

# Supporting the delivery of quality housing and homelessness advice





## Who are we?

The National Homelessness Advice Service (NHAS) was created to support professionals in local authorities, statutory agencies, local citizens advice and other eligible advice agencies in England who give housing advice. We'll provide you with up-to-date housing and homelessness training and information, answer your questions and give advice, so you have everything you need to help people with a housing issue. Best of all, you don't need to pay anything to access our service.

We're run by Shelter, the housing and homelessness charity and funded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

The NHAS is a catalyst for change, encouraging local authorities and agencies to work effectively together in partnership. The professional resources and specialist support we offer will enable you to provide the most appropriate, accurate, and timely housing advice that helps to prevent people becoming homeless.

Local authority housing teams, some statutory agencies, local citizens advice and eligible voluntary advice agencies are welcome to use this free service.



## What can we do for you?

We are here to support you in your day-to-day work, providing access to the latest knowledge and information on housing policy and homelessness law. Our free advice and resources gives you the support required to help people in housing need as quickly and efficiently as possible.

The NHAS provides:

- telephone and webchat consultancy to give on the spot support when providing housing advice
- free high quality, flexible training on a range of housing and homelessness issues
- specialist housing debt advice on housing cost arrears, welfare benefits and certain rent arrears cases
- comprehensive and up-to-date online information about housing and homelessness



## Consultancy and housing advice

### Here to help you in your day-to-day work

Our team of experienced housing specialists are only a phone call away. However complicated or simple a case, we support you to deal with any housing enquiry or problem.

Our consultancy is free to all NHAS members with phone lines open Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm. We can also be contacted using webchat, via our website.

### Five good reasons to get in touch with NHAS

- you get a quick diagnosis of any housing problem
- you can be sure our legal advice is accurate and up to date
- we'll support you to explore all practical options open to your client
- the advice you give your clients will be based on latest information, case law and policy
- you'll receive written confirmation of the advice we provide within 3 days

We deal with any housing-related query, but most frequently with:

- homelessness applications and prevention
- possession proceedings
- housing in relation to persons from abroad
- landlord and tenant issues
- rent and mortgage arrears
- security of tenure
- relationship breakdown
- disrepair

'The service was excellent - I was given invaluable advice and information which will significantly assist me in supporting my client, and I would not have been able to get the same information elsewhere.'

**Local authority  
adviser**



## NHAS Housing debt advice

### Helping you to help people in housing debt

Our specialist housing debt advisers support local authorities, local citizens advice, statutory agencies and voluntary advice agency members to help people having difficulty paying their mortgage or rent, or facing possession proceedings. We offer a consultancy service on:

- mortgage or rent arrears
- provide welfare benefits advice to maximise income and support housing affordability

All of our advice given will be confirmed to you in writing, following your call.

'Succinct, thorough and pertinent expert advice. Really brilliant. I couldn't find it in books. Thanks so much - you've prevented someone becoming homeless.'

**Voluntary agency member**



## Training you

### Training from housing and homelessness experts

Our programme of introductory/refresher level training courses are designed in response to the latest developments in housing and homelessness, and aimed at people who give housing advice. Our team of professional trainers have a wealth of expertise and experience to help advisers gain the knowledge, skills and confidence to tackle housing issues and give quality housing advice. We provide face to face courses, webinars, briefings and bitesize as part of a blended approach to training.

'I thought it was one of the most useful courses I have been on. The trainer had lots of relevant case law and I have come away with a really useful set of notes. (I) am really looking forward to the other courses in the series. Essential learning for any new adviser. Can't wait for a homeless client to come in – I am ready.'

#### **Local citizens advice adviser**

### Five good reasons to attend NHAS training

- our team of professional trainers have a wealth of knowledge and experience in housing and homelessness
- you will gain the knowledge, skills and confidence to tackle housing issues and give quality housing advice
- you get the opportunity to network with other advisers, learn of current best-practice initiatives, and keep up to date with legislation and policy
- your training package can be designed in a way that best suits your needs (i.e face-to-face and/or on line webinars and bitesize products)
- like all NHAS services, our training is free



## Resources at your finger tips

### For in-depth and up-to-date information

We are committed to keeping you up-to-date on housing and homelessness law and policy.

As an NHAS member:

- you receive monthly electronic updates on NHAS services, housing and homelessness news, policy and case law
- you get our bi-monthly publication 'Housing matters' – a dedicated bulletin providing current housing and homelessness news, articles written by experienced housing practitioners, and information on key legal issues
- you can access our closed Facebook group to receive daily updates and have topical discussions with peers in different organisations, from across the country
- you have access to online information and free downloads when visiting **nhas.org.uk**, including:
  - a range of up-to-date factsheets on housing issues that will be useful in informing your clients
  - good practice guides and toolkits for housing and homelessness services
  - innovation & local practice pages providing solutions from NHAS members to help prevent homelessness
  - access to Improving Outcomes for Young People content. This is for professionals working with young people who are experiencing housing issues.

In addition, there are other resources which you may find useful:

- **Shelter Legal** is a free online law resource for people working in housing and homelessness



## **Making partnerships work effectively**

### **Sharing best practice across the country**

We work closely with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and other organisations to disseminate and support best practice in homelessness prevention.

NHAS has produced a range of toolkits and guides to help make partnership working clearer. In a climate where greater value for money and efficiencies are paramount in service delivery, we are using our expertise to support frontline agencies working more productively and efficiently with housing services to achieve the most effective outcomes for clients. You will find the guides and toolkits on our website.

We also run events throughout the year to update you on current case law and best practice to support NHAS members & provide opportunities to network. Look out for events on the NHAS website.

## Contact us

For more information about our service, visit our website **[nhas.org.uk](https://nhas.org.uk)**

If you have any questions about the work we do or want to discuss how we may be able to support your team, email **[nhas@shelter.org.uk](mailto:nhas@shelter.org.uk)**

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