

Homelessness

Introduction

This Factsheet is about complaints about Homelessness. It should be read together with our '[How to Complain](#)' webpage, available on the 'Making A Complaint' tab. If you have made a Housing Application to the Council or a Housing Association you should also read our factsheet on Housing Applications.

The Council has responsibility by law to provide help and assistance to people who are or may become homeless. Only certain people (known as People in Priority Need) are entitled to emergency accommodation and help with their belongings. Examples are people with dependent children and people who are disabled.

The Council may have less responsibility if you are found to have caused your own homelessness ("intentionally homeless").

What we can do

We can look at whether the Council has:

- Prevented you from making a homelessness application or has failed to recognise that you could be homeless e.g. your housing application says that you are overcrowded;
- Failed to offer you temporary accommodation if you are in the group entitled to it e.g. you are pregnant;
- Looked at your homelessness situation properly e.g. if you have been evicted has the Council contacted your former landlord to find out why;
- Taken too long to reach a decision on your case;

- Failed to give you a written decision telling you: (i) if it will help you, (ii) if not why that is, (iii) about your rights to appeal;
- Looked after your furniture and belongings e.g. arranged storage;
- Failed to deal (or unreasonably delayed dealing) with your case properly.

What we cannot do

We cannot:

- Force the Council to provide you with accommodation;
- Overturn a properly made decision on your homelessness case.

Issues to bear in mind

The extent of the help and assistance you will receive from the Council may be affected by whether you live or work in the council's area (called having a local connection).

Further Information

You may want to consider contacting the following organisations for advice:

Shelter Cymru which provides independent and free housing advice and support. You can contact them by phone on **0345 075 5005** or the internet at www.sheltercymru.org.uk.

Citizens Advice Cymru which provides independent and free advice and support on a range of problems (including homelessness). You can contact them via the internet at www.citizensadvice.org.uk (selecting the 'Wales' site page option) and entering your postcode for details on how to reach your nearest CAC advice office.

Your **local Assembly Member** may also be able to offer advice and assistance.

We are independent and impartial; we cannot order public bodies to do what we recommend – but, in practice, they almost always do.

Examples of cases that we have looked at can be found on our website, under the 'Publications' tab on the '[Our Findings](#)' page.

Contact us

If you are unsure whether we would be able to look into your complaint, please [contact us](#) on 0300 790 0203 or ask@ombudsman.wales

Also available in Welsh.

Easy Read

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