



LONDON BOROUGH OF  
**MERTON**



**HOUSING**



# STATISTICS

Merton is unusual among London boroughs in no longer owning or managing any social housing.

Merton's proportion of social rented stock is the fifth lowest in London at 14.1% compared to the regional average of 24.1%.

As of April 2024, there are currently 10,575 families on the Merton housing waiting list.

In 2022-2023, Merton housed or rehoused 237 households as a result of successful nomination:

133 one-bedroom properties

68 two-bedroom properties

35 three-bedroom properties

1 four-bedroom property



# HOUSING ISSUES

The acute shortage of housing, particularly social and genuinely affordable housing, has led to spiralling rents and house prices across the country.

Many young people and families on low to middle incomes struggle to afford to rent or buy a decent home. Also, overcrowding, evictions, rent arrears and homelessness are all on the rise.

Merton Council's vision is to support sustainable growth in Merton and deliver high-quality, accessible new homes of different types, sizes and tenures that match identified local needs, particularly for affordable homes.



# SOCIAL HOUSING

In the UK, social housing is a property development programme where housing associations, local councils and their partner developers rent out homes on a not-for-profit basis, providing affordable, decent homes to those who need it.

Social housing in Merton is provided by housing associations, and Merton Council does not own any council housing.

In order to be considered for a social housing property in Merton people need to join the housing register.

However, there is a shortage of housing in Merton and the demand far exceeds the supply. Unfortunately, it is not possible for the local authority to house everyone who applies.



# SOCIAL HOUSING

To apply for Merton's housing register, people need to complete a **Choice Based Lettings Application Form** and return it to the Civic Centre either via post or in person.

Most people, 18 years and older, can apply. Expectations include:

- people who do not currently live in Merton
- people from abroad who are subject to immigration control
- people who have been found guilty of unacceptable behaviour which is serious enough to make them unsuitable for a social housing tenancy.

If any person included in the application has a medical condition or disability which is made worse by their current living conditions, a **Medical assessment form** also needs to be completed and attached to the application form.

Merton Council will assess the application and make a decision within 20 days. If the application is accepted, the person will be added to the housing register, be allocated a Band and provided with a U PIN number.

Merton's Community and Housing Department

Name \_\_\_\_\_ User PIN \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ User ID \_\_\_\_\_  
Postcode \_\_\_\_\_  
Registration No: \_\_\_\_\_

Choice Based Lettings  
Application Form

(for new customers and existing council and  
housing association tenants)

November 2008

Crystal Mark  
Charity approved by  
Plain English Campaign

Merton  
family  
hub

# BANDS EXPLAINED

Once in a Band applicants depending on their priority group, will be rehoused either on points and/or in date order.

Priority within Bands A and D will be on a date order basis, according to the date the applicant was placed into that Band.

Applicants in Bands B, C, E, F, G and H will have their priority assessed using a points scheme which gives applicants a number of points for certain types of housing needs. The more points an applicant has, generally, the more priority for housing they have.

A full explanation of the Banding point system can be located in the [Housing Register and Nominations Policy](#)

<b>Band A</b> Overriding Medical Priority Statutory Overcrowding Reciprocal Exceptional Circumstances Physical Disabilities Housing Health and Safety Standards
<b>Band B</b> Priority Groups
<b>Band C</b> Housing Association Transfers
<b>Band D</b> Special Quotas
<b>Band E</b> Accepted Homeless Households in Temporary Accommodation
<b>Band F</b> Older Persons Accommodation
<b>Band G</b> General Housing Register
<b>Band H</b> Low Priority Applications



# BIDDING PROCESS

Available homes are advertised on Merton's Choice Based Lettings Service website where people can bid or express an interest in a home. All social housing homes are let through this service.

Applicants will be issued with a confidential PIN (Personal Identification Number) and User ID (Identification Number) when added to the housing register. These will be needed to bid/express an interest in a property.

Applicants will usually only be able to bid for properties of the correct size for their household, although in some instances the housing association may agree that households can bid for properties of one bedroom smaller than they require. This will be specified in the advertisement.

The Council will normally shortlist the highest priority applicants as determined by the **Housing Register and Nominations Policy**. The bidder with the highest points/longest registration date will be invited to sign the tenancy agreement. If they have not signed by the end of the following working day the property will normally be offered to the next highest applicant.

Registration and Nomination Team based at the Civic Centre is available Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm to support the social housing application/bidding process

020 8545 3305 / 020 8770 5000 (out of hours) / [registration@merton.gov.uk](mailto:registration@merton.gov.uk)





# HOMELESSNESS

Anybody facing homelessness must present at Merton Council Civic Centre as soon as possible.

A 1:1 interview and assessment will be undertaken and if eligible a personal housing plan (PHP) will be created listing the next steps to solve the identified needs. If eligible, and in a priority group, temporary accommodation will also be provided.

Further information - [Homeless in Merton](#)

020 8545 3636 / [housingadvice@merton.gov.uk](mailto:housingadvice@merton.gov.uk)

Council's decision	Our duty to you
You are not eligible for assistance	To offer you advice and information
You are eligible, but not homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days	To offer you advice and information
You are eligible and threatened with homelessness within 56 days	To create a Personal Housing Plan (PHP) to prevent homelessness for up to 56 days
You are eligible, have become homeless, but have no local connection to Merton.	Referral to another authority (and to provide temporary accommodation if you are in priority need, until the referral is accepted).
You are eligible, have become homeless, but are not in priority need	To create a Personal Housing Plan (PHP) to relieve homelessness for up to 56 days. However no interim accommodation would be provided
You are eligible, have become homeless, are in priority need and have a local connection	To provide you with temporary accommodation and a PHP to relieve your homelessness for 56 days.
You are eligible, still homeless after 56 days of relief work, are in priority need and are not homeless intentionally	To secure that accommodation is available for your occupation (either private or social housing)



# NO RECOURSE TO PUBLIC FUNDS (NRPF)

No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) applies to a person who is 'subject to immigration control' in the UK and has no entitlement to welfare benefits or public housing.

A child in need assessment is likely to be required for any family presenting on the basis that they do not have adequate accommodation and/ or sufficient income to meet their living needs because of their inability to access benefits or employment, or where the child's circumstances suggest this may be the case. The threshold will be in accordance with the [Merton's Effective Support Model](#)

Under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, a local authority has the power to provide emergency housing and/or financial support to a family when a child's welfare is at risk whilst assessments or enquiries are being carried out. However, a decision to refuse or withdraw support under section 17 may be made following a child in need and/or human rights assessment.



# DAMP AND MOULD RESOURCES


People who have difficulty heating their homes and/or who experience fuel poverty are more likely to live in homes with damp and mould.

London's Public Health system partners have designed a [Damp and Mould Checklist](#) for use by frontline health and social care professionals when they visit residential properties in London.

## The checklist includes:

- ❖ Support with identifying damp and mould concerns
- ❖ Support with identifying households most at risk
- ❖ Support with taking action on concerns

If you are concerned that a family is experiencing fuel poverty, we recommend that they seek welfare advice. They may be able to access welfare benefits or charitable grants which can assist them.

Section 1: IDENTIFICATION 

**SECTION ONE: IDENTIFYING HOUSING CONCERNS**  
Complete Q1-8 below to identify possible concerns related to mould, damp, and fuel poverty (see Appendix 1 for a factsheet and Appendix 3 for visual examples of concerns)

		YES	NO
Q1	Is there visible condensation on windows or surfaces in the house?		
Q2	Are there visible patches of damp or water damage on walls or ceilings?		
Q3	Is there any visible mould growth on windows or surfaces or a smell of damp?		
Q4	Has the householder reported known leaks inside the property, faulty pipes or guttering outside the property, bridged damp-proof course or visible structural/ facade defects?		
Q5	Do any of the bathrooms or kitchen lack a working extractor fan?		
Q6	Are there concerns about adequate ventilation in the property? For example: windows cannot be opened; windows do not have (operational) trickle vents; concerns about opening windows owing to high levels of outdoor air pollution, noise or for safety reasons.		
Q7	Have the residents raised issues about damp and mould with their landlord? (e.g., concerns have been ignored or the response to concerns is slow)		
Q8	Are there concerns about the adequacy and effectiveness of the heating system for the property? Are the occupants struggling to heat their home?		

Comments:

# HOUSING SUPPORT



[Housing  
Options](#)

The Housing Options Team based at the Civic Centre offers housing advice including on landlord / tenant problems, illegal eviction, harassment, mortgage arrears and securing accommodation for people not covered by homelessness legislation. 020 8545 3636 / 020 8770 5000 (out of hours) / [housingadvice@merton.gov.uk](mailto:housingadvice@merton.gov.uk)



[Housing Advice  
Line](#)

The South West London Law Centre has a new FREE Housing Advice Line for Merton and Wandsworth residents, designed to help navigate housing-related issues and concerns. The advice lines offer assistance on a wide range of housing matters, including rent arrears, unlawful eviction, anti-social behaviour and homelessness. 0800 640 4254 (Thursday 10am -12:30pm)



[South West  
London Law  
Centres](#)

The South West London Law Centre provide advice on housing and money along with providing independent legal advice about social welfare issues including housing, debt, immigration and employment. 020 8667 9252 / email [enquiries@swllc.org](mailto:enquiries@swllc.org)



# HOUSING SUPPORT



[Citizen's Advice](#)

Citizen's Advice provides information and advice on housing, welfare benefits, debt and budgeting, the cost of living and more. The Cost of Living team is available at Colliers Wood Library on Mondays, Wide Way Medical Centre on Tuesdays, Wimbledon Library on Thursdays and Pollards Hill Library on Fridays. 0808 278 7831



[Shelter England](#)

Shelter provides lots of useful information on housing rights and also offers advice, support and guidance with housing, benefits and debt problems via telephone advice lines. 0330 053 6091 (under 25yrs) / 0344 515 1540 (25yrs and over) Monday to Friday 9:30am to 5pm.



[Migrant Help](#)

Migrant Help provides advice and guidance to assist asylum seekers in the UK move through and understand the asylum process. Migrant Help runs a free asylum helpline available 24/7/365 and accessible to all asylum seekers in the UK. 0808 8010 503



# HOUSING SUPPORT



[Project 17](#)

Project 17 works to end destitution among migrant families with no recourse to public funds. They work with families experiencing exceptional poverty to improve their access to local authority support. Project 17 provides advice on housing and financial options for families with no recourse to public funds. 07963 509044 / 07701 330 016 (Professionals) / [info@project17.org.uk](mailto:info@project17.org.uk)



[StreetLink](#)

StreetLink helps connect people sleeping rough to local services. StreetLink can be used by anyone in England and Wales to send an alert about someone who is sleeping or preparing to sleep rough. Alerts are sent to outreach teams, who go out mostly at night to connect people sleeping rough to local support services. Alerts can be submitted online. [enquiries@thestreetlink.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@thestreetlink.org.uk)



[Age UK  
Merton](#)

Age UK Merton is an independent charity that provides older residents with advice and information about housing, benefits, transport, redundancy, pensions and retirement as well as concerns about health, relationships or isolation. 020 8648 5792 / [advice@ageukmerton.org.uk](mailto:advice@ageukmerton.org.uk)



[DeafPlus  
advice](#)

DeafPlus provides information and advice on housing, benefits, debt and employment including in British Sign Language (BSL). 07861 499 235 / [maryhicks@deafplus.org](mailto:maryhicks@deafplus.org)



# HOUSING SUPPORT



## Council Tax Support

Residents who are on a low income or receiving certain benefits, you may be able to claim Council Tax Support. 020 8274 4903 between 9.00am and 1.00pm. [housing.benefits@merton.gov.uk](mailto:housing.benefits@merton.gov.uk)



## Discretionary Housing Payments

Residents may be eligible for discretionary housing payments if they are already receiving housing benefit or the housing element of universal credit, but still have to pay rent themselves. 020 8274 4903 between 9am and 1pm. [housing.benefits@merton.gov.uk](mailto:housing.benefits@merton.gov.uk)



## Household Support Fund

Families may be eligible for a grant if they receive Council Tax Support or free school meals or are struggling with the cost of living.



# HOUSING SUPPORT



[Christians  
Against  
Poverty](#)

Christians Against Poverty offers financial help and access to support with debts. The local Christian Against Poverty Debt Centre is based in Sutton. Appointments can be booked by calling the enquiries team on 0800 328 0006



[Wimbledon  
Guild](#)

Residents in Merton who need financial help can apply for a one-off grant from Wimbledon Guild to pay for things like food, gas and electricity, replacing essential household appliances or buying school uniforms. [welfare@wimbledonguild.co.uk](mailto:welfare@wimbledonguild.co.uk)



[Christian Care  
Merton](#)

Christian Care is a charity in Merton that provides support for debt, homelessness, eviction, abuse, immigration, mental and physical illness and disability. 020 3302 0181- 9.30am to 2.00pm Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday [christiancaremerton@gmail.com](mailto:christiancaremerton@gmail.com)





# MERTON LOCAL DIRECTORIES

Merton Local Directories are great resources to keep up to date with activities and services available for children, young people and adults in Merton.

[Merton Local Directories](#)

## Welcome to Merton Local Directories

Support, services, advice and things to do




### Family Services Directory

Support and information for expectant parents and families with children and young people aged 0-19.

- [Activities and leisure](#)
- [Childcare and education](#)
- [Community groups and places](#)
- [Family support and parenting](#)
- [Health and wellbeing](#)
- [Information, advice and support](#)

[See more](#)



### SEND Local Offer

Support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities aged 0-25.

- [Activities and leisure](#)
- [Education and childcare](#)
- [Employment and training](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Preparing for adulthood](#)
- [Social care](#)

[See more](#)



### Young Merton

Support for care leavers moving into adulthood and independent living aged 16-25.

- [Education and learning](#)
- [Have a say. Get involved](#)
- [Keeping safe and healthy](#)
- [Local offer for care leavers](#)
- [Things to do](#)
- [Work, money and living](#)

[See more](#)



### Adult Support Services Directory

Support for adults on employment, education, health, housing, financial advice and things to do in the community.

- [Activities and leisure](#)
- [Health and wellbeing](#)
- [Housing matters](#)
- [How to access help](#)
- [Keeping safe](#)
- [Money matters](#)

[See more](#)



### Family Hubs Directory

Connecting families and young people with access to help, when and where they need it.

- [Family Voice](#)
- [Home life, finances and staying safe](#)
- [Keeping your family healthy](#)
- [Play, youth and family learning](#)
- [SEND support \(Special educational needs and disabilities\)](#)
- [Start for Life](#)

[See more](#)

