

Housing Options in Harlow 2006

If you are in need of accommodation, this guide gives you basic information about the range of housing options available in Harlow.

We hope you find it useful.

Please note:

We cannot recommend or endorse any private landlord or organisation.

The information included in this leaflet is also available at local libraries, in papers, and various other sources.



Private Rented Accommodation

There is a range of options in the private rented market:

- Lodgings – a room in a house shared with the landlord
- House-share – a room in a house, sharing kitchen, bathroom, and sometimes a lounge, with other residents
- Bedsit – one room with a small kitchen and bathroom for your own use (the bathroom is sometimes shared)
- Flat or house – self-contained accommodation and so more expensive than the others listed above.

Accommodation is available both in Harlow and the surrounding area.

Landlords usually ask for a deposit equal to one month's rent, and often one month's rent in advance, before you move in.

The Advice Centre has a number of leaflets which give more information on tenants' rights, but we recommend you do the following before entering into any tenancy agreement:

- Check what you will need to provide. Landlords often ask for a month's rent in advance, a deposit in case of damage to the property, references, and sometimes a rent guarantor.
- What sort of tenancy you will get (self-contained accommodation will usually be let on an Assured Shorthold Tenancy) ?
- How much is the rent, does it include council tax, water charges, gas and electricity charges, TV licence?
- How long will the tenancy be for, and will you have a written agreement?
- What are the landlord's plans for the property, and are there any plans to increase the rent?

Harlow Accommodation Project (HAP)

This project helps homeless people move into private rented housing. It can provide landlords with a deposit guarantee (in the form of a non-cash contract).

What is a Deposit Guarantee?

This is a certificate given by HAP to a landlord, instead of a cash deposit. Although tenants do not provide the deposit, they will be responsible for re-paying any claims made against it, and joining the project's saving scheme.

Who can have a Deposit Guarantee?

Some one who is:

- Classed as non-priority homeless by Harlow Council.
- In receipt of, or eligible for, any means tested or health benefit such as Council Tax.
- Homeless or threatened with homelessness.
- Unable to provide a deposit of their own.
- Capable of independent living.

Who will not receive a Deposit Guarantee?

- Anyone under 18 years old.
- Those who have previously been given a deposit guarantee and have not followed the project's regulations and principles.
- People whose local authority has a duty to re-house them.
- Those for whom the probation service or social services accept a duty to assist in finding accommodation.
- Council or Housing Association tenants, unless a court order for eviction has been obtained.
- If applicants are in debt to a previous landlord.

Housing Benefit

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit can be claimed for private rented properties, as well as social rented homes. If you already claim another benefit or are on a low income you should make a claim for Housing Benefit to find out whether any assistance can be provided. How much you can get depends on your circumstances but even if you are working you may be eligible.

If you are not on Housing Benefit already, or unsure if you are eligible, it is still worth applying.

For advice and an application form visit Contact Harlow at the Civic Centre, Water Gardens, Harlow.

Bed and Breakfast

In addition to purpose-built establishments, there is a small amount of Bed and Breakfast accommodation in the town provided by people in their own homes. This information is held by Harlow's Library Service on their LIFE system and is also available in the local press.

How do I find B&Bs?

- By visiting Harlow Library, The High, Harlow or ringing 01279 413772
- On the Harlow website, www.harlow.gov.uk/community/info

The LIFE system is for Essex, but for other counties, contact:

Essex Tourist Information Centre, County Hall, Market Road, Chelmsford, CM1 1GG Tel: 01245 283400

Website: www.essexvisitor.information@firstgroup.com

They should be able to put you in touch with other local Tourist Information Centres who have lists of short-term accommodation in their areas.

Buying in Harlow

There are many properties available to buy on the open market in Harlow and the surrounding areas. The cost of property in Harlow very much depends on the popularity of the area in which it is located. Local estate agents will be able to provide more detailed information (for more details see Contact Addresses).

Shared Ownership

Shared ownership is a combination of renting and buying. With shared ownership you buy a 'share' of your home and pay rent on the rest: it does not mean that you share your home with someone else. Properties available for shared ownership are advertised in Harlow Council's Home Finder magazine, and include properties both in Harlow, and in neighbouring areas.

Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)

Also known as Housing Associations, these organisations provide accommodation on a similar basis to the Council. This is a growing sector in Harlow, and RSL properties are found in many areas of the town. Vacancies are advertised in Harlow Home Finder, including some properties in neighbouring areas.

Young People

The Young People's Information Centre (YPIC) provides support and advice for young people (see Contact Addresses for details). In addition to the options listed above, some specialist housing schemes for young people also exist in the town.

Housing information from Harlow Council

Harlow Council has a range of housing information leaflets, available at Contact Harlow, and the Advice Centre. This information includes details on Shared Ownership, the Council's Housing Register and the Council's Allocations Scheme – Harlow Home Finder.

Contact Addresses

Useful contacts

The Contact Centre

Civic Centre,
The Water Gardens,
Harlow,
Essex. CM20 1WG
Tel: **01279 446655**

Harlow Accommodation Project

2a Wych Elm, Harlow, Essex CM20 1QP
Telephone **01279 861186**
Opening times:

Monday to Friday 10am – 2pm

Welfare Rights and Advice Service

The Advice Centre
2 East Gate, Harlow,
Essex. CM20 1ND
Tel: **01279 446622**
*Offers detailed, independent,
specialist advice.*

Citizens' Advice Bureau

Rooms 1 and 2
at the Advice Centre
Tel: **01279 425694**

**Young People's
Information Centre**

Occasio House (The Foyer),
Playhouse Square,
Harlow,
Essex. CM20 1AP
Tel: **01279 446815**

Local Newspapers

The Harlow Citizen,
8 Simon Campion Court
High Street, Epping
Essex. CM16 4AU
Tel: **01992 572285**

Harlow Star

6 Westgate House,
The High, Harlow,
Essex. CM20 1JW
Tel: **01279 451545**

Lettings Agencies

Guardian Residential Lettings
19 Adams House, Post Office Walk,
The High, Harlow
Essex. CM20 1BD
Tel: **01279 635685**

Centurion Property Services

5A West Square
The High, Harlow,
Essex. CM20 1JJ
Tel: **01279 417234**

Estate Agents

Bairstow Eves West Ltd
40 High Street, Old Harlow,
Essex. CM17 0DW
Tel: **01279 626117/443361**
Mon-Sat: 9am-6pm
Sun: 10am-2pm

The Angle

Fourth Avenue,
Harlow,
Essex. CM20 1DN
Tel: **01279 400650**

*Provides accommodation for young people,
usually aged between 18 to 30 years. Please
ring for an appointment*

Herald

6th Floor
Westgate House,
The High, Harlow
Essex, CM20 1YS
Tel: **01279 624331**

Geoffrey Matthew Estates

47 High Street
Old Harlow,
Essex. CM17 0DN
Tel: **01279 444988**

Curness & Davies

Bank House, 37-39 High Street,
Old Harlow,
Essex. CM17 0DN
Tel: **01279 639666**
Mon-Fri: 9am-6.30pm,
Sat: 9am-5pm, Sun: 10am-1pm

Haart Property Services

4 Westgate, The High, Harlow
Essex. CM20 1JW
Tel: **01279 443311**
Mon-Fri: 9am-6pm,
Sat: 9am-5pm, Sun: 10am-1pm

Howick & Brooker

Gothic House, 1 High Street,
Old Harlow,
Essex. CM17 0DN
Tel: **01279 418888**
Mon-Fri: 9am-6pm,
Sat: 9am-5pm, Sun: 10am-12pm

Master & Watkins

The George, Station Road,
Old Harlow,
Essex. CM17 0AN
Tel: **01279 454647**
Mon-Fri: 9am-6pm,
Sat: 9am-4pm, Sun: 10am-12pm

Registered Social Landlords**Blackwater Housing**

Blackwater House,
132a High Street
Braintree,
Essex, CM7 1LB
Tel: **01376 323322**

Springboard Housing Association

Springboard House
2A Cloughton Road
London, E13 9PN
Tel: **0208 475 0033**

East Thames Housing Group

3 Tramway Avenue,
Stratford,
London
E15 4PN
Tel: **0208 522 2000**
0845 6000 830
Repairs Freephone
0800 158 111

Swan Housing Group

Pilgrim House
High Street,
Billericay
Essex, CM12 9XY
Tel: **01277 844700** – main switchboard

Moat Housing Group

The Square,
Holloway Bridge
Heybridge,
Maldon,
Essex, CM9 4LH
Tel: **0845 0860086**

Warden Housing Association

Unit 2, Mitre Buildings,
Kitson Way
Harlow,
Essex, CM20 1DR
Tel: **01279 621600**

NB Housing Associations often 'close' their waiting lists for a period of time. To be considered for vacancies which they offer to Harlow Council you will need to be included on the Council's Housing Register.