

Housing advice for older people

This advice is for older people who may be experiencing housing problems.

Help available for older people

There are various options available for older people dependent on whether you wish to remain in your current home, need to move to something more suitable or are threatened with, or are homeless.

The Housing Team at West Suffolk will try to identify housing problems at the earliest opportunity to hopefully prevent you from becoming homeless. This will be achieved through partnership and multi-agency working to prevent you from becoming homeless, through the necessary support intervention you may require.

If you are threatened with homelessness, or are homeless, we have a duty to assess the circumstances of your homelessness, identify what your housing and support needs are, and to work with you to try to prevent your homelessness or support you to find you somewhere to live. We will provide you with a 'personal housing plan' which will tell you what we can do to help you and what you can do to help yourself. This might include actions such as attending viewings or private sector or supported housing or engaging with organisations that can assist older people.

For West Suffolk Council to be legally obliged to provide you with accommodation, we would need to be satisfied that you are eligible, homeless, in priority need and that you have not made yourself intentionally homeless.

While old age itself does not confer a priority need for accommodation we look at all your personal circumstances and will take into account information we gather from various sources including any medical professionals involved in your care. Even if we do not have a statutory duty to provide accommodation, we will still actively work with you to try to resolve your housing need.

Sheltered housing is a form of housing available to older people. The age criteria can vary from anything between a minimum of 50 to a minimum of 65. Sheltered housing is available to individuals and couples, but isn't available to dependents living with the applicant such as children. Pets in some cases maybe allowed.

Sheltered housing is accommodation for people who can live independently. This isn't for people who need a similar setting to a residential home. Sheltered houses enable you to live as self-sufficiently as possible, but with the peace of

mind of knowing that support is there if required. You have your own flat or bungalow with bathroom and cooking facilities.

For more details of private sheltered housing and how to access it, visit these websites:

- AbbeyField
- Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association
- Hanover
- Housing and Care 21
- First Port
- Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (RABI)

Sheltered housing is also available through the Home-Link choice based letting scheme. To find out more visit the Home-Link website.

Some applicants will not qualify for sheltered housing as their support needs may be too high. If this is the case Suffolk County Council may need to offer suitable accommodation in an extra care setting. For more information please contact your social worker or Customer First <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/adult-social-care-and-health/find-local-social-care-support-or-contact-customer-first/>

Buying/renting

It is sometimes possible to buy a flat in a housing complex especially for older people. If you already own your home, it may be easier for you to buy than to rent, as home owners are usually not given priority on waiting lists to rent from the council or a housing association.

Support available to remain in your own home

Suffolk County Council provide adult social care services. It provides support to help you to stay in your home. Visit the county council website for more information. <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/adult-social-care-and-health/help-at-home-care-home-information-and-mental-health/>

We offer a grant to support the cost of any adaptations you need to make to your home. See our Disabled Facilities Grant page for information.

<https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/housing/upload/Disabled-Facilities-Grants-website-info.pdf>

Further help

Please contact the Housing Options Team on 01284 763233 or visit www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/housing

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