

## Homeless prevention

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### Housing options for former members of the regular armed forces

Housing authorities have a duty ([section 179](#)) to provide advisory services free of charge to people in their district. The service must be designed to meet the needs of certain groups, which include former members of the regular armed forces. North Somerset Council is committed to supporting ex service personnel, and to ensuring that they and their families have the support they need and are treated with the dignity they deserve. The Armed Forces Community Covenant in North Somerset was signed on Armed Forces Day 29 June 2013 <http://north-somerset-afc.org.uk/>

### Looking before end of service

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If you are living in service accommodation, you will automatically be notified 24 months prior to your discharge date, 12 months if you give notice, which will mean that your service accommodation will also be ended at the same time. At this time you will be made aware through your Unit Resettlement Officer and the Career Transitions Partnership (CTP) of options and help available to you.

### Applying as homeless

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You can also approach the Council for advice and the options that are available to you. If you are threatened with homelessness or are homeless, you can apply to the Council under homelessness legislation and we will work with you to prevent or relieve your homelessness.

If you think you will be homeless after discharge from the services, you should contact the Council's Housing Solutions Team on 01934 426330. We will not wait until you are made homeless before we help you.



Ex-services personnel are exempt from the general rules that apply to local connection to join the housing register. Homechoice North Somerset policy allows registration for certain Armed Forces personnel regardless of whether or not they have a local connection. See [www.homechoicensomerset.org.uk](http://www.homechoicensomerset.org.uk) for further information.

## Vulnerability

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You may be treated as being vulnerable and therefore in priority need for accommodation if it is established that your vulnerability is as a result of being a former member of the armed forces. To help support your case, you may need to provide medical evidence from the MOD, including a Medical History Release Form (if you were given one).

When deciding if you are vulnerable, North Somerset Council may consider:

- how long you were in the forces and what role you had
- if you spent any time in a military hospital
- if you were released from service on a Medical Discharge (Medical History Release Form)
- how long it has been since you left service

We will link you with existing support networks with the armed forces to ensure that the full range of advice and support is provided to you.

## Further housing support and advice by Veterans' Housing Advice

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Veterans' Housing Advice is a new service which provides clear pathways for ex-Service personnel in housing need throughout the United Kingdom to move into permanent homes. It is provided in partnership with The Royal British Legion, Shelter and Connect Assist, its main aim is to make accessing the services of charities easier through a telephone helpline open seven days a week from 8am-8pm.

It can, for example, provide a housing intervention that negates the need to consider a rent bond or rent deposit.

## Contact us

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Phone 01934 426 330 or email [Housing.advice@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:Housing.advice@n-somerset.gov.uk)



You can also send the team a message through your Homechoice account and receive replies.

## Still need help?

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You can get further advice from Shelter's free housing advice helpline (**0808 800 4444**)



[www.england.shelter.org.uk/housing\\_advice/homelessness/your\\_situation/ex-services](http://www.england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/homelessness/your_situation/ex-services)

CTP a guide for housing: <https://www.ctp.org.uk/resettlement-guides/housing-396670>

## List of contacts

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Veterans Housing Advice 0808 802 1212

Royal British Legion tel : 01934 422301 **or** [www.support.britishlegion.org.uk](http://www.support.britishlegion.org.uk)

SAFA tel: 020 8938 3633 **or** [www.ssafa.org.uk](http://www.ssafa.org.uk)

[www.veteransgateway.org.uk](http://www.veteransgateway.org.uk)

[www.homesforveterans.co.uk](http://www.homesforveterans.co.uk)