

Kingston Council Welcome pack for those in temporary accommodation



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KINGSTON
UPON THAMES

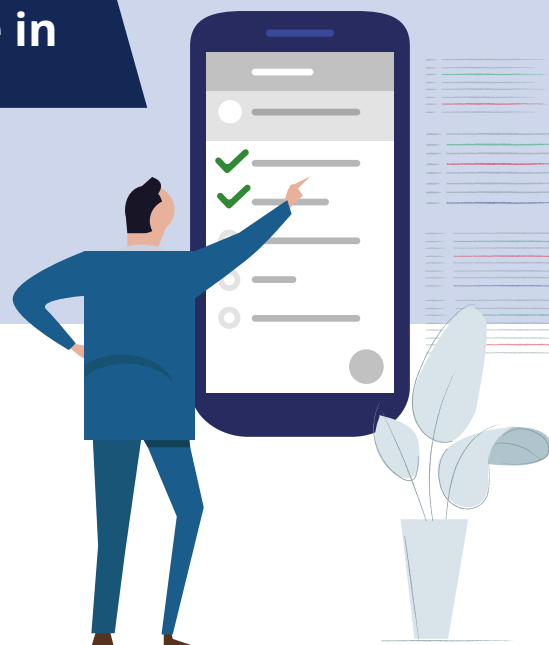
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Checklist of what to do when you move in

On this page you will find a checklist of what you need to do and complete when you first move into temporary accommodation.



- 1 Complete a 'change of circumstances' update on your Universal Credit account.
- 2 Check if you're required to pay council tax and if you can apply for council tax reduction from the council where you have been placed. Find your local council www.gov.uk/find-local-council
- 3 Provide the documentation your housing officer requests.
- 4 Make a separate claim for housing benefit on your local council's website to get support with housing costs.
- 5 Read and understand your licence or tenancy agreement.
- 6 Register with a local GP - information on [page 7](#)
- 7 Get to know the services available to help you in Kingston or locally.



Understanding your rights and responsibilities

This page will explain some of the terms and phrases used by the council and help to answer some of the questions you may have.



What is temporary accommodation?

You will be offered temporary accommodation if the council has accepted its duty to house you when you are homeless. This may be the accommodation that you're already living in, as emergency accommodation, if it meets your needs.

We have a duty to provide temporary accommodation if we have reason to believe you are:

- eligible for assistance
- homeless
- in priority need.

If you don't feel you want to take the offer of emergency accommodation, before you decline please seek advice from organisations such as: Shelter england.shelter.org.uk or Citizens Advice Kingston citizensadvicekingston.org.uk

You have the right to request a review of certain decisions made on your homeless application, such as:

- eligibility
- whether you are homeless or threatened with homelessness
- priority need
- intentionally homeless
- the steps taken to prevent or relieve your homelessness
- local connection referrals
- suitability of some accommodation offered
- ending of the prevention or relief duty
- discharge of duties
- refusal to cooperate.

You have 21 days after being notified of a decision about your housing to request a review. If you make a request after 21 days, the local authority has no obligation to accept.

You can request a review yourself or ask someone to do so on your behalf. This would

ideally be in writing but verbal requests can sometimes be accepted. Please ask your Kingston Housing Solutions Officer if you'd like a review.

The council normally has 56 days to respond to your review request, however an extension may sometimes be requested. You can seek independent legal advice to support your review.

What is emergency accommodation?

When you make a homeless application, you may be offered interim emergency accommodation while your case is being assessed. Interim emergency accommodation can include placement into a hotel and accommodation outside of Kingston upon Thames.

What we offer you depends on your family composition and what is available at the time. A lot of emergency accommodation has a 'no pets policy'. We can help with kennelling for your pets if you need it, but you will have to cover these costs yourself.

Contact the Kingston Council Temporary Accommodation Team for any further questions through our contact form at kingston.gov.uk/temporary-accommodation/emergency-temporary-accommodation

Will I be moved into accommodation that is not shared?

Some of our accommodation, including the council's own hostels, provide shared kitchen and bathroom facilities. As your homeless application progresses, we will seek to move families with children into self-contained accommodation. However, our ability to do this is dependent on the supply of homes. We try to move households with children placed in hotel accommodation within six weeks. It can sometimes take longer, depending on what is available at the time.

How long will I be outside of the borough for?

It is unlikely that your first accommodation will be within Kingston upon Thames and may be some distance from the borough.

There is no limit on the time you can spend in temporary accommodation, including any provided out of the borough. We will move households back into Kingston as and when properties become available.

Moves are usually prioritised based on how long a household has been outside of Kingston and the housing duty that has arisen. Other factors such as support needs may also be taken into account.

How will I pay for my accommodation?

When you are provided temporary accommodation you will need to complete a claim for Housing Benefit on the day you receive your accommodation.

Information on how to claim Housing Benefit, advice on the information you need to provide following your claim and the link to an online form are available at: kingston.gov.uk/benefits-5/applying/2

If you are receiving the housing cost element of Universal Credit and are provided temporary accommodation, you will need to tell the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) to end the housing cost element of your claim.

You will then need to make your claim for Housing Benefit online, but if you need help with this please tell your Housing Solutions Officer.

Details of how to set up direct debit payments can be found at kingston.gov.uk/council-houses/pay-rent or you can call 0345 359 1111.

If you are struggling with rent payments, please contact the Kingston Council Income Recovery Team by calling 0208 547 5000.

Your agreement to occupy your accommodation will confirm the cost of your accommodation including any service charges.

If you need a copy of your agreement to occupy, please fill in our contact form at kingston.gov.uk/temporary-accommodation/emergency-temporary-accommodation

What if I need storage for some of my possessions?

Your Housing Solutions Officer will talk to you about whether you need storage and what you need to store.

We can help ensure the protection of your possessions at a secure storage facility in Rainham, Essex. It costs £60 per month for this service.

Where we arrange for collection of your possessions you will need to be available to provide access to your belongings.

You can request access to, or the return of your belongings, by filling in our contact form at kingston.gov.uk/temporary-accommodation/emergency-temporary-accommodation.

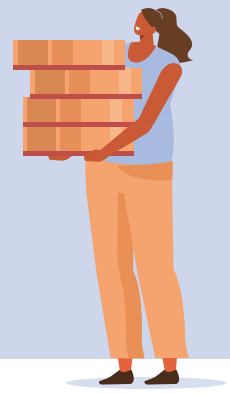
Prior notice is required to access or return your possessions and there is a £40 fee for this.

Please note that with some types of temporary accommodation it will not be possible to take all your possessions.

You can ask the accommodation provider, but many will not permit personal possessions to be moved into hostels, furnished homes or other types of interim accommodation like a hotel.

Support with living on a low income

This page provides information and advice about how to budget, save money and get help with bills and other costs.



Household Support Fund

If you are struggling to afford food, fuel, utility bills and other essentials, even temporarily - or have an urgent one off cost (boiler, cooker, fridge etc.) you can make an application to the Kingston Household Support Fund. Find out how to apply at kingston.gov.uk/benefits-5/household-support-fund

Budgeting, debt advice and help with your bills

The Government has made additional funding available for low-income households in Kingston who are struggling to afford food, fuel, utility bills and other essentials. Find out more at kingston.gov.uk/costoflivingsupport

You can also find lots of ways to reduce your energy bills at kingston.gov.uk/energy

Contact Kingston Council's Financial Inclusion Team

The Financial Inclusion Team helps residents to maximise their benefit income to help them keep their tenancies.

They work with households until all the financial inclusion issues are resolved. The team provides general money and debt advice to ensure residents can make informed decisions about their finances.

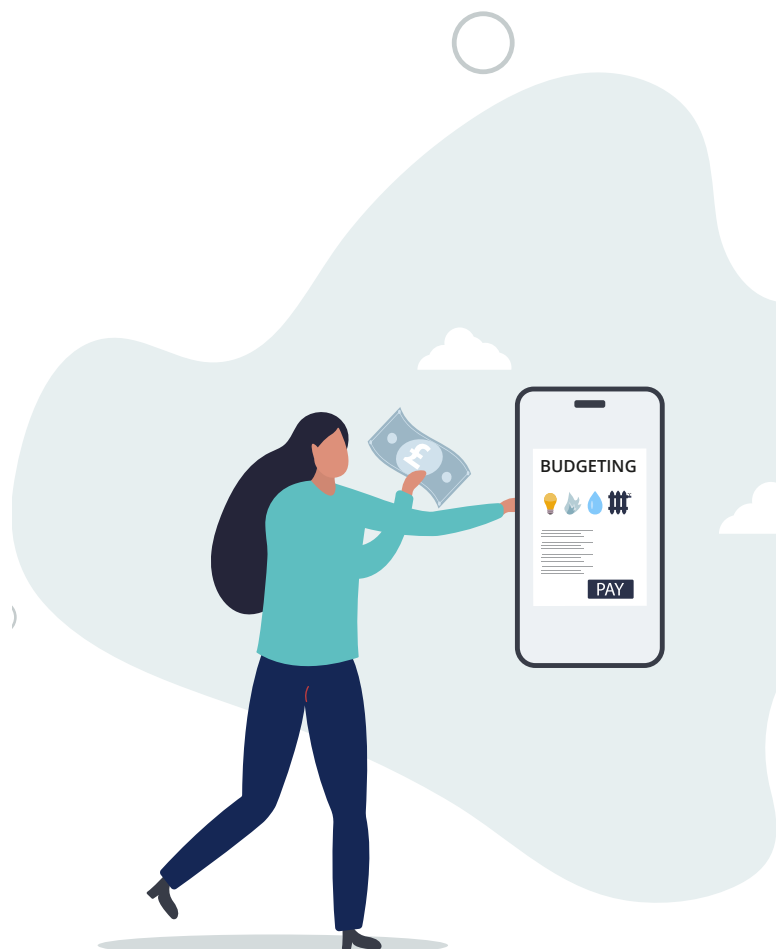
Referral criteria:

- You must have a Kingston Council tenancy (general needs and temporary accommodation).
- You have rent arrears.
- You have consented to being referred to the Financial Inclusion Team.

You can speak to your rent officer, housing officer or social worker if you'd like to be referred to the Financial Inclusion Team.

Supporting you in your employment

Kingston Council's aim is to help people into work, improve their skills and qualifications, increase their opportunities to earn more and to move into a new career by accessing new growth sectors. Find out more and get support at kingston.gov.uk/employmentandskills



Health and wellbeing information and advice

These pages provide information and advice on how to get health and wellbeing support in Kingston and other boroughs.

Getting set up with NHS services in Kingston

How can I access health services?

The NHS website is the best place to go if you need help to find a local GP, pharmacy or dentist. On the site you can also find out about a range of health conditions, symptoms and treatments, including what to do and when to get help. Visit: [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk)

How do I register with a GP?

Anyone in England can register with a GP surgery to access NHS services. It's free to register and you do not need proof of address or immigration status, ID or an NHS number. Most people need to register with a surgery close to where they live. You can find your nearest GP, as well as all the information you will need to register at [nhs.uk/nhs-services/gps/how-to-register-with-a-gp-surgery/](https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/gps/how-to-register-with-a-gp-surgery/)

NHS vaccinations and when to have them

Vaccines are the most effective way to protect against infectious diseases. It's important that vaccinations are given on time for the best protection but if you or your child missed a vaccine, contact your GP to catch up. Find out about vaccinations for babies, children and adults, including information about vaccinations during pregnancy, for COVID-19 and flu, and for travel, at [nhs.uk/vaccinations](https://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations)

Looking after your mental and physical health

If you need urgent help with your mental health, you can call 0800 028 8000 to speak to Kingston's NHS mental health crisis line or call 111 and select the mental health option.

Both services are open 24 hours a day for children and adults. You can speak to a trained mental health specialist who can give you professional support and advice, and direct you to the right service for your needs. Find out more at: swlstg.nhs.uk/urgent-help

Adults

In order to access NHS mental health services for adults you need to register with a GP first.

You can get online help with sleep, anxiety, low mood or stress at [good-thinking.uk/](https://www.good-thinking.uk/) or [nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/) or find local support at kingston.gov.uk/mentalhealth-adult

Kingston Talking Therapies

Kingston Talking Therapies provide free confidential psychological and wellbeing interventions for common mental health problems such as anxiety disorders and depression. If you are 18 years old or older and registered with a GP you can refer yourself to this service. Please visit swlstg.nhs.uk/kingston-talking-therapies

Local free and low cost counselling

If you would like to find out more about local counselling services that can support you through a range of live events and situations, please visit connectedkingston.uk/categories/counselling

Young people

Tellmi

Tellmi is an anonymous app where children and young people aged 11 to 18 years can share experiences and support each other. Tellmi can be downloaded for free from the [Apple Store](https://www.apple.com/uk/itunes/app/apple-store/id1446124881?pt=253680&pt_cat=Health&pt_medium=App+Store) or [Google Play](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.tellmi), or accessed via [the web app](https://www.tellmi.org.uk/).

Kooth counselling service

[Kooth](https://www.kooth.com/) is a free, safe and anonymous online counselling service for children and young people aged 11 to 22 years, across South West London. Visit [kooth.com](https://www.kooth.com/).

Other resources

iThrive - Emotional Health Service Resource Hub - kr.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/community-information/information-and-advice/emotional-health-service/ithrive

Every Mind Matters - nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/ - help for parents and carers to spot the signs that children may be struggling.

Referrals for all mental health services for children and young people who live in Kingston or have a Kingston GP go through the South West London and St George's Mental Health Trust Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

Referrals are usually done by a professional but parents/carers can also refer on their child's behalf. Email: krcamhsreferrals@swlstg.nhs.uk or call CAMHS on 020 8547 6171, 9am - 5pm on weekdays.

What services can I access to support my physical health?

Kingston's Healthy Lifestyles offers free services to help people make small changes to help improve their health and wellbeing. You can access a range of support, including:

- stop smoking support
- exercise referral to help you get active
- support to reach a healthy weight
- advice and classes to help with strength and balance and reducing the risk of falls.

Visit connectedkingston.uk/services/healthy-lifestyles-services or call 0208 547 6815.

How to connect with community groups and services

Connected Kingston is a local website that can help you to search and connect with local groups and services. You will find a range of resources, including groups that can support you to get more active, learn new skills, provide information and advice and find sports clubs, social clubs, community events and more. Visit connectedkingston.uk/.

Accessing food and essential supplies

Where is my nearest foodbank, community cafe or kitchen?

In Kingston there are a range of options where you can prepare or access food and essentials for free or at a low cost. These can all be found at connectedkingston.uk/collections/help-with-food

Community kitchens

If you are in temporary accommodation and do not have access to cooking facilities you can contact Save the World Club and book a community kitchen slot for three hours. Please note booking is essential.

Slots are available on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 9.30am - 12.00 and 12.30pm - 3pm

To book call 07389 074 128 or email eric@savetheworld.org and/or tariq@savetheworldclub.org between 12.30-6.30pm.

Address: 18 Southsea Road, Kingston upon Thames, KT1 2EH

Domestic abuse and violence against women and girls (VAWG)

Kingston Willow Centre

The Kingston Willow Centre provides free, confidential, non-judgmental and independent support to anyone who is experiencing domestic abuse or any form of violence against women and girls. For more information visit kingston.gov.uk/domestic-sexual-violence

Call 0208 547 6046 or email kingstonVAWG@refuge.org.uk, Monday to Friday, 9am - 5.30pm.

Out of hours support

Support is available out of hours. Freephone the 24-Hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline on 0808 2000 247 or find out more at refuge.org.uk/

Walk-in support in Kingston

The Kingston One Stop Shop is a walk-in service for anyone experiencing domestic abuse to access specialist support. It runs every Monday from 9:30 - 12:30pm at the Women's Hub, KingsGate Church, 161A Clarence Street, KT1 1QT.

Support for children and families

These pages provide information and advice about services and activities available to children and families in Kingston and other boroughs.



Education and the possibility of moving school

If you've been placed in temporary accommodation outside of Kingston, your children will need to commute back into the borough to go to school. If the journey is too difficult you might want to look for a school that is closer to where you are living. To do this, please contact your local council's school admission team through their website (details of local councils can be found on [page 11](#)). Alternatively, if you have just moved to Kingston, this link will help you to navigate the local admissions process kingston.gov.uk/schools-education/school-admissions-arrangements

Your local library

Your local library provides various services from book clubs and free wifi to 'rhyme time' activities, dementia support and more. Find out what's happening in your local library at: libraries.kingston.gov.uk/home

Parks and playgrounds in Kingston

Find your nearest recreation areas and playgrounds at kingston.gov.uk/directory/7/recreation-areas-and-playgrounds

Free School Meals

The Mayor of London is continuing to fund free school meals for every London state primary school pupil. Find out more at: kingston.gov.uk/schools-education/free-school-meals-1

I have a newborn or young baby

Kingston Council has put together a guide to help parents caring for new babies during the early weeks and months of babyhood. This includes information about how to register the birth, access to 'Healthy Start' vouchers, breast and bottle feeding advice, and support if your baby is unwell. You can find this and more at kingston.gov.uk/births-3/advice-parents-newborn-babies-kingston

Healthy Start vouchers

If you're more than 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under 4, you may be entitled to get help to buy healthy food and milk. You could be eligible for weekly vouchers worth between £4.25 - £8.50 to help buy plain cow's milk, fresh and frozen vegetables, fresh, dried and tinned pulses, and infant formula. Find out more and apply at healthystart.nhs.uk/

Health Visiting service:

Health Visitors are all qualified nurses who provide free child development and health advice for parents and carers of children aged 0-5 years. Your Health Visitor will visit your family to monitor your child's development and can also offer additional support about:

- infant feeding
- emotional health
- antenatal and postnatal workshops
- healthy lifestyle programme for families.

Providing you are registered with your GP, your Health Visitors will be notified of your pregnancy and will contact you directly. You can also contact the Kingston Health Visiting Service directly by calling 020 8339 8000 or email hvadminhub@yourhealthcare.org or visit connectedkingston.uk/services/health-visiting

School Health Service

The School Health Service provides health promotion, advice and support to school age children, young people and their families with the aim of improving their health and wellbeing. This includes a range of health improvement activities including assessment, child protection, screening, immunisation, special needs provision, drop-in sessions, sexual health (KU19) and PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education).

The service accepts referrals from families, carers, young people and professionals. To make

a referral visit yourhealthcare.org/our-services/school-health/#contact-referral or to contact the service directly on 020 8549 6323, text: 07507 207365 or email ku19@yourhealthcare.org

Where is my nearest Children's Centre?

Children's Centres bring together a range of services for expectant mothers and children under 5 and their families. They are a friendly place to learn and play, meet other families, and find out about local health services. In Kingston there are four Children's Centres, you can find location and opening times, as well as latest term-time programmes at kr.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/community-information/information-and-advice/children-centres/children-s-centres-in-kingston

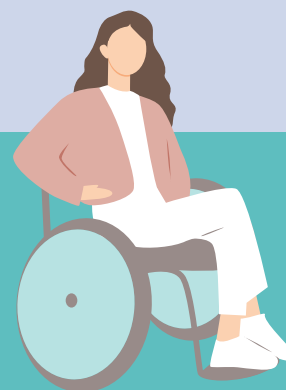
Growbaby

Growbaby may be able to provide you with free baby formula, nappies, and baby food. They may also be able to support with new and second hand baby clothes and equipment. You will need a referral from your Health Visitor (or other healthcare professional) to access this service, and you can find out more at connectedkingston.uk/services/growbaby-kingston

For further information and support, visit our cost of living support pages at kingston.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies

Support for adults

Below is some information on how to get support for vulnerable adults and what to do if you are concerned about a child or adult in Kingston.



How to get support from the Adult Social Care Service at Kingston Council

Kingston's Adult Social Care service offers information and advice about care and support when daily living has become difficult due to illness, old age, or disability. You can get personalised advice, care and support to help you have a good quality of life by becoming or staying independent. Find out more at kingston.gov.uk/adult-social-care

What to do if you are concerned about a child or adult

If someone is in danger of being hurt right now, call the police on 999.

When to make a report to the council

Let us know if you believe an adult is being mistreated. Tell us even if you're not sure whether we need to know and we'll decide if it needs investigating.

You can visit kingston.gov.uk/safeguarding and fill in our form use the online form or call Kingston Council on 020 8547 5000.

Tell us about a child at risk

If the person is under 18, or there's a child at risk too, contact the children's safeguarding team online at kingston.gov.uk/supporting-safeguarding-children/concerned-child/1 or call 0208 547 5008.

Find out more at kingston.gov.uk/safeguarding

Living outside of Kingston - contact details for other councils



Council	Phone	Website
Bexley	020 8303 7777	www.bexley.gov.uk
Ealing	020 8825 5000	www.ealing.gov.uk
Sutton	020 8770 5000	www.sutton.gov.uk
Merton	020 8274 4901	www.merton.gov.uk
Lambeth	020 7926 1000	www.lambeth.gov.uk
Hounslow	020 8583 2000	www.hounslow.gov.uk
Hillingdon	01895 556 666 (Housing Service)	www.hillingdon.gov.uk
Croydon	020 8726 6000	www.croydon.gov.uk
Brent	020 8937 1234	www.brent.gov.uk
Spelthorne	01784 451 499	www.spelthorne.gov.uk
Runnymede	01932 838 383	www.runnymede.gov.uk
Richmond	020 8891 1411	www.richmond.gov.uk
Mole Valley	01306 885 001	www.molevalley.gov.uk
Southwark	020 7525 5000	www.southwark.gov.uk
Wandsworth	020 8871 6000	www.wandsworth.gov.uk
Slough	01753 475 111 (Housing Service)	www.slough.gov.uk
Ashford	01233 331 111	www.ashford.gov.uk
Elmbridge	01372 474 474	www.elmbridge.gov.uk
Epsom and Ewell	01372 732 000	www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk
Reigate and Banstead	01737 276 000	www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk



Thanks to Sutton Council for supporting this document.

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If you have difficulty reading this document because of a disability, or would like it in a different format or language, please call our Contact Centre on 020 8547 5000, or ask someone to call on your behalf.

