

Shared Accommodation

Housing Solutions Team



Information on shared accommodation options for single people and couples seeking help with housing

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Shared Accommodation

Due to pressures of demand not everyone seeking accommodation will be able to secure this through our housing register. Accommodation for couples and single person households is in particularly high demand.

For this reason, your housing officer will discuss shared accommodation as an option for you. Shared accommodation can be quick to access, is generally quite affordable and is a good option for single people and couples seeking accommodation.

Solo Housing

Solo Housing help single people who are homeless or in housing need to find suitable accommodation. Solo Housing work with several Councils and have a range of accommodation available. This includes their successful lodgings scheme.

Solo's lodgings scheme provides affordable accommodation for people who do not need support and enables people with a spare room to meet someone wishing to rent it. This gives the householder useful extra income and provides people who do not have a home with a quick solution to their problem at an affordable rent. Solo work hard to match the needs of both lodger and landlord and can provide ongoing advice and support for the lodgings placement.

Referrals to the lodgings scheme can be made through the Council or directly to Solo Housing.

Solo can be contacted on:

Phone: 0800 652 0155 or email: info@solohousing.org

or, for more information about the lodgings scheme please see the Solo Housing website: www.solohousing.org/lodgings.html

Affordability

For most people who are entitled to assistance with their rent (through benefits such as Local Housing Allowance or the Housing Element of Universal Credit), single claimants under 35 will only be entitled to the Shared Room rate (there are exceptions for some people with disabilities and some care

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leavers). This is currently between £81.50 per week (£353.16 per month) and £82.85 per week (£359 per month). This means that it is likely that independent accommodation in the private sector will be difficult to afford and that shared accommodation is therefore a more sustainable option.

An added benefit of lodgings and other shared accommodation is that often bills and utilities are included in the cost of the room.

Even for those who are working, housing options can be limited. It is often difficult to find the deposits needed to take on a private rented tenancy and the demand on social housing in Broadland and South Norfolk is extremely high. Again, for these reasons, it is advised that customers consider seeking shared accommodation.

Seeking Private Shared Accommodation

There are a range of options for people seeking shared accommodation. This can range from private lodgings arrangements with a resident landlord to small groups of people living in shared houses to larger, managed Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO's).

There are various places you can look to seek shared accommodation:

- **Local Letting Agents** – local letting agents, even if they mainly advertise independent houses and flats, may also have bedsits, studio apartments and shared accommodation to let. Most will have their own websites and they may also advertise on property websites like Rightmove or Zoopla. You can also call the letting agencies and register yourself with them for certain property types. Some letting agents specialise in offering property management services for Houses of Multiple Occupation and other forms of shared accommodation.
- **Rightmove, Zoopla and other property letting websites** - Many of the letting agents with properties locally will use these sites and it can save having to check lots of different letting agents' websites. Some of these sites will allow you to look specifically for shared accommodation, for others they may list shared housed as a larger property (a 3, 4 or 5 bed) but at a rent that shows it is a shared house so it can be best to search by lowest price first to find the shared accommodation.
- **Facebook/gumtree and other social media or local selling sites** – These can be good ways to find available shared accommodation, you could also post 'wanted' ads for accommodation of a particular type or in a particular area

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- **Local press and adverts in shops etc** – Are still a good place to look for shared accommodation being offered

Shared accommodation websites

There are also various useful websites for people seeking shared accommodation, below are just a few that can be found easily by searching Google. These are not websites or services specifically supported by South Norfolk or Broadland Councils, so please exercise all normal cautions when using them.

- <https://www.roomgo.co.uk/> (formerly easyroommate.com)
- <http://property.vivastreet.co.uk/flatshare+norfolk>
- www.spareroom.co.uk
- www.housepals.co.uk
- <https://www.homesforstudents.co.uk/>
- www.gumtree.com/flatshare-offered/norfolk

Other Useful Information

For further information regarding shared accommodation or any other housing options please call the Housing Solutions Team on **01508 533751** (South Norfolk) or **01603 430641** (Broadland).

The Eastern Savings and Loans Credit Union can sometimes help people needing to borrow money to help access accommodation and can offer good support to help their members save to meet various costs. They can be contacted on **0333 600 0690**.

Citizens Advice and Shelter both have information about the rights you have if you are living in shared accommodation as well as the responsibilities of landlords. Citizen's Advice can also help with advice on a range of issues including housing, debt and employment issues.