow, and repayments are taken automatically from your benefits.

Claiming benefits when moving into temporary accommodation



What do I need to do?

If you are currently claiming benefits and have moved into emergency or temporary accommodation, you must update whoever pays your benefits (usually the Department for Work and Pensions) about your change of circumstances.

If you live in temporary accommodation, you cannot receive housing cost help from Universal Credit (UC); you would need to make a separate claim for Housing Benefit from Crawley Borough Council instead.

If you disagree with any decisions made about your entitlement to benefits, you can request a review from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). You usually need to do this within the first month of making a claim.



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Be aware: If you do not report a change of circumstances straight away or you give incorrect information, your claim may be stopped, reduced or you may be overpaid and have to pay the money back.



What if I get Universal Credit?

You must inform UC that you are in temporary accommodation as soon as possible.

If you make a new claim to Universal Credit and are living in temporary accommodation, you will not receive an amount for your housing costs. You need to claim Housing Benefit for your rent. This can be done through the council. You will still receive your standard allowance and any other Universal Credit additional amounts that you are entitled to.



What if I get disability benefits?

Contact the Disability Service Centre to report changes if you get Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP).



What if I get Child Benefit?

Report any changes that could affect your Child Benefit to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC). If you do not, you may not get all the money you are entitled to, or you may be overpaid and have to pay the money back.

Getting support with food



Where can I get support with food?

If you are on a low income and have a limited amount of money available to spend on food, or you are in a crisis situation with no money left for essentials, there are a number of local options in the Crawley area that can help:

Crawley Foodbank

Partnership

Provides urgent help with food. email:

operationsmanager@theeasterteam.org for more information.



Household Support Fund

The Household Support Fund is a UK government fund to support low income households with the rising cost of living. The fund covers a wide range of needs including food, essential bills and energy. Request support: tiny.cc/Sunh001



FreeShop Crawley

A supermarket providing food, toiletries and baby essentials without any associated costs. Visit their website for more information:

freeshopcrawley.com





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Elim Church Hot Meals

Offers hot meals to families and individuals who are struggling financially. You need to be referred to access this service by us. Visit their website for more information: elim-church.org.uk



Maggy's Discounted Food

Provides affordable food with discounted prices. Located in Ifield. Visit their website for more information: maggysdiscountedfood.co.uk



Be aware: To access Crawley food banks, you need a referral. The food bank will give you a food parcel, usually containing enough food for three days. They also might be able to give you essential toiletries, like toothpaste or deodorant. If you've used a foodbank, you'll need to get another referral before you can use it again.

Contact your Housing Officer or Citizens Advice on 08082 787969 for a referral to the scheme.



I am pregnant/have a child under the age of four. Where can I get help?

If you are more than 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under four, you may be entitled to get help to buy healthy food and milk. If you are eligible, you will be sent a Healthy Start card with money on it that you can use in some UK shops.

You can use your card to buy:

- plain liquid cow's milk
- fresh, frozen, and tinned fruit and vegetables
- fresh, dried, and tinned pulses
- infant formula milk based on cow's milk

You can also use your card to collect:

- Healthy Start vitamins – these support you during pregnancy and breastfeeding
- vitamin drops for babies and young children – these are suitable from birth to four years old

Check your eligibility and apply at shorturl.at/oIvYb



Getting support with utilities

Depending on the type of accommodation you are placed in, you might have to set up utility accounts or pay service charges to cover for household bills, such as heating, electricity and cleaning.



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What's the first step towards saving money on energy bills?

Being aware of your energy consumption is the first step towards saving money. A smart meter automatically keeps track of exactly how much gas and electricity you use, as well as how much it is costing you. The device means that your energy bills will always be based on actual usage as opposed to an estimate, ensuring you never overpay for energy you have not used.

Typically, all smart meters are free from energy suppliers who offer them and installation should come at no extra cost.



Can I get help with my energy bills?

With the price cap changing, it is useful to compare energy tariffs to see if switching to a cheaper fixed rate deal can save you money. You can get a quote for the best energy deal using MoneySuperMarket's energy comparison tool.

shorturl.at/QRtkq



There are also limited energy grants that can assist with the costs of heating your home, provided by West Sussex Energy.

Contact your Housing Officer or Access Crawley on 01293 438101 or email access.crawley@crawley.gov.uk for a referral to the scheme.

If you are on low income or claiming certain benefits, you may qualify for social tariffs, such as the Warm Home Discount Scheme.



What can I do if I'm struggling to heat my home?

The Warm Home Discount Scheme is a one-off, £150 discount off your electricity bill, typically delivered between October and March. You may be eligible if your energy supplier is part of the scheme or you get certain qualifying benefits or tax credits e.g. Housing Benefit, Universal Credit, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), or Child Tax Credit.

If you are eligible, your energy supplier will apply the discount to your bill. You may be able to get the discount on your gas bill instead if your supplier provides you with both gas and electricity.

The Household Support Fund also provides support with energy bills.



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What if I'm currently struggling with energy debt?

British Gas Energy Trust can help with energy debt. Whether you are with British Gas or another supplier, you can still apply for grants to remove domestic gas and electricity debts or for emergency fuel credit. They also provide free resources to help make sure you are getting the support and benefits you are entitled to.



Can I get support with my water bill?

If you are struggling to pay your water bill, you may be entitled to help. Contact your water provider directly for further information. You may be eligible for multiple financial support schemes, depending on your circumstances.

Most properties in Crawley are serviced by Southern Water and Thames Water. If you live in Forge Wood contact Independent Water Networks.



Can I get cheaper broadband and phone package deals?

Some providers offer bespoke broadband and telephone deals known as social tariffs. Social tariffs are cheaper broadband and phone packages for people claiming Universal Credit or other benefits.

Check if your current provider offers a social tariff. If your provider does not offer a social tariff, you can switch to one that does.

Getting support with furniture and white goods



Can I get support with furniture or white goods?

If you need furniture or white goods, for example a refrigerator, cooker, washing machine or sofa, there is some funding available through the Household Support Fund.

You will be asked to provide:

- proof of identity
- proof of living in West Sussex
- evidence of benefits and information relevant to your household's current hardship

Contact your Housing Officer or Access Crawley on 01293 438101 or email access.crawley@crawley.gov.uk for a referral to the scheme.



Where can I get cheap or free furniture and white goods?

To find free furniture or white goods, visit:

Freecycle [ilovefreecycle.org](https://www.lovefreecycle.org)



Gumtree [gumtree.com](https://www.gumtree.com)

Freecycle [freecycle.org](https://www.freecycle.org)



Facebook Marketplace
facebook.com/marketplace



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For more help with money worries:
[**crawley.gov.uk/council-information/help-money-worries**](https://www.crawley.gov.uk/council-information/help-money-worries)



Free budget planner:
[**shorturl.at/vDXXI**](https://shorturl.at/vDXXI)



Guide to budgeting and free budget planner:
[**moneysavingexpert.com/banking/budget-planning**](https://moneysavingexpert.com/banking/budget-planning)



Free course to learn budgeting skills:
[**capuk.org/get-help/money-coaching**](https://capuk.org/get-help/money-coaching)



Free debt advice and budgeting tips:
[**advicewestsussex.org.uk/advice**](https://advicewestsussex.org.uk/advice)



Guide to getting debt advice and help:
[**moneysavingexpert.com/loans/debt-help-plan**](https://moneysavingexpert.com/loans/debt-help-plan)



Benefits calculator to check what benefits you may be entitled to:
[**gov.uk/benefits-calculators**](https://gov.uk/benefits-calculators)



More benefits and financial support if you're currently looking for work:
[**gov.uk/browse/benefits/looking-for-work**](https://gov.uk/browse/benefits/looking-for-work)



Boom Community Bank:
[**boomcb.org.uk**](https://boomcb.org.uk)



Check if you are eligible for budgeting loans:
[**gov.uk/budgeting-help-benefits/eligibility**](https://gov.uk/budgeting-help-benefits/eligibility)



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More information on budgeting loans:

[**gov.uk/budgeting-help-benefits**](https://gov.uk/budgeting-help-benefits)



Apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment:

[**shorturl.at/ybP8D**](https://shorturl.at/ybP8D)



Turn2Us Grant Search tool:

[**turn2us.org.uk/get-support/apply-for-grants**](https://turn2us.org.uk/get-support/apply-for-grants)



Claim Housing Benefits:

[**shorturl.at/nUZ4h**](https://shorturl.at/nUZ4h)



Report a change in circumstances to get the right amount of benefits:

[**gov.uk/report-benefits-change-circumstances**](https://gov.uk/report-benefits-change-circumstances)



Check your Universal Credit account:

[**gov.uk/sign-in-universal-credit**](https://gov.uk/sign-in-universal-credit)



Disability Service Centre:

[**gov.uk/disability-benefits-helpline**](https://gov.uk/disability-benefits-helpline)



Apply for a Council Tax Reduction:

[**shorturl.at/maybQ**](https://shorturl.at/maybQ)



If you have any other existing benefit claims:

[**gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus/existing-benefit-claims**](https://gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus/existing-benefit-claims)



More advice on using a food bank:

[**shorturl.at/yq5TY**](https://shorturl.at/yq5TY)



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MoneySuperMarket's energy comparison tool:
[**moneysupermarket.com/gas-and-electricity**](https://moneysupermarket.com/gas-and-electricity)



West Sussex Energy:
[**westsussexenergy.co.uk/heating-and-insulation-grants**](https://westsussexenergy.co.uk/heating-and-insulation-grants)



Check if you are eligible for the Warm Home Discount:
[**gov.uk/check-if-youre-eligible-for-warm-home-discount**](https://gov.uk/check-if-youre-eligible-for-warm-home-discount)



The Warm Home Discount Scheme:
[**gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme**](https://gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme)



British Gas Energy Trust:
[**britishgasenergytrust.org.uk**](https://britishgasenergytrust.org.uk)



More information on the grants and benefits
that could help you pay your energy bills:
[**shorturl.at/maLNc**](https://shorturl.at/maLNc)



Check if you're eligible for a water bill discount
from Southern Water:
[**shorturl.at/Kv7NR**](https://shorturl.at/Kv7NR)



Check if you're eligible for a water bill discount
from Thames Water:
[**shorturl.at/BTmft**](https://shorturl.at/BTmft)



Check if you're eligible for a water bill discount from
Independent Water Networks:
[**iwnl.co.uk/help-and-advice/bills**](https://iwnl.co.uk/help-and-advice/bills)



More advice about getting cheaper broadband
and phone packages:
[**shorturl.at/cNJSk**](https://shorturl.at/cNJSk)



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Education and the possibility of moving schools

Can I request temporary accommodation near certain schools?

We realise how difficult it can be to change schools but, due to a shortage of properties, such requests are unlikely to be met.

Where should my children go to school if I've been placed in Crawley?

If you need help finding a new school for your children, visit the West Sussex County Council's website and contact their Pupil Admissions Team for more information on how to apply to schools, either within or outside Crawley.

tiny.cc/Sunh001



I've been placed in temporary accommodation outside Crawley, where should my children go to school?

If you have been placed in temporary accommodation outside Crawley, your children might have to travel in to attend school, while you wait for longer-term accommodation.

If you are too far away for your children to travel into Crawley, or the journey is too difficult, you might want to consider finding a school in your new area. Visit your relevant council's website for more information on how to apply for school places nearby.



Do I have to pay for my child to travel to school?

Normally it is your responsibility to get your children to and from school safely. However, your child may be able to get free transport to school if they meet certain criteria.

Children of compulsory school age qualify for free school transport to their nearest suitable school if the following apply:

- the school is more than two miles away and the child is under eight
- the school is more than three miles away and the child is eight or over
- there's no safe walking route between their home and school
- they cannot walk there because of their special educational needs, disabilities or a mobility problem





3. Support if you have children



Top tip: If your child is eligible for free school meals or your family receives Working Tax Credit at the maximum level (no deductions), you also may be entitled to help with school transport.

Where help is agreed, it will usually be given through one or more of the following:

- a free place on a contract or school bus
- a rail or bus season ticket
- fuel allowance where travel by car is agreed
- taxi or minibus, in exceptional circumstances only, usually for children with severe disabilities
- a contribution towards the cost of travel



Can my child receive free school meals?

Your child may be eligible for free school meals if you or your child are currently receiving means-tested benefits, for example, Universal Credit or Child Tax Credit.

If you are not eligible for benefits-related, free school meals, but your child is currently in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2, they will automatically be entitled to Universal Infant Free School Meals. Contact your child's school for more details.

If you are eligible for benefits-related free school meals in accordance with the council's criteria, and your child is also receiving Universal Infant Free School Meals, it is important that you continue to register. This will enable your child's school to claim valuable 'pupil premium' funding. This is an additional grant the school can invest in to provide extra support for your child.



Can I get financial support when buying my child's school uniform?

Buying new school uniform can be expensive. Selling your child's old uniform and buying second-hand or joining a uniform swap shop can help to reduce costs. Otherwise, you could contact your child's school directly as they may operate a second-hand school uniform scheme.

Uniformerly

An online school marketplace where parents can buy and sell school uniforms.

uniformerly.co.uk



Crawley School Uniform Giveaway and Swap Shop

A Facebook group for Crawley residents to swap uniforms with other parents. There is no buying or selling, only exchanging.

shorturl.at/tbq7x





3. Support if you have children

Help with paying for childcare



Can I get financial support with childcare costs?

You may be able to get help with childcare costs through government schemes, for example:

- Tax-Free Childcare
- free childcare for your child aged nine months to four years old if you live and work in England
- claiming an extra amount of Working Tax Credit to help cover the cost of childcare
- claiming back up to 85 per cent of your childcare costs if you are eligible for Universal Credit and your child is under 18
- free education and childcare for two-year-olds if you claim certain benefits
- 15 hours free childcare for three and four-year-olds



Can I get financial support for my child during the holidays?

The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme is fully funded by the Department for Education. The programme offers children who are entitled to benefits related to free school meals the opportunity to attend participating holiday activity clubs and have a free meal. Eligible children can attend their chosen HAF activities and get a free meal for a maximum of four days per week for one week at Easter, four weeks during the summer and one week at Christmas.



Are there any places to find support or guidance as a parent?

Early Help works alongside West Sussex partners, including the district and borough councils to provide families with advice to improve their situation. This service includes Early Help Hubs that ensure families are connected to the right kind of support quickly.

Family hubs offer a range of support, information and guidance to parents, carers and young people. Hubs are open for you to drop in and speak to staff on a whole range of issues affecting you and your family. They also have public access computers to use, free of charge, as well as social spaces available to meet other parents.



Can I get free childcare items?

Ten Little Toes is a Baby Bank in Crawley, offering support to families expecting a baby, or with children aged 0 to 12 years, who are currently in a crisis or facing difficult circumstances. If you are worried about providing the essential items that your children need to feel safe and comfortable, this referral-based charity can help. Items they offer include:

- clothing and shoes
- nappies and wipes
- formula and food pouches
- highchairs and baby seats
- buggies
- cots and cribs
- bedding, blankets and towels
- breastfeeding equipment
- maternity clothing



3. Support if you have children

You will need to ask a professional to refer you, e.g. your Crawley Housing Team or Citizens Advice, and Ten Little Toes will contact them for the list of items you need. The charity will then build you a bundle of the items that you can then pick up from one of their locations.

Useful resources and further advice



Check your eligibility and discover whether you can apply for free school transport, as well as other transport discounts available to young people: shortlink.uk/UYg4



Check your child's eligibility for free school meals: tiny.cc/r8oh001



Find out what childcare schemes you may be eligible for: gov.uk/get-childcare



More advice on childcare, pre-school, nurseries and paying for childcare: shortlink.uk/UYhi



Find a family hub near you: tiny.cc/x8oh001



More information on the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme: shortlink.uk/UYhV



Ten Little Toes: tenlittletoesbabybank.org



Support for pregnancy and parenthood: nhs.uk/start-for-life



4. Your health and wellbeing

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4. Your health and wellbeing

Accessing health services



How do I access healthcare services?

Visit the NHS website to find local healthcare services, including GP surgeries, pharmacies, dentists, urgent treatment centres and other healthcare resources.

[nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk)



Your guide to getting health care

If you need help with your physical or mental health, there are a few different options.

NHS 111

Medical help right now, if you're not sure what to do

Contact the 24-hour NHS free phone line by dialling 111 to get health information and advice. Get help in your language by saying "interpreter please" or visit

<https://111.nhs.uk>



Pharmacy

Medical advice for minor illnesses and injuries like coughs, colds, aches and pains

Pharmacists offer medical advice and sell medicines and first aid materials. They will let you know if they think you need to visit a doctor or other healthcare professional. shorturl.at/VWs5w

GP, family doctor or medical centre

First point of contact for ongoing health concerns and referral to specialist services

Your GP surgery looks after your long term health and can give medical advice, treat many conditions, prescribe medicines and refer you to hospital for specialist treatment. Everyone can register with a GP. More information can be found further on in this section.

Urgent treatment centre

Sprains and strains, minor fractures, burns, head and eye injuries, bites and stings

For medical problems that cannot wait but are not life-threatening, the Crawley Urgent Treatment Centre is open 24/7. You can book an arrival time through NHS 111 or walk in and wait to be seen by a doctor or nurse at Crawley Hospital, West Green Drive, RH11 7DH.

Medical emergencies

Chest pain, severe bleeding, breathing difficulties, loss of consciousness

If someone is seriously ill or injured and their life is at risk, call 999 for an ambulance or go straight to the emergency department at East Surrey Hospital, Canada Ave, Redhill, RH1 5RH.



4. Your health and wellbeing

Help with low mood or anxiety

Feeling down, worried, stressed or unable to cope

Don't struggle alone. To find the right support for you, visit

surrex.ics.nhs.uk/crawley-healthy-mind

Dental treatment

You can register with any dentist that is accepting NHS patients, regardless of where you live. You can receive care in any practice able to offer you an appointment. Search for an NHS dentist at nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-dentist. If you are having difficulty finding a dentist or accessing urgent dental care, call NHS 111.



How to register for a GP in Crawley?

Anyone can register with a GP and it is free. You do not need proof of address, immigration status, ID or an NHS number.

For more information, visit

nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-gp



What if I need a GP but I am not registered with a GP near my temporary accommodation?

If you are not registered with a GP but need treatment quickly, you should first call your usual GP surgery for advice. They may be able to help you over the telephone, including sending a prescription to a pharmacy close to your temporary residence. You may also be advised to go to a local Walk-In

Centre for help. If necessary, you can find a local GP surgery and register as a temporary resident to receive support for up to three months. To register you will need to fill out a temporary services form (GMS3), available from the GP surgery.

If you are still living in the area near your local GP surgery after three months, it is advisable to apply to register with them or another GP, as a permanent resident.



What about registering my children with a GP?

Children under 16 need to be registered by their parent or legal guardian. You will need to fill out a separate form to your own and may be asked to provide proof that you are their legal guardian.

Help with healthcare costs

You usually need to pay towards the cost of prescriptions, dental care and eye care unless you are:

- aged under 16, or 16 to 18 and in full-time education
- aged 60 or over
- pregnant or had a baby in last 12 months
- exempt because of a certain condition or disability
- receiving certain benefits, or dependent on someone who is.

Scan the code to find out if you can get help with healthcare costs services.

shorturl.at/6dAaG





4. Your health and wellbeing

Answering your questions about healthcare

The NHS has put together a booklet, **Your guide to getting healthcare in Crawley**, to answer your questions and provide information about the health services which are available to you. It is available in 13 languages. Visit



sussex.ics.nhs.uk/health-access-crawley



How do I find maternity care?

The care you receive while you are pregnant and immediately after having your baby is called maternity care. Once you know you are pregnant, it is important to find maternity care as soon as possible for you and your baby's health.

If you are pregnant and have completed your registration with your local GP, you will be able to make an appointment explaining you are pregnant. They will then refer you to a midwife. You can also ask to be referred to your nearest midwifery service by another healthcare professional, school nurse or Family Hub.

You will be offered a series of appointments, tests and scans to check you and your baby's health, discuss your options and choices for giving birth and make sure you have all the support you need.



Can I get advice for my child's health, wellbeing and development?

Health visiting is a free, universal service available to all parents and carers. Health visitors are specialist community public health nurses or registered midwives who work with parents, offering support and informed advice from the pre-birth period until a child starts school at five years old. Their job is to identify your child's health needs as early as possible to improve their health and wellbeing, ensuring your child has the best start in life.

Depending on your individual needs, health visitors can provide:

- advice on feeding your baby such as introducing your baby to solid foods
- advice on dental health
- advice around child growth and development, undertaking developmental reviews
- advice on behavioural difficulties, sleeping and potty training
- advice on safety, family health and minor illnesses
- postnatal workshops
- specific support on subjects such as postnatal depression (PND)
- parenting advice and support and signposting to other agencies



4. Your health and wellbeing

Crawley family hubs

Family Hubs are a drop in service, ideal for households with children living in emergency or temporary accommodation. They provide a safe place where your child can play and make friends, as well as social spaces to meet other parents. Crawley Family Hubs also have public access computers to use, free of charge.

There are lots of fun activities for little ones and the chance to have a hot drink and talk to other parents living in similar situations. You can also get advice on housing, benefits, managing your money and health and wellbeing. tiny.cc/d9oh001



Are there sexual health services in Crawley?

Sexual Health West Sussex provides a full range of confidential sexual health services, six days a week, across three main hubs in and around the Crawley area. They offer contraceptive services, detection and treatment of all Sexually Transmitted Infections, detection and treatment of HIV, access to psychosexual services for people who have problems with sex and making choices around unplanned pregnancies.

Call the central booking line for more information on appointment types and opening times. If Sexual Health West Sussex does not provide the service you need, you should consult your GP. Phone 01903 285199



Where can I get help for domestic abuse?

If you or someone else is in immediate danger, phone 999 and ask for the police.

If you are experiencing domestic abuse or know someone who is, don't struggle alone. WORTH Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse services provide direct support to victims and survivors in West Sussex. You can refer yourself to WORTH services via the website or ask a professional to do this for you.

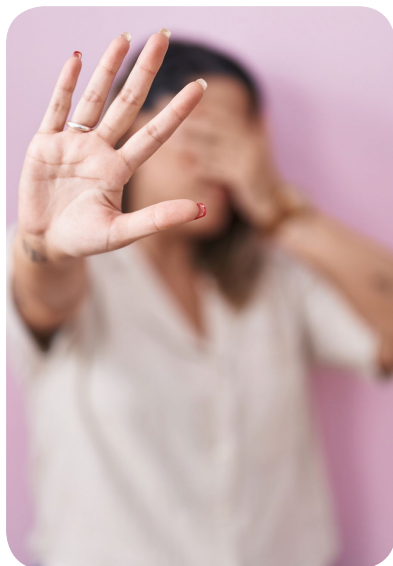
tiny.cc/l9oh001

Call 033 022 28181 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

Text: 07834 968539

Email:

domesticabuseservicescentral@westsussex.gov.uk





4. Your health and wellbeing

Further services which support your health and wellbeing

Crawley Wellbeing

Funded by public health, Crawley Wellbeing is a free service which provides health and wellbeing support to people who live and work in Crawley. They offer a range of information, support and advice on a range of issues:

- nutrition for yourself and your family including how to eat well on a budget and how to eat well with limited cooking facilities
- reducing and maintaining a healthy weight
- stopping smoking including advisor support and free nicotine replacement therapy and vapes
- reducing alcohol
- being as active as possible
- Wellbeing check including blood pressure reading
- NHS health check – cholesterol and blood pressure check and heart health score
- signposting to other local services to assist you

For more information contact
01293 585317

crawley.westsussexwellbeing.org.uk



Who is eligible for an NHS Health Check?

NHS Health Check is a national programme for people between the ages of 40 and 74. It is a free, 30-minute check to assess your risk of developing heart disease, stroke, diabetes and kidney disease.

If you are outside the eligible age range, you should continue to contact your GP in the usual way if you have any health concerns.



Are services available to help with alcohol and substance use?

Use of alcohol and drugs can sometimes impact your day to day life and the lives of those around you. A range of support is available in Crawley to help.

Take the free alcohol test to find out if your drinking is putting you at risk:

drinkcoach.org.uk



The Crawley Wellbeing Service provide free, confidential support to help you reduce your alcohol consumption and move towards a healthier lifestyle.

shorturl.at/dquH6



The Drug and Alcohol Wellbeing Network (DAWN) is free a service that offers professional support to West Sussex residents of all ages who are affected by drugs and alcohol, ranging from advice and counselling to information on detoxing and rehabilitation.

For adults aged 25 and over:

shorturl.at/QWK4p





4. Your health and wellbeing

For young people aged 24 and under: shorturl.at/mloqu



Social Prescribing

Crawley Social Prescribing can help you find the right group or service to meet your health and wellbeing needs.

If you'd like support from the social prescribing team, complete and submit the self-referral form on their website.

shorturl.at/SjXhK



Your mental health



Where can I find help immediately?

If you require urgent help and feel you are at 'breaking point', are worried you may hurt yourself or somebody else, or are having suicidal thoughts and believe your life is in immediate danger, please call 999 or go to A & E.



Where can I access mental health support?

Call NHS 111 and select the mental health option to be connected to a 24/7 mental health crisis line (known locally as the Sussex Mental Healthline). The service is free and available to anyone who is concerned about their own mental health or someone else's. They also support children and young people.

Your Mind Matters is a county council led campaign which aims to ensure young people, parents and professionals across West Sussex know where to get help with their emotional wellbeing and mental health, both in general and in times of crisis.

tinylink.info/10S6X



The NHS Stay Alive app is a suicide prevention resource full of useful information and tools to help you or your loved one stay safe in crisis.

shorturl.at/69Cst



If you are over the age of 18, struggling with your mental health and need support outside normal working hours, Staying Well Crawley can help.

tinylink.info/10S7A



NHS Talking Therapies West Sussex can help if you over 18 and struggling with common mental health problems such as depression, excessive worry, social anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). You can refer yourself and you do not have to speak to your GP.



4. Your health and wellbeing

Services are free, confidential and provide a wide range of support, including courses, online programmes and one-to-one sessions. They aim to help you understand your symptoms and take practical steps to improve your mental health. tinylink.info/XWmv



Be aware: NHS Talking Therapies West Sussex are unable to provide urgent crisis support to people experiencing more severe difficulties with their mental health. If you need immediate support, please see a GP who can refer you to an appropriate service.



I don't know what kind of support I need?

Pathfinder is an alliance of mental health support providers. They provide a single point of access to mental health and wellbeing support, including information, advice, signposting, community groups, peer support, access to a clinical service provided by nurses and occupational therapists, and recovery-focused one-to-one sessions for people 18 and over who are affected by mental health.

tinylink.info/10S8f



Is there mental health support for people under 18?

If you are under 18 years old and worried about your mental health, or you have a child under 18, there are people and places you can turn to for help.

Youth Emotional Support (YES) is a free service for young people aged 11 to 18 who are looking for support with their mental health and wellbeing.

tinylink.info/10S8F



Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) are a specialist NHS children's and young people's mental health service that provide support to young people experiencing mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression, self-harm, eating disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorder and psychosis.

sussexcamhs.nhs.uk



More support for your physical and mental wellbeing

There are lots of ways to support your physical and mental wellbeing, whether that is joining a group or volunteering. Below are a few of the options available in Crawley. If what you want is not here, the local library is a good place to find out what else might be available to you.



4. Your health and wellbeing

Crawley Library

Crawley Library is a modern friendly library in a spacious building including a cafe, near the town centre. You can access and borrow a wide range of books and other resources from the library as well as explore the many activities that are run at the library. Crawley library is also home to the Business & Intellectual Property Centre and Employ Crawley for help with setting up your own business or looking for a job.

Crawley Library, Southgate
Avenue, Crawley, RH10 6HG
Call 01293 651751
Email:

crawley.library@westsussex.gov.uk



Crawley Community Garden

An inclusive community garden in Crawley offering local volunteering opportunities. They also accept people who wish to just come, chat and enjoy some time outdoors. shorturl.at/HuQl8



Parks and open spaces

Being active doesn't have to cost anything. Tilgate Park and Goff's Park have freely available outdoor gym equipment for anyone to use. There are many other parks and open spaces in Crawley where you can spend time, get some exercise, to unwind or simply to enjoy being outdoors. shorturl.at/u5jn5



Free health and wellbeing walks

Crawley Wellbeing have a Healthy Walk Scheme hosted in a variety of parks around Crawley. No formal membership is required, all you need to do is simply turn up to the walk.

tinylink.info/XWoAs



Community tennis programme

Barclays Free Park Tennis gives you the chance to meet new people, enjoy free exercise with a full-body workout and practice your skills. They offer free, social tennis sessions in Crawley to players of all ages and skills levels.

lta.org.uk/play/free-park-tennis



Free park run

Parkrun is a free, fun and friendly weekly 5k community event. You can walk, jog, run or join as a volunteer.

parkrun.org.uk/tilgate
parkrun.org.uk/ifieldmillpond



K2 Crawley Leisure centre

K2 Crawley is a state-of-the art leisure centre that offers a variety of activities to help you stay active.

Pease Pottage Hill, Crawley,
RH11 9BQ

shorturl.at/ZzUbl





4. Your health and wellbeing

The Bewbush Centre

The Bewbush Centre is a community-based leisure centre featuring a gym and a sports hall. Dorsten Square, Crawley, RH11 8XW

shorturl.at/dUFRb



The Active Crawley Card is a membership card for K2 Crawley and Bewbush Leisure Centre. You can get discounts on some activities if you receive certain benefits. To apply for an Active Crawley Card, call K2 Crawley on 01293 585300 or visit their website.

Crawley Town Community Foundation

With the aim of building a connective, active and engaged community, Crawley Town Community Foundation delivers a wide range of sport and activity programmes, catering to all ages, abilities, backgrounds and goals.

Premier League Kicks is aimed at young people aged eight to 18. Sessions are held at locations across Crawley and are free to attend.

Move the Goalposts are free football sessions based at Broadfield Stadium aimed at supporting those over the age of 18 experiencing (or at risk of experiencing) mental health difficulties. The sessions provide an opportunity to engage with other participants experiencing similar struggles.

Extra Time Hubs provide support for those over the age of 50 and who are at risk of loneliness or isolation. Held at Broadfield Stadium on Fridays, these sessions provide an opportunity to socialise with others, gain advice from external partners and (if you are feeling energetic) take part in Walking Football or Seated Exercise sessions. Sessions are low cost and the first session is free.

ctcommunityfoundation.com



Crawley's cultural services

Crawley has a range of libraries, heritage museums, arts and events that you can use to learn new skills and increase your knowledge.

crawley.gov.uk/culture



Events in Crawley

Visit crawley.gov.uk/events for details of events and activities that are taking place throughout the year in Crawley.

tinylink.info/XWpO



Information for families and young people across West Sussex

The Family Information Service (FIS) is provided by West Sussex County Council. They offer free, impartial, up-to-date information to all families on childcare, as well as activities and services for 0-25 year olds.

tinylink.info/10Sbh





4. Your health and wellbeing

West Sussex Mind

A range of online resources and tools, such as meditation, mindfulness, podcasts and blogs, to support mental health and wellbeing.

westsussexmind.org



Pathfinder West Sussex

Online mental health resources, tools and information.

tinylink.info/10SbF



Volunteering in Crawley

Volunteering can take up as little as an hour of your week and enables you to give back to your community, gain skills and experience, meet new people and become involved in your community.

shorturl.at/UGIv6



Community Garden Volunteer

Be a part of an inclusive community garden, whether you have previous experience and knowledge in gardening or are a beginner. The role is flexible and non-committal; you can join meet-ups as many or as few times as you wish.

tinylink.info/10Sc1





4. Your health and wellbeing

Useful resources and further advice



Your Guide to Accessing Healthcare in Crawley
sussex.ics.nhs.uk/health-access-crawley



Register with your local GP surgery:
nhs.uk/nhs-services/gps/how-to-register-with-a-gp-surgery



Find an NHS dentist:
nhs.uk/nhs-services/dentists/how-to-find-an-nhs-dentist



Advice if you're having a baby:
sussex.ics.nhs.uk/healthaccess/having-a-baby



Find a health visiting service:
tinylink.info/XWr0



Services and support for parents:
nhs.uk/conditions/baby/support-and-services



Find out more about how to get help with healthcare costs:
tinylink.info/XWr6



Sexual Health West Sussex:
sexualhealthwestsussex.nhs.uk



Crawley Wellbeing:
crawley.westsussexwellbeing.org.uk



Get an NHS Health Check:
tinylink.info/XWrm



4. Your health and wellbeing

Useful resources and further advice



Crawley Social Prescribing:

crawleycommunityaction.org/crawley-social-prescribing



Support services in West Sussex for those affected by drugs and alcohol:

tinylink.info/XWrH



West Sussex Drug and Alcohol Wellbeing Network (DAWN):

tinylink.info/10Sdb



Under 25s Drug & Alcohol Service:

tinylink.info/10Sdm



Get help with your mental health:

sussexpartnership.nhs.uk/your-mental-health/getting-help



NHS Talking Therapies West Sussex:

westsussexalkingtherapies.nhs.uk



Pathfinder West Sussex:

pathfinderwestsussex.org.uk



Additional young people's mental health services in West Sussex:

pathfinderwestsussex.org.uk/im-under-18



Additional support services in West Sussex if you are experiencing domestic violence and abuse:

shortlink.uk/VcVE



5. Key contacts

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5. KEY CONTACTS

Crawley Borough Council – Housing Options Service

01293 438000

e: housing.options@crawley.gov.uk

Crawley HomeChoice

01293 438608

e: crawley-homechoice@crawley.gov.uk

Crawley Social Prescribing

01293 657000

e: info@crawleycommunityaction.org

Citizens Advice in West Sussex North and South East

0808 278 7969

e: advicewestsussex.org.uk

Early Help

01403 229900

e: wschildrenservices@westsussex.gov.uk
tinylink.info/10ShF



Living outside Crawley



Living outside the Crawley area?

If you are currently living outside Crawley, here are details of other local authorities. If you are housed in their area, they will be able to offer support and guidance. Visit their website for more information.

Reigate and Banstead Borough Council

01737 276 000

SMS – 0783 462 6468 if you
are deaf or hard of hearing
reigate-banstead.gov.uk



Surrey County Council

03456 009 009

SMS – 07860 053 465
surreycc.gov.uk



Croydon Council

020 8726 6000

croydon.gov.uk



Horsham District Council

01403 215100

horsham.gov.uk



Mid Sussex District Council

01444 458166

midsussex.gov.uk



Bromley Council

020 8464 3333

bromley.gov.uk



West Sussex County Council

01243 777100

westsussex.gov.uk



Personal notes



This space is for you to take notes

[illegible]

Special thanks



We would like to give a special thanks to everyone who has collaborated on this guide, especially Sutton Council, for sharing their resources with us.



Your Guide to Temporary Accommodation has been brought together by Crawley Borough Council in partnership with the Crawley Local Community Network, organisations who are working together to address health inequalities within Crawley. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of information in this guide but over the lifetime of this publication, changes will occur. The information contained within the publication is for general information purposes only and is not intended to be a substitute for professional financial, legal or medical advice. Crawley Borough Council and the Local Community Network partners do not endorse any of the organisations, products or services within this guide.

