FIRST-TIER TRIBUNAL
PROPERTY CHAMBER
(RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY)

DO YOU NEED LEGAL ADVICE?

The staff and members of the Tribunal cannot provide you with legal advice. The following organisations can provide advice or direct you to where you can get it. Some of these sources of advice are free.

LEGAL ADVICE:

BPP Legal Advice Clinic

1. If you want to speak to someone, please text your name and number to 07785 620491.

2. You will be told that you will receive a call between 10am and 1pm on the Tuesday via an online system.

3. You will receive a text informing you of the time of the call.

4. You will connect to a student volunteer and supervisor via Teams and instructions will be taken.

5. You will be sent by email a consent form. This must be returned before any advice is given. Although a physical signature is referable, we will accept an email reply confirming consent. The email must be added to Intralinks.

6. If you need to provide documents, you will be given details of how to do so during the call.

7. At present you will receive a letter of advice within two weeks.

8. As we do not provide ongoing advice, any phone calls made to the mobile number are likely to be rejected.

University of Law – Legal Advice Centre

The University of Law Legal Advice Centre has two centres that are able to offer assistance to those who are not eligible for legal aid and are unable to pay for legal services.

At the Moorgate Campus, students can offer advice and representation under the supervision of qualified solicitors, in particular in respect of service charge disputes. You can obtain an appointment by email to LAC.traineelitigation@law.ac.uk, or by phoning 01483 216943 between 9.30 am – 5.30pm weekdays.

The Leeds Campus provides remote advice nationwide for non-urgent legal problems concerning Housing Law. Clients can book a remote appointment for 30 minutes of advice from a qualified solicitor and are also provided with a written letter of advice which is drafted by students and supervised by qualified solicitors. You can obtain an appointment by email to lac-leeds@law.ac.uk, or by phoning 01483 216943 between 9.30 am – 5.30pm weekdays.

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LEASE

LEASE provides free initial advice to members of the public on residential long leasehold matters, including service charges and building safety, by email, telephone or letter. Telephone: 020 7832 2500 Monday to Friday from 9:30-16:30 or visit http://www.lease-advice.org/

Advocate

Advocate (formerly known as the Bar Pro Bono Unit) provides access to justice across England and Wales for people who are not eligible for legal aid and who cannot afford to pay. They match deserving cases with one of their panel of fully qualified barristers.

They can offer specialist legal advice, drafting and/or representation in all areas of law, where:

- An individual cannot get legal aid or afford to pay privately
- The matter involves the law of England and Wales
- The help needed will take 3 days or less
- Cases in all areas of law

Applications must be received **at least 3 weeks before help is needed**.

In order to qualify for assistance, you need to be **both** ineligible for legal aid, **and** unable to afford to pay privately for representation. Whether you can afford to pay privately includes whether you are able to pay with the assistance of legal expenses insurance often available with a home or motor policy or from membership of a Trade Union, employment benefit or similar.

The first step is to use the online legal aid checker to demonstrate that you do not qualify for legal aid, here: www.gov.uk/check-legal-aid

The second step is to complete Advocate's form, including the information about your means, available here: www.weareadvocate.org.uk

Other Pro Bono Advice and/or Representation Organisations

LawWorks maintains a list of services including Law Centres and other free Legal Advice Clinics that may be able to provide you with support.
Please visit www.LawWorks.org.uk

Shelter have a telephone advice line on 0808 800 4444 which is open 365 days of the year. You can also find advice on their website: http://england.shelter.org.uk/

Law Centres Network: You can find your local Law Centre through the Law Centres Network website. http://www.lawcentres.org.uk/

Citizens Advice have centres available throughout the country and may be able to provide advice on your housing issue. Visit their website to find your local centre and their contact details: https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk

You can find a Solicitor through the Law Society directory: http://solicitors.lawsociety.org.uk/

You can contact a Barrister directly through the direct access portal: https://www.directaccessportal.co.uk/search-barristers.html

A Housing Law Advice Service is run by Westminster Law School. They provide advice to tenants on the following: rent increases for 'fair' or 'market' rates, rent repayment orders, licencing of houses in multiple occupation. Please note that they do not provide representation or advice on leasehold matters. If you wish to make appointment please email lawclinic@westminster.ac.uk or call 0203 506 9626 and leave a voicemail advising them of your name, contact number and a brief description of the legal matter you need help with.

PREPARATION OF BUNDLES

If you need help preparing a paper or digital bundle then these organisations may be able to assist:

BPP Legal Advice Clinic - As mentioned above, please call on 07785 620491

Support Through Court – As mentioned below please call on 03000 810 006

There are many useful resources to help prepare a PDF hearing bundle that can be found on the internet and YouTube including:

- a video prepared by St Philips Chambers on creating a bundle using Adobe Acrobat Pro: https://st-philips.com/creating-and-using-electronic-hearing-bundles/;
- Adobe.com provides step-by-step instructions on creating and converting documents to PDF, compressing files, bookmarking and hyperlinking documents, combining and merging PDF files, adjusting page numbering, etc. A free merging tool is found here: https://www.adobe.com/uk/acrobat/online/merge-pdf.html;
- Alternatively, free PDF editor programs and other guides can be found by searching on Google.

SELF-HELP AND OTHER RESOURCES

If you will be attending a hearing without representation, then there are useful guides available online to help you prepare.

LEASE-Advice is run by the Leasehold Advisory Service. In addition to a telephone advice line (above), they publish guides about residential leasehold problems, guides about how to

make an application to the First-tier Tribunal and past tribunal decisions: http://www.lease-advice.org/

Advicenow is a website offering accurate information on the law and contains several guides on the Tribunal process. You can read and download all of them from: http://www.advicenow.org.uk/

Support Through Court provides practical and emotional support for people with tribunal hearings. You can contact them by telephone on 03000 810 006 email them at London@supportthroughcourt.org or visit their website at http://www.supportthroughcourt.org/locations/london/royal-courts-of-justice/. If you would like practical help in advance of your hearing you should call 020 7947 7701 and ask for an appointment.

Shelter have a telephone advice line on 0808 800 4444 which is open 365 days of the year. You can also find advice on their website: http://england.shelter.org.uk/

Law Centres You can find your local Law Centre through the Law Centres Network website. http://www.lawcentres.org.uk/

Citizens Advice have centres available throughout the country and may be able to provide advice on your housing issue. Visit their website to find your local centre and their contact details: https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk

You can find a Solicitor through the Law Society directory: http://solicitors.lawsociety.org.uk/

You can contact a Barrister directly through the direct access portal: https://www.directaccessportal.co.uk/search-barristers.html