



Allocating Our Homes

A simple guide to how we allocate homes

This guide explains who can apply for one of our homes, how we look at applications, and what happens when a home becomes available.

We use a points system to help us offer homes fairly. People with the most urgent housing needs usually get higher priority. We also check that any home we offer is suitable, affordable and safe for you and your household.

What you need to know first

Before you apply, there are three key things to know:

You need to qualify for our housing waiting list.

- We'll check things like your right to rent, your local connection and whether our homes are the right option for you.

We look at your housing need.

- We use a points system to understand how urgent your situation is.

We only offer homes that are suitable.

- This means looking at the size, location, rent, accessibility and any support needs.

Who can apply?

You can apply to join our housing waiting list if you:

- have the legal right to rent social housing in England
- meet our application rules
- give us the information we need
- have a connection to an area where we have homes, unless an exception applies.

We look at every application individually. We will always aim to make a fair decision based on your circumstances.

How to apply

To apply, you'll need to fill in an online application form.

We may ask you about:

- who lives with you
- where you live now
- why you need to move
- your income, savings and assets
- any health, disability, welfare or support needs
- the areas you want to live in
- any safety concerns or urgent reasons for moving.

We may also ask for evidence, such as proof of identity, income details, benefit information, medical information or information from another landlord or support agency.

We aim to check applications within 33 working days, where we can.

How we decide who gets priority

We use points to help us understand who needs housing most urgently. When a home becomes available, we look at:

- your points
- how long you have been waiting
- whether the home is the right size
- whether the rent is affordable
- whether the home meets your needs
- whether any local letting rules apply.

The person with the most points will not always be offered every home. The home must also be right for them.

Our priority bands

900 points: urgent housing need

You may get this priority if you need to move urgently. This could be because:

- your home is unsafe or in very poor condition
- your health or safety is seriously affected by where you live
- you need to leave hospital but have nowhere suitable to go
- you have lost your home because of a fire, flood or another emergency.

800 points: you are not safe where you live

You may get this priority if you need to move because it is not safe to stay where you are. This could include domestic abuse, violence, serious threats, harassment, hate incidents or serious antisocial behaviour.

If you are living in a refuge or temporary accommodation because you had to leave an unsafe home, we will take this into account.

700 points: you are already one of our tenants and need to move

You may get this priority if you already rent from us and need to move because:

- your home is no longer affordable
- your home needs major work
- your current home cannot meet your support needs
- adaptations are needed but cannot be made
- your home is overcrowded
- you want to move to a smaller home.

600 points: you are homeless or at risk of homelessness

You may get this priority if you are homeless, at risk of homelessness, or owed a homelessness duty by a council in an area where we have homes.

This may include people who are rough sleeping, staying temporarily with friends or family, leaving prison with nowhere to go, or working with a council because they are homeless.

500 points: your current home does not meet your needs

You may get this priority if your home is not right for you. This could be because:

- it is overcrowded
- it is in poor condition
- you have to share facilities with another household
- it does not meet your health, disability or welfare needs
- you need to move to give or receive care
- you need to be closer to medical treatment or support
- you are ready to move on from supported housing.

400 points: Armed Forces community

You may get this priority if you, or someone in your household, is part of the Armed Forces community and needs housing support.

This can include serving personnel, veterans, reservists, bereaved partners, separated partners who need to leave Ministry of Defence accommodation, and some adult children of Armed Forces personnel.

300 points: other housing needs

You may get this priority if you have other housing needs. This could include:

- living somewhere temporary
- staying with friends or family for a short time
- your tenancy is ending
- a relationship has broken down
- you have dependent children
- you are expecting a baby
- your income or work situation makes it hard to find settled housing.

200 points: care-related housing needs

You may get this priority if:

- you are a foster carer, adopter, special guardian or family/friend carer and need a larger home for a child;
- you are a young person leaving care.

100 points: general housing need

You may get this priority if you qualify for the waiting list but do not fall into one of the higher priority groups.

This may also apply if you are already one of our tenants and want to move, but do not have a higher housing need.

Local connection

In most cases, you need a connection to an area where we have homes.

This could mean you:

- have lived there for at least two years
- have close family there who have lived there for at least two years
- have worked there for at least two years.

There are exceptions. For example, you may not need to meet the usual local connection rules if you are fleeing domestic abuse, homeless, leaving care, part of the Armed Forces community, moving for work, or need to move near specialist support.

When we may not be able to accept an application

Sometimes we may not be able to add someone to the waiting list.

This could be because:

- they do not have the legal right to rent
- they cannot legally hold a tenancy and there is no suitable person or organisation to hold it for them
- they or someone in their household has a history of serious behaviour that makes a tenancy unsuitable
- they do not meet the local connection rules
- their income or savings mean they may be able to find another housing option.
 - The income and savings limits are:
 - £60,000 or more in annual gross taxable income; or
 - £16,000 or more in capital assets.

If we decide you do not qualify, we will explain why and tell you how to ask us to look at the decision again.

If you have rent arrears or previous tenancy issues

Rent arrears or previous tenancy issues may affect your application, but we will not make assumptions. We will look at each case individually.

We will look at your circumstances and consider things like:

- whether the debt was yours
- whether it has been repaid
- whether you have set up and kept to a repayment plan
- whether the arrears were linked to domestic abuse or financial abuse
- whether you are moving to a smaller social rented home.

Keep your application up to date

Please tell us if anything changes after you apply. This includes changes to:

- your address
- who lives with you
- your income
- your health, disability or support needs
- your housing situation
- whether you still want to stay on the waiting list.

We may contact you each year to check your details. If we do not hear back from you, we may remove your application from the waiting list.

When a home becomes available

When a home becomes available, we look at who is waiting and whether the home is suitable. We check things like:

- the size of the home
- the rent and service charges
- the location
- accessibility
- whether the home meets your needs
- whether the area is safe and suitable for you.

We may offer homes directly rather than asking people to bid.

If we offer you a home

If we offer you a home, we'll give you information to help you decide whether it is right for you. This may include:

- the type of home
- number of bedrooms
- rent and service charges
- tenancy type
- location
- condition of the home
- accessibility features
- heating and energy information
- local services
- typical running costs.

If you need more help to understand the offer, please ask us.

If you refuse an offer

You can usually view a home before deciding whether to accept it. If you need someone to come with you, or you need more support before making a decision, please tell us.

You can refuse up to three suitable offers. If you refuse three suitable offers, your priority may be reduced for 12 months.

Before this happens, we will encourage you to talk to us about the areas and types of homes you want to be considered for.

If we withdraw an offer

Sometimes we may need to withdraw an offer. This could happen if:

- you no longer qualify
- the home is too small or too large
- the home has adaptations needed by someone else
- the home cannot be adapted for your needs
- the home is supported housing and you do not need that type of home
- the location would put you or someone in your household at risk.

If we withdraw an offer, we will explain why.

Asking us to look at a decision again

You can ask us to review some decisions. This includes decisions about:

- not adding you to the waiting list
- removing you from the waiting list
- the priority you have been given
- suspending or cancelling your application
- how we assessed your circumstances.

You usually need to ask for a review within 21 days of our decision.

Someone who was not involved in the original decision will look at it again. We aim to give you a decision within 56 days, unless we agree a different timescale with you.

Need help?

If you need help to apply, understand a decision, provide evidence or talk through your housing options, please get in touch with us.



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