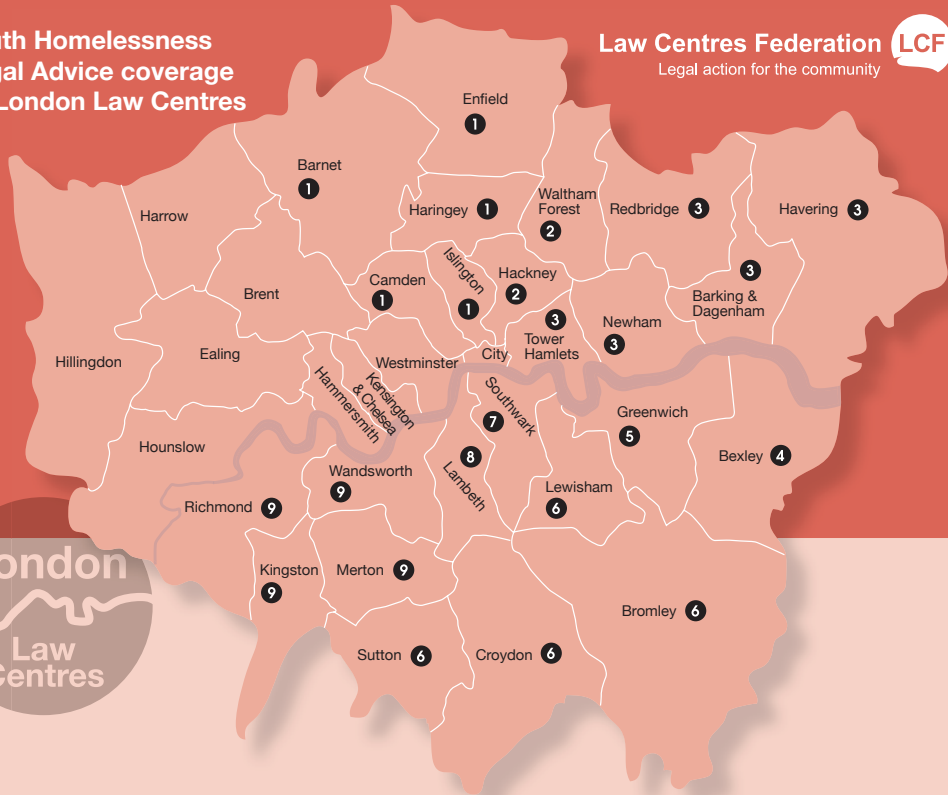


Youth Homelessness
Legal Advice coverage
by London Law Centres

Law Centres Federation **LCF**
Legal action for the community

Youth Homelessness Legal Advice Project London



1 (Streetlegal at) Islington Law Centre

161 Hornsey Road, London N7 6DU
020 7607 2461
info@islingtonlaw.org.uk
www.islingtonlaw.org.uk

2 Hackney Community Law Centre

8 Lower Clapton Road, London E5 0PD
020 8985 8364
info@hclc.org.uk

3 Tower Hamlets Law Centre

214 Whitechapel Road, London E1 1BJ
020 7247 8998
info@thlc.co.uk

4 Cross Street Law Centre

4 Cross Street, Erith, Kent DA8 1AB
020 8311 0555
www.tmlc.org.uk

5 Plumstead Law Centre

Plumstead Community Law Centre
105 Plumstead High Street, London SE18 1SB
020 8855 9817

6 Streetwise Community Law Centre

1-3 Anerley Station Road, Penge, London SE20 8PY
020 8778 5854

7 Southwark Law Centre

Hanover Park House
14-16 Hanover Park, Peckham, London SE15 5HG
020 7732 2008

8 Lambeth Law Centre

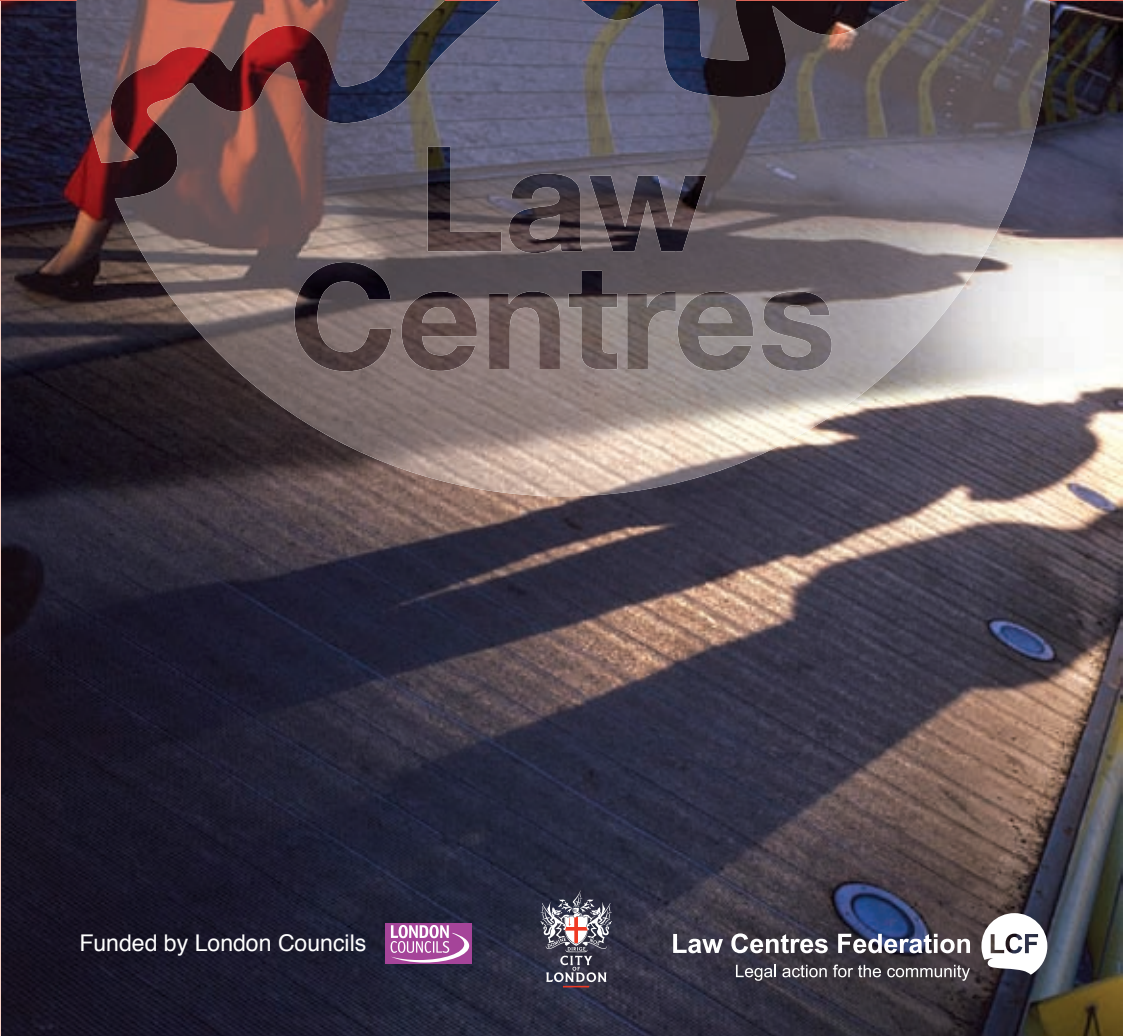
Unit 4, The Co-Op Centre
11 Mowll Street, London SW9 6BG
020 7840 2000
admin@lambethlawcentre.org

9 South West London Law Centres

101a Tooting High Street, London SW17 0SU
020 8772 7052 (Advice Services Manager)

www.lawcentres.org.uk

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Law Centres Federation **LCF**
Legal action for the community

Supported by London Councils, London Law Centres® are working in partnership to provide young homeless people with legal advice. Law Centres provide legal advice to young homeless people in crisis to access suitable accommodation and support, enabling them to get on with the rest of their lives.

Research has shown that almost 60% of homeless people seeking advice in London are aged under 25 and that 58% of young people face legal problems *without* obtaining advice.¹ Young people will only access advice in places where they feel comfortable. Law Centres have teamed up with Connexions services, youth information advice and counselling agencies and colleges to offer legal advice outreach sessions.

The project provides legal advice for young people aged 16-25 in 24 North, East and South London boroughs. Many have been forced to leave home because of relationship breakdown, abuse or neglect. Many 'sofa-surf' at friends' houses and some sleep on the streets. Some young people do obtain housing, but often in temporary, insecure and inappropriate accommodation, with no support. Many young people do not access financial support and many have debts.

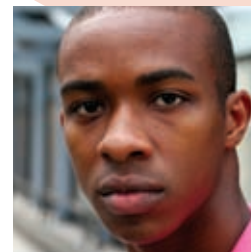
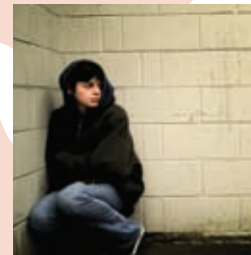
Law Centre caseworkers provide legal advice to young people including:

- Homeless applications
- Providing advice and guidance about renting in the private sector (when there are legal issues or as part of a homelessness application)
- Claiming benefits for young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
- Accessing support for their other legal problems through linking up with immigration solicitors, family solicitors etc
- Rent arrears which threaten their homes
- Possession actions
- Accessing support from Social Services for example where there are child protection issues, young people leaving care, young disabled people and those who are too vulnerable to manage on their own, and young people with immigration issues.

Safe and suitable housing is vital to allowing young people to get on with the rest of their lives and to reach their full potential. Based on an independent evaluation of this work, we know that young people: ²

- Re-engage with education, training and employment
- Feel safer, healthier and less stressed
- Have better understanding of rights and more able to deal with problems
- Manage their money better
- Are more confident
- Get more involved in their communities
- Have better and safer relationships

If you or young people you support need legal advice around homelessness, please get in touch with your nearest Law Centre service.



I was homeless for years and only got housed when I went to the Law Centre and I know many young people who have needed advice but haven't gotten it.

Streetlegal, Islington Law Centre Client

No one at the homeless persons unit listened to me – I tried loads of times. But when my solicitor wrote a letter, suddenly the problem was solved.

Streetwise Law Centre Client

¹ Shelter Research and Legal Services Research Centre / Youth Access 07, *Young People and Civil Justice*

² Michael Bell Associates / Youth Access 07, *Transforming Lives - Evaluation of the Rights to Access Project*