

# YOUNG PEOPLE, CARE LEAVERS AND HOMELESSNESS

*If you are 16/17 years old or a care leaver, you may be able to get housing and other help from Derby City Council and Derby Homes. The help you get mainly depends on your age.*

## KEY ADVICE:

- Derby City Council's Children's Services team is responsible for finding you somewhere to live until you turn 18.
- If you are an 18-25 year old homeless care leaver, Derby Homes may have a duty to help you if:
  - you have already left care, and
  - you have spent a total of at least 13 weeks in care since the age of 14, and
  - part of that time in care was while you were 16 or 17

Derby Homes may have a duty to help you with finding somewhere to live. It doesn't matter if those 13 weeks were not all at the same time.

You have different rights if you have spent less than a total of 13 weeks in care, or you want to leave care before your 16th birthday.

## FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR 16 OR 17 YEAR OLD CARE LEAVERS

Most 16 or 17 year old care leavers are not eligible for benefits. The Children's Services department of Derby City Council can help you by:

- providing housing or helping you find and keep your own place
- supporting you financially by paying you enough for your rent, food, bills, travel costs for education and training, clothing, pocket money and childcare if you need it
- giving you any other support you need, such as help with continuing your education, finding work or dealing with personal problems

You can usually only claim benefits if you are a 16 or 17 year old care leaver and you are also a single parent or unable to work because of a disability or illness.



Derby City Council



Find out more from Turn2Us about benefit rules for care leavers. **Turn2Us** is a national charity that helps people in financial hardship to gain access to welfare benefits, charitable grants and support services. Find out more at [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)

### HOUSING HELP FOR 18 TO 25 YEAR OLD CARE LEAVERS

If you are aged 18 to 25, you may be able to get help from both Derby City Council's Children's services and Derby Homes' Housing Options Service. You are automatically classed as being in 'priority need' until your 25<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Children's services can also help you by providing support and help with training and education.

If you are in full-time further or higher education, Children's Services must find you somewhere to live during holiday periods if you need it.

### BENEFITS FOR CARE LEAVERS OVER 18

When you turn 18 you are entitled to claim benefits. You should be able to claim Universal Credit if you need to.

### HOUSING HELP FOR CARE LEAVERS 25 YEARS OLD AND ABOVE

Some older care leavers can get accommodation from Derby Homes if they are in priority need. For example, this may be the case if you:

- are vulnerable as a result of having been in care
- haven't had a stable home since you left care
- have slept on the streets in the past

### OTHER SUPPORT FOR CARE LEAVERS AGED 18 TO 24

As a care leaver, you should continue to receive help and advice from Derby City Council until your 21<sup>st</sup> birthday (or 25<sup>th</sup> if you are still in education or training). Children's services can help you by providing assistance with education and training until your 25<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Your personal advisor should still keep in touch and should go over your pathway plan with you to see how you are getting on. There is more information about personal advisers below.

Ask Derby City Council's Health and Social Care Services to help you if you need support to continue with your education or find training or employment. They may be able to help with the cost of living near your college, training centre or workplace.

### PERSONAL ADVISER

Before you leave care you're given a pathway plan setting out what support you might need to live independently. Find out more about pathway plans at [www.gov.uk/leaving-foster-or-local-authority-care](http://www.gov.uk/leaving-foster-or-local-authority-care)

You're given a personal adviser whose job it is to make sure that you claim everything you are entitled to. They can help you with application forms for housing, benefits, and education and/or training courses. They should also help you with learning life skills, like how to budget.

Your personal adviser should stay in contact with you and provide ongoing support and help until your 25<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Get advice if you don't have a personal adviser. You may be able to get one even if you didn't get one while you were still in care.

### SINGLE ROOM RATE

Usually, if you are under 35 years old and you rent from a private landlord, the maximum Universal Credit you can get is the same rate you would get for renting a single room in a shared house. If you've been in care, this doesn't apply until you turn 25.

You should be entitled to Universal Credit even if you have just spent one night in care. There is a maximum amount that you can be paid, which depends on the area you live in.