



Housing



Council Housing - Rykneld Homes Ltd

Private Sector Housing

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Homelessness & Housing Advice

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Council Housing - Rykneld Homes

The Council has around 8,000 properties which are managed by Rykneld Homes. They provide a wide range of housing services to tenants. They work in partnership with us to deliver our housing priorities which are designed to improve services to tenants and residents, strengthen our local communities and improve our estates and neighbourhoods.

Rykneld Homes is also responsible for delivering the long term regeneration of our housing. They are leading the project to build new Council homes, carry out structural repairs to non-traditionally built homes and make sure our homes are properly insulated and energy efficient.

Services provided by Rykneld Homes on behalf of the Council include:

- Letting Council properties through our Choice Based Lettings scheme - Choice Move - and delivering the Council's Allocations Policy
- Carrying out Repairs and Maintenance to Council homes
- Empty property repairs - getting homes ready for new tenants
- Delivering the Capital Programme on behalf of the Council

- Managing estates - including dealing with anti-social behaviour, tenancy issues, cleaning and maintaining estates
- Involving local communities in the work of Rykneld Homes
- Carrying out the long term regeneration of Council homes and building new properties to let for social rent
- Rent collection, arrears management and financial inclusion advice
- Leasehold management and managing the Right to Buy

How do I apply for a council home?

You can apply for a home - or register to transfer or exchange your existing property - through a choice-based lettings scheme called Choice Move. This can be accessed on-line at www.rykneldhomes.org.uk or telephone (01246) 217670

Choice Move is designed to give people choice over the property they would like, while making sure housing is offered to those people most in need.

Everyone applying for a home is assessed according to their need and placed into one of four priority bands.

Current tenants can also apply for an exchange through a mutual exchange scheme called Homeswapper. Rykneld Homes tenants can register for free by visiting www.homeswapper.co.uk

Regeneration

We are working in partnership with Rykneld Homes to carry out the long term regeneration of Council homes. This includes making structural repairs to non-traditionally built properties such as pre-fabricated homes and replacing some properties with new homes which offer a higher quality of accommodation for tenants.

Contact us

For more information about Council homes visit the Rykneld Homes website at www.rykneldhomes.org.uk or call (01246) 217670.

Private sector housing

We are responsible for the enforcement of housing standards in the private sector, which includes owner-occupied properties as well those which are privately rented and mobile homes.

Housing disrepair

We have significant legal powers to require the owners of private property to properly maintain their dwellings.

Our two main powers are:

- To require owners of a property to fix substantial disrepair and prohibit the use of properties that have significant hazards.
- To require landlords to carry out repairs to privately rented property where the conditions cause hazards to occupying tenants

If you live in rented accommodation and you think the property is not in good repair, you can contact us to discuss the issue if the landlord does not carry out the repairs.

If we believe that a property is in such a state of disrepair, or the operator of a mobile home site is not complying with the conditions of their site licence, we may investigate the matter and will carry out any necessary enforcement actions in line with the Council's Enforcement Policy.

Licensing of mobile home /caravan sites

We issue licences to site owners of mobile homes and caravan sites, often subject to conditions which we enforce. An application for a site licence must be in writing and accompanied by a site plan.

If you live on a licensed site and have any concerns about the conditions on the site you can contact us to discuss the issue and we can investigate your complaint.

Contact us

For more information contact Environmental Health on (01246) 231111 or visit the website at www.ne-derbyshire.gov.uk

Help to adapt your home

We provide grants which can help towards the cost of adapting your home.

Disabled facilities grants

If you own your home or rent it from a private landlord and need to make alterations to your home to meet the needs of your disability, you may be eligible for help towards the cost.

The first step is to get in touch with the Occupational Therapists at Derbyshire County Council - you can contact them on **08456 058058 (Call Derbyshire)**.

They will visit you to decide what extra help you need and if necessary arrange for their architects to draw up the plans.

The amount of grant you receive towards the works will be decided by a 'means test', this means that your income, savings and circumstances will be considered to determine the level of grant awarded. This is to make sure that people that are in the greatest need receive the most financial help. Depending on the outcome of the means test you may be asked to pay a contribution towards the cost of the work.

The grant may be reclaimed if the property changes hands but the amount to be repaid will be limited to amounts that exceed £5,000, and will not exceed a repayment of £10,000.

How do I apply?

The first step is to get in touch with the Occupational Therapists at Derbyshire County Council, you can contact them through Call Derbyshire (08456 058 058).

North East Derbyshire District Council tenants can apply for an adaptation through Rykneld Homes.

Energy Efficiency

With around 2.28million households across the UK deemed to be in fuel poverty, can you afford not to be warm this winter?

Together with Bolsover District Council we are providing dedicated specialists who can help local people get a better deal on their energy bills and tackle fuel poverty.

So, if your home gets cold in the winter, or you worry about the heating bills, then our Home Improvement Team can help!

They can provide you with information and advice on reducing your fuel costs, ensure you are receiving the benefits you are entitled to and improve the energy efficiency of your home.

The service is free and our officers can:

- Contact energy suppliers on your behalf
- Read and explain energy bills
- Help you to reduce your fuel costs
- Switch energy suppliers on your behalf
- Provide energy companies with correct meter readings
- Get you help with dealing with fuel debt

- Give advice on renewable energy in your home
- Provide information about the financial assistance available
- Refer you for a benefit check
- Give advice on home insulation
- Help with grant funding applications
- Give advice on mould and damp
- Give advice on repairs to your home

If you want a Home Improvement Officer to come and visit you and give you free advice and information please telephone Environmental Health on **01246 231111** or visit the website at **www.ne-derbyshire.gov.uk**

Handy Van Scheme

The Derbyshire Handy Van Network is open to people who are 60 and over or who have been referred by one of our partner organisations.

The Handy Van service could get you help with the following:

- home fire safety checks
- checking and fitting smoke alarms
- home security checks
- energy efficiency advice
- practical tasks

Unfortunately the service cannot offer an emergency service for plumbing or electrical problems.

The Handy Van service is available Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm, just call **0203 535 4999** or email: **handyvan@metropolitan.org** to request a visit. Each household will be able to access this free service twice a year.

Housing Strategy and Enabling

We are responsible for making sure everyone in the district has access to suitable housing. The Housing Strategy and Enabling team and Economic Development team have produced a joint Housing and Economic Development Strategy which outlines the Council's priorities for achieving economic growth and securing access to a range of good quality housing for its residents, from this the housing priorities identified are;

- Maximise affordable housing to rent or buy through new build or make best use of existing stock
- Enable people to live in and sustain healthy homes
- Prevent and reduce homelessness

Affordable housing

Affordable Housing is provided for people who cannot afford to rent or buy privately in the housing market.

Affordable rented housing, usually referred to as social rented housing, is normally owned by a local authority or housing association also known as a Registered Provider (RP).

Homes to rent

When council or Housing Association properties become available to rent they are advertised through a choice based lettings scheme called Choice Move which is managed by Rykneld Homes. Further information about Choice Move can be found at www.choicemove.org.uk

Supported Housing

The Housing Strategy and Enabling Team also works with partners to identify and enable the provision of supported housing schemes for vulnerable groups such as young people, older people, people with mental health issues or people with learning disabilities. Many of these schemes are delivered by agencies in the voluntary sector or through RPs and funded by Derbyshire County Council. Housing related support enables vulnerable people to maintain their tenancies and avoid homelessness.

Homes to buy

If you would like to own your own home, but cannot afford to buy on the open market, there are a number of government-sponsored schemes that could help you.

The one stop information point for all the schemes is Help to Buy Midlands, the government-appointed HomeBuy agent for the Midlands.

Contact us

For more information view the Help to Buy Midlands website www.helptobuymidlands.co.uk or telephone **03458 50 20 50**

Homelessness and housing advice

If someone has a housing problem which may lead to homelessness, we have a duty to help them stay in their current accommodation. For example, we may provide advice on benefits, including Housing Benefit, negotiate with private landlords to stop a tenancy agreement being ended or refer you to the Citizen's Advice Bureau or another of our partner agencies for detailed advice.

We also provide advice on private tenants' rights and investigate complaints from private tenants of harassment and illegal eviction. If we can't resolve the situation, we would look at the options open to people outlined below.

Homelessness and re-housing

If we can't reach a solution and you are homeless (or will become homeless within the next 28 days) you can make a homelessness application. To make sure we help those most in need, we must assess your situation.

We must establish if a person is homeless and, if so, whether this is a result of a deliberate act or omission and are therefore classed as intentionally homeless. We also need to assess whether they have a 'priority need' for housing, including people who:

- Are pregnant
- Have parental care, control and responsibility for children

- Are 16 or 17 years of age and without adult support
- Are vulnerable as a result of serious physical or mental health problems, domestic violence, being in care, prison or in the armed forces

This is not a complete list and each case is assessed on its own merits. Will work with successful applicants to find them suitable private rented council or housing association accommodation.

Temporary accommodation

If a person who has a priority need becomes homeless before we have dealt with their application we will arrange temporary emergency accommodation, either in one of our homeless units or bed and breakfast accommodation. Applicants will be asked to pay for this or claim Housing Benefit and pay a smaller amount covering the remaining charges.

What happens if an application is not successful?

In some cases - if someone is not in priority need or deemed 'vulnerable' in terms of the strict legal definition, or if they are intentionally homeless - we may not have a duty to provide accommodation.

We will try and help unsuccessful applicants find alternative accommodation. This can be hard to arrange at short notice even after submitting a homeless application, so we encourage people to consider all options open to them, such as the private rented sector.

Bond Guarantee Scheme

We run a Bond Guarantee Scheme which helps homeless people move into private rented accommodation that would usually require a large bond payment.

If you cannot afford to pay a bond, and you qualify for assistance, this scheme will provide you with a 'bond guarantee certificate' to take to a prospective landlord.

The bond guarantee certificate will guarantee either £500 for a homeless family or pregnant couple, or £300 for a single person. This only covers the cost of any damage to the property and does not cover any rent arrears.

Each application will be assessed on its own merits.

For more information about the Bond Guarantee Scheme contact the Housing Options Team on **(01246) 231111**.

Contact us

For more information contact the Housing Options Team on **(01246) 231111** or visit the website at **www.ne-derbyshire.gov.uk**