

Housing Matters (Bristol)
Easton Business Centre,
Felix Rd, Easton, Bristol,
BS5 0HE (Postal Address Only)
0117 935 1260 (advice line)
advice@housingmatters.org.uk



Free & confidential advice:

Advice Service Lead: Harriet Goodland

Service User Charter

What you can expect from Housing Matters (Bristol):

- Housing Matters will provide good quality advice and information within a reasonable timescale
- Housing Matters will offer you a polite and courteous welcome, a confidential service and, where necessary, an interview
- We will work on your case until it is completed, unless the matter needs to be referred to a solicitor or other advice agency or until you stop instructing us in relation your case
- If we are unable to progress your case within a reasonable timescale, we may refer you to another organisation.

What we expect from you:

- Co-operate and participate in the service we offer you
- Attend appointments on time and keep us informed if you are unable to attend
- Keep us informed about any information relevant to your case
- Be respectful at all times and not use abusive language or act in an abusive manner
- Whilst Housing Matters does not necessarily expect its service users to be free from drug and alcohol use, service users are expected to be able to engage in services in an appropriate manner.

Updated February 2023

Feedback and Complaints

We would be grateful if you could let us know the outcome of your case and whether there is any aspect of our service that needs reviewing/improving. We welcome any positive or negative feedback on our service.

If you are not happy with our service, you have a right to complain. Please do not hesitate to ask for a customer feedback / complaints leaflet by emailing admin@housingmatters.org.uk or by writing to: The Secretary, Housing Matters (Bristol), Easton Business Centre, Felix Road, Easton, Bristol, BS5 0HE.

Housing Matters (Bristol) is working towards equality of opportunity and recognises that discrimination exists in many parts of our society. Housing Matters (Bristol) finds discrimination and intimidation of any kind unacceptable. We are committed to implementing policies and practices that will combat discrimination in our areas of work and aim to promote maximum accessibility of our service to all members of the community. Housing Matters staff will treat clients with courtesy and respect. We reserve the right to refuse to advise those who, after warning, continue to use discriminatory or abusive language or behaviour.

Housing Matters (Bristol) is a registered charity that provides free, independent, and confidential advice on housing and related matters.

We advise on issues such as homelessness and the threat of homelessness, housing benefit & universal credit, rent arrears, landlord & tenant problems, private renting, repossession action and security of tenure, housing conditions & disrepair, overcrowding, housing & relationship breakdown, domestic violence, racial and other types of harassment, applications for social housing and supported accommodation.

Our service is for anyone in housing need living in Bristol and the surrounding areas. We operate our service by telephone, email, home visits and outreach appointments.

Data Protection and Access to Information Policy

Housing Matters (Bristol) are registered with the Information Commissioner's Office under ZA442269. We will process your personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Under the Data Protection Act you have a right to access information that we hold about you and also to know how long we will keep this information and when it will be destroyed

You have the right to see your file by making an appointment to visit the Housing Matters office.

In order to ensure that nothing on the file is changed, a member of staff must be present whilst you look at the file. Where information on the file has been provided by third parties, permission will be sought from the third party to release the information to you. Where permission is denied by the third party, the relevant information will be removed from the file. You can request a copy of any material that you have access to view.

You have the same rights to computerised information about yourself as you do to information kept on paper. A printout of any such information will be sent on request.

All material regarding you, whether on paper or on computer, is strictly confidential. The only people with access are:

- You
- Staff of Housing Matters (Bristol) who need access in order to provide the service their job requires
- Independent File Reviewers and auditors engaged by Housing Matters (Bristol) for Advice Quality Standard purposes. (NB - if you have any queries about this please ask)

Information will only be released to other people in the following circumstances:

- Where you request / give consent for information to be shared with a third party
- Where you have signed an authorisation form
- Where staff have a legal obligation to disclose information, for example to the Police. In such a situation, you will be informed of the disclosure and the reasons for it. We will not give more information than is legally required

If you feel that the information held about you is wrong or misleading, you can request that it is amended. If staff agree, then the information will be corrected, or a note

added to this effect. If staff do not agree, then you will be able to put your own version in writing which will be kept on the file.

Information about you will be retained by Housing Matters (Bristol) for seven years after your case is closed. Your access to this information does not depend on whether you are currently receiving a service from Housing Matters (Bristol).

Please refer to our full Privacy Notice on our website at <http://www.housingmatters.org.uk/> for more information or request a hard copy from us.