

# Emergency accommodation

## Finding a private sector tenancy

This information sheet contains guidance about finding a private sector tenancy for homeless households.

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### Things that you should know:

If we have decided that we owe you a duty to provide you with accommodation following an investigation of your circumstances as a homeless person, this duty may be discharged through an offer of private sector accommodation. You may be offered private sector accommodation at any stage once the Council has decided that a duty is owed to you. If you refuse this offer of accommodation, the council's duty to provide you with accommodation will come to an end; you will not be able to remain in your bed and breakfast or temporary accommodation.

An alternative may be that you find your own accommodation in the private rented sector. There are a number of benefits for you: control of where you live, the type of accommodation, your school catchment area and proximity to work.

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### What happens to my homelessness application if I choose this route?

No further homelessness duty will be owed to you. If you become homeless again, you may re-approach the council.

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### What can the council do to help?

If you find your own accommodation, the council can:

- Negotiate with your landlord
- Check the gas safety and electrical safety certificates
- Discuss the EPC certificate with your landlord
- Arrange a Deposit Guarantee Bond and/or lodging a deposit on the property (see the Croybond leaflet)
- Sometimes manage any rent in advance required
- Check the tenancy agreement and associated terms
- Carry out a property condition inspection and inventory

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## Is there anything I should do before I start looking?

If your homelessness application is still being investigated, speak to your housing officer. If the council has already accepted a duty towards you and you are in temporary accommodation, read the information below and start looking.

Any property that you find must be:

- Suitable for your needs
- Within Local Housing Allowance Rates. Further These can be found at [www.croydon.gov.uk/housing/housingbenefits](http://www.croydon.gov.uk/housing/housingbenefits) or [www.lha-direct.therentservice.gov.uk](http://www.lha-direct.therentservice.gov.uk))
- In reasonable condition
- Have a landlord who is prepared to engage with the council's Landlord Bond Scheme and if required accept tenants on Housing Benefit
- The landlord must not be a close relative

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## Where can I look for accommodation?

You can look for somewhere to live in other boroughs as well as the London Borough of Croydon. There are suggestions as to where you can look for accommodation at the end of this sheet.

If you find somewhere to live outside the London Borough of Croydon, you would need to make your claim for Housing Benefit to the council where the property is.

### Websites

[www.dsslondon.com](http://www.dsslondon.com)  
[www.dss-accepted.co.uk](http://www.dss-accepted.co.uk)  
[www.dsslettings.org.uk](http://www.dsslettings.org.uk)  
[www.spareroom.com](http://www.spareroom.com)  
[www.gumtree.co.uk](http://www.gumtree.co.uk)  
[www.findaproperty.co.uk](http://www.findaproperty.co.uk)

### Newspapers

Croydon Post  
Croydon Guardian  
Croydon Advertiser  
South London Press  
Time Out  
Evening Standard  
Croydon Loot

### Croydon estate agents that may have landlords that will accept Housing Allowance.

**Jackson Property Services**  
82-84 South End  
Croydon CR0 1DQ  
**020 8686 6667**

**AOB Estate Agents**  
39 Whitehorse Road  
Croydon CR0 2JG  
**020 8683 0012**

**James Chiltern**  
182 London Road  
Croydon CR0 2TE  
**020 8681 8133**

**Choices**  
41-43 Brighton Road  
Croydon CR2 6EB  
**020 8680 1414**

### Croydon estate agents that may accept partial housing benefit. You need to work a minimum of 16hrs and have a guarantor; someone that owns their own home in the UK.

**Townends**  
83-85 High Street  
Croydon  
**020 8680 8585**

**Warren Hamilton**  
Croydon  
**020 8680 9846**

**First Options**  
**020 8771 9100**

**Benson & Partners**  
**020 8686 3335**  
**020 8765 1234**  
**020 8653 3444**

Lettings agents let properties from a range of different landlords. They will not always have properties available from landlords that take housing benefit. If they say that they don't have properties when you contact them, ask if it is worth calling back.

### Other Local estate agents

**Leaders Croydon**  
312 High Street  
Croydon  
**020 8686 7941**

**Dickenson estate agents**  
304 High Street  
Croydon  
**020 8251 9191**

**Amicus Horizon Ltd**  
125 High Street  
Croydon  
**020 8726 8600**

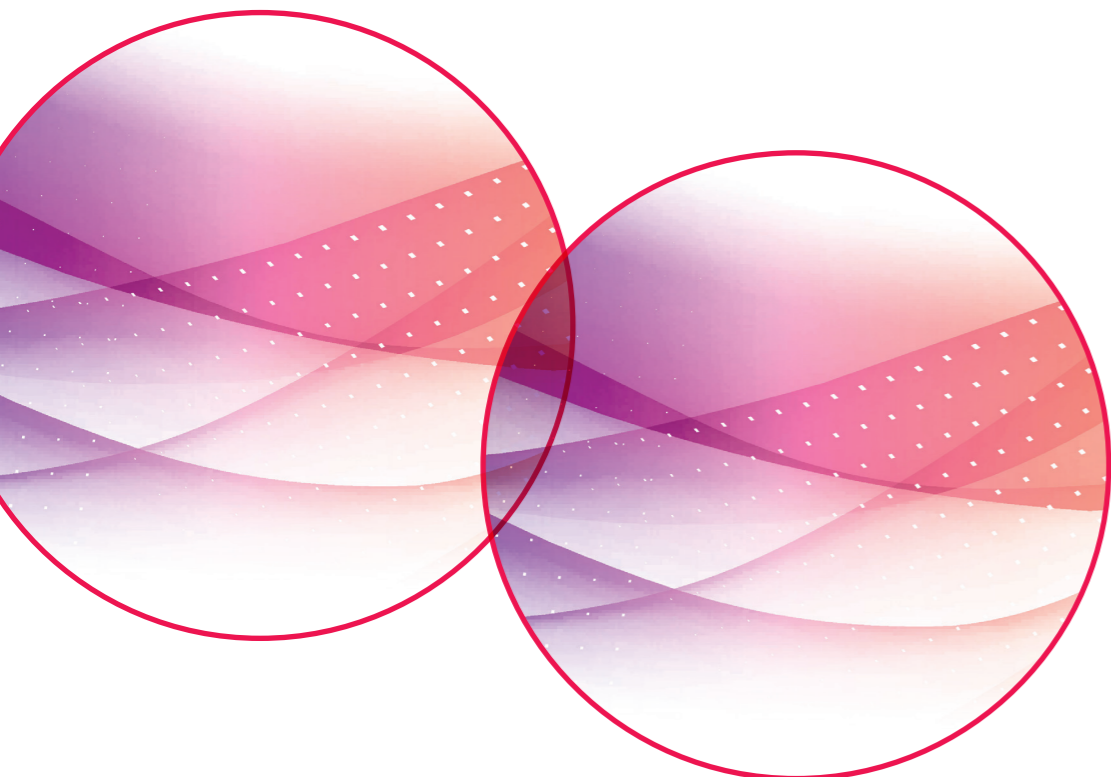
**Croydon Property management**  
119 High Street  
Croydon  
**0845 456 1914**

**Connells estate agents**  
8 Suffolk House  
George Street  
**020 8688 7465**

**Bairstow eves**  
28 Norfolk House  
George Street  
**020 8622 5440**

### Advice about private renting

[www.shelter.co.uk](http://www.shelter.co.uk)  
[www.homelesslondon.org.uk](http://www.homelesslondon.org.uk)  
[www.homelessuk.org](http://www.homelessuk.org)  
**0808 800 4444**  
Shelter's free housing advice.  
**0800 731 5920**  
Croydon welfare benefits advice line.



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## Things to think about before you view

Think about some questions you should ask the landlord before you see the property. Here are some examples:

- When will the property be ready to move into?
- How much is the rent?
- Is it paid weekly or monthly and how is it collected?
- What does the rent include?
- What other bills will you have to pay?
- Are you responsible for the Council Tax?
- Will s/he take someone on Housing Benefit?
- How long is the tenancy for?
- Is furniture provided?
- Is there kitchen equipment?

You might like to take someone else like a friend or relative to view the property with you. Do not take a group of people with you as the landlord may find this intimidating. Remember that first impressions count.

Take the Croybond leaflet to the viewing and ask the landlord if they will accept you as a tenant within the scheme.

Look around the property and discuss any concerns you have with the Landlord; for example something may need fixing or the property may need cleaning or redecorating. Ask the landlord whether s/he intends to deal with these things before you move in and it is a good idea to get anything agreed in writing.

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## What should I do once I have found a property?

Give the landlord the Croybond leaflet. **Do not sign a tenancy agreement yet.** Contact the Housing Placements Team on **020 8726 6100** straight away with the landlord or lettings agent's contact details.

If you need to check how much housing benefit you are entitled to, you can call the Croydon Welfare Benefits advice line on **0800 731 5920**.