

Help if you are homeless: Gypsies and Travellers

Get help finding somewhere to live if you're a Gypsy or Traveller and you are homeless

You could be homeless for a number of reasons:

- face eviction from your pitch, encampment or tenancy
- have nowhere to legally park your mobile home
- need to leave your home due to violence

Help from the Council

You can apply to any council for help if you're homeless or at risk of losing your home or pitch within 56 days.

The Housing Solutions service must carry out an assessment of your housing needs.

The Housing Solutions service will then draw up a **personal housing plan** that sets out the steps you and the council must take to help you keep your home or pitch. If this isn't possible, the Housing Solutions service will outline ways you and the council can find you somewhere new.

For more information on **personal housing plans** please see our other homelessness advice leaflets.

Emergency accommodation

Southwark Council must arrange emergency accommodation if it thinks you might be homeless, in priority need and meet immigration and residence conditions.

Southwark Council must provide accommodation for you and anyone who usually lives with you as a member of your family.

What you can be offered

If you qualify for emergency or longer-term housing, Southwark Council must try to find you a suitable pitch or accommodation within the area. If there is nothing available locally Southwark Council could place you elsewhere.

Many Gypsies and Travellers want somewhere they can park up and live legally. Southwark Council must consider your cultural needs and lifestyle when deciding what is suitable.

If a suitable pitch is not available, Southwark Council will probably offer you 'bricks and mortar' accommodation. In the short-term this could be a bed & breakfast or homeless hostel. In the longer-term it could be a self-contained flat or house.

If accommodation is unsuitable

You can only challenge the suitability of emergency accommodation in court with the help of a solicitor. It would have to be very unsuitable for a legal challenge to succeed.

You can ask for a review of the suitability of longer-term housing within 21 days of receiving an offer from Southwark Council. You should accept the offer and then ask for a review as you may not get another offer if your review is unsuccessful.

Still need help?

The following organisations provide specialist advice to Gypsies and Travellers:

Community Law Partnership Travellers Advice Team

0121 685 8677

9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Out of hours emergency number 07768 316755

Friends, Families and Travellers

01273 234 777

10am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday

Contact us

If you need advice, assistance and support with your housing needs, please contact Southwark Council's Housing Solutions service.

Housing Solutions service

25 Bournemouth Road, Peckham Rye, London, SE15 4UJ

020 7525 4140

Out of hours phone:

020 7505 5000

housing.options@southwark.gov.uk

Call Southwark Advocacy and Support Services (SASS) for further information on 020 7593 1290 or for more information on the council's work in this area please access information on the Southwark Council web site at www.southwark.gov.uk