

Gateway to Homechoice FAQs

<p>What happens if I don't provide the required documents?</p>	<p>If you do not provide the required documents within 28 days of the local authority requesting them then your application will be cancelled. If you have a problem getting the requested information within 28 days because you are waiting for a new birth certificate or passport to be sent to you please discuss this with the relevant local authority</p>
<p>How long will it take for me to get housed?</p>	<p>This depends on where you want to live and what type of property you need. In some areas, there is very high demand for certain types of properties so in these circumstances, you are likely to wait for a property for a long time. In other areas, there may be more properties available. For more information on the length of waiting times, please see our annual report.</p>
<p>I am already a social housing tenant – How can I move faster?</p>	<p>Mutual Exchange is by far a faster option for moving house than bidding on Gateway. Once you have found someone to swap with, and all checks are satisfactory between the tenants and Landlords, a move can be facilitated within a matter of weeks. (Bidding on Gateway can take months/years) There are often people who wish to move to a smaller property or to a particular area if its nearer to their support network, but do not know about your property, or your desire to move.</p> <p>Placing adverts in the local shops in the area you would like to move to and social media or exchange websites, would enable those people who want to move to your area, but don't know how to go about it, to contact you to discuss swapping. There are lots of people who don't advertise their need to move and who would not have a priority on Gateway so this would help them to find you.</p> <p>Always keep your contact details and address anonymous until you feel safe enough to exchange the information and only put a contact number or email address on any adverts you place.</p> <p>People respond well to pictures and a list of facilities/features/bills/room sizes that a prospective home has to offer. e.g do you have good transport options nearby, GP surgery/school/shops in walking distance? Spacious rooms, modern kitchen/bathroom? These are worth including in any advertisements you place in your target area. Please also bear in mind though, that in order to move either via Gateway to Homechoice or Mutual Exchange, you must have an up to date rent account which is clear of arrears.</p>
<p>Who can be included on an application?</p>	<p>An applicant may include anyone on their application if they usually reside with the main applicant as a member of the family/household. This includes any close blood relative, marital or co-habiting</p>

	<p>partners or someone who might reasonably be expected to reside with the main applicant. Any adult who is asking to be accepted or who has been accepted as being part of a household but who is not the lead or joint applicant will be required to sign a declaration acknowledging that the relevant local authority may undertake enquiries into their circumstances.</p> <p>Lodgers or live-in carers are not usually included as part of the main applicant's household and so would not be included in a housing application. If an applicant requires an extra bedroom for their carer, they should apply for this under the <u>Welfare criteria</u>.</p>
<p>What if I have applied before?</p>	<p>An applicant or household member can only be part of one active housing register application at a time.</p> <p>If you have been housed or your application has been closed...</p> <p>Applicants who have previously been registered and their application has been closed can re-apply to join the register using their existing log in number. Previous joint applicants who wish to apply separately will need to have their application split and will be provided with another log in number.</p> <p>Applicants previously housed into social housing will be permitted to re-apply to join the housing register; however, if they apply during the first 12 months after moving, they will receive an effective date of 12 months after their tenancy began.</p>
<p>Why do I need to renew my application each year?</p>	<p>Once a year you will be asked to review your application to check that all of the information we hold about you is accurate. If you do not renew your application within 28 days, we will close your application.</p>
<p>Can I apply if I own a property?</p>	<p>Owner-occupiers or applicants who own other residential property are eligible to join the housing register but will be placed below other groups in our lowest priority band (Band E).</p> <p>Owner-occupiers in Band E will be able to express an interest for a property if they wish to do so, however, because a Council or RP tenancy can only be held as a main home, homes are not usually offered to applicants who still own their home or are paying a residential mortgage. An exception may be considered where an older owner-occupier wants to express an interest in low demand sheltered accommodation.</p>

Bedroom Guidance

Children of the same sex are expected to share a bedroom unless there is a medical or welfare reason why the children cannot share a bedroom. Medical and welfare needs will be assessed using the scheme's standard processes explained in Step 2 of your verification letter. Adult children will not be given additional bedroom entitlement but will be considered as children of the household and will be assessed in accordance with the table below.

Applicants who are given a medical award because they require an additional bedroom cannot be given both a medical award and an overcrowding award for the same, additional bedroom requirement.

The following table shows what size of property applicants will be eligible for within this scheme. Applicants are expected to make best use of bedroom sizes in their property. For example, the best use of bedrooms within a two-bedroom property might be for an adult to sleep in the smaller of the bedrooms and their children to share the larger bedroom:

Household Size	Bedroom entitlement
1 adult	Bedsit or 1 bedroom
2 adults living together as a couple	1 bedroom
2 adults living together, but not as a couple	2 bedrooms
1 adult (or 2 adults living together as a couple) expecting their first child	2 bedrooms
1 adult (or 2 adults living together as a couple) with 1 child	2 bedrooms
1 adult (or 2 adults living together as a couple) with 2 children of the same sex	2 bedrooms
1 adult (or 2 adults living together as a couple) with 2 children of the opposite sex, where both children are under 10 years old	2 bedrooms
1 adult (or 2 adults living together as a couple) with either: 2 children of the opposite sex where one child is aged 10 years or more 2 children and the applicant or their partner is pregnant 3 children 4 children (all of one sex or 2 boys and 2 girls)	3 bedrooms
1 adult (or 2 adults living together as a couple) with either: 4 children (3 children of the same sex and 1 child of the opposite sex who is over 10 years old) OR up to 6 children	4 bedrooms
1 adult (or 2 adults living together as a couple) with 6 or more children	5 or more bedrooms