



# Applying for a home with Longhurst & Havelok Homes

This leaflet explains what you need to do if you wish to apply for accommodation with Longhurst & Havelok Homes.

## Introducing Longhurst & Havelok Homes

We are a social landlord registered with the Housing Corporation, which is the Government body responsible for promoting and supervising housing associations.

We aim to provide good quality, affordable housing on the basis of need, and work towards maintaining and developing communities where people want to live.

## How do we let our homes?

There are a number of ways in which you can be offered housing with Longhurst & Havelok Homes. This could be through one of the following:

- Direct application - this is where we have our own housing register and a percentage of our homes are allocated to applicants on this list.
- Nomination from the local authority's housing register - a percentage of our homes are allocated to applicants who have applied directly to their local authority.
- Common housing registers - this is where we do not hold a separate waiting list and all lettings are made from a central register, usually maintained by the local authority.

## Office contact details

### Boston Office

Leverett House  
Gilbert Drive  
Endeavour Park  
Boston  
Lincolnshire  
PE21 7TQ

### Lincoln Office

14 Melville Street  
Lincoln  
LN5 7HW

### Grimsby Office

Hamshaw House  
Brighowgate  
Grimsby  
NE Lincolnshire  
DN32 0QE

### Nottingham Office

5 The Triangle  
Enterprise Way  
NG2 Business Park  
Nottingham  
NG2 1AE

- Through local choice-based lettings schemes - this is where vacant homes within the area are advertised and applicants are invited to place 'bids' for a home.

We are aiming to achieve a simple way of applying for a home, where one application is made to the local authority for both housing association and local authority rented homes. We are working closely with our local authority partners to achieve this.

Enclosed with this leaflet is information on how homes are let in your local authority area.

### **What type of properties do you have?**

We currently have over 5,000 properties which range from studio flats to 4-bedroom houses. These are spread throughout the East Midlands and North Norfolk.

We will send out information with our application form that will tell you about where we have properties and the type of properties you can apply for.

If you want more information or an application form, please telephone our Customer Service Centre on freephone **0800 111 4013**.

### **What type of property can I consider for housing?**

The type of property you can consider depends on your circumstances and listed is a general guide for some of our property types.

Property Type	Size of Household	Average Rent*
Studio Flat / Bedsit	Single Person	£69.85
One Bedroom Property	Single Person or Couple without children or with access to children overnight	£69.00
Two Bedroom Property	Applicant with one or two children of the same sex	£73.58
Three / Four Bedroom Property	Applicant with two or more children	£84.09
One / Two Bedroom Bungalows	Applicant over 60 years old	£71.63
Sheltered Housing	Applicant over 60 years old or disabled applicant	£85.50

\* Average rent and service charge as at 2nd December 2009

## Who can be re-housed?

We house applicants who are in housing need and who do not have a sufficient income to secure other reasonable housing. We also offer homes to older people and disabled people in housing need.

We do not discriminate on grounds of gender, race, nationality, ethnic origin, sexuality, disability, religion, marital status or age.

We cannot offer a home to applicants who by law are ineligible for re-housing. For example, those seeking asylum or people who do not have a legal right to remain in the United Kingdom.

## Will I know my position on the register?

Unfortunately, for applicants placed in bands High, Medium or Low band, we still cannot provide your exact position on the list as new applicants accepted into a higher band than yours will go above your overall position on the list.

This is because we need to take into account people's circumstances rather than decide priority purely on the basis of time spent waiting for accommodation.

If your circumstances change, please tell us straight away as this may affect your position on the register.

## Review

We will review your circumstances every year to check that you still wish to be rehomed and see if your circumstances have changed.

## Who do I contact for any further information?

Please telephone our Customer Service Centre on freephone **0800 111 4013** or write or email us.

Please let us know if you want a copy of the Housing Corporation leaflet 'Charter for Housing Association Applicants and Residents'.

This leaflet provides a summary of our Housing Register Policy. Please contact us if you require a full copy of the policy. Alternatively a copy can be viewed or downloaded from our website.

To avoid unnecessary delay please attach all information with your original application, check that the correct postage has been paid and reply to our requests for information as quickly as possible.

If you are offered one of our homes you will be expected to keep to our tenancy contract conditions. Please contact us if you would like a draft copy of our tenancy contract.

### **When will you let me know if I have been accepted?**

We will try and write to you within 10 days of receiving your application, to tell you if:

- your application has been accepted, including details of which band you are in, and the reasons behind this decision.

### **What if I am refused?**

We will write and tell you why we have refused your application. You can re-apply if your circumstances change. See section 'What to do if you disagree with any of our decisions'.

### **How long will I have to wait for housing?**

How long you will have to wait depends upon:

- how many suitable properties we have in your chosen areas
- how many of these properties become empty
- how many people are above you on the register.

We do not normally re-house applicants who are owner-occupiers unless:

- you need sheltered accommodation
- your mortgage lender is repossessing your home
- your relationship has broken down and as a result you need to leave your current home
- your current home is unsuitable due to ill health.

We do not normally re-house applicants who are under 18 except where:

- you have a dependent child or you are expecting a baby and/or
- your local authority has accepted you as homeless and
- your needs have been assessed and you can maintain a tenancy without support or an appropriate support package is in place.

Where you are considered 'vulnerable', such as you have drug or alcohol dependency or mental illness which may affect your ability to manage your tenancy. We may not be able to re-house you if appropriate support is not available.

### **Applicants who may be excluded from re-housing**

We will not normally consider applicants who come into the following groups:

- you have supplied significantly false or misleading information about your housing application

- if you, or any member of your household have been guilty of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make you unsuitable to be one of our tenants. For example, noise nuisance, domestic violence, racial harassment, intimidation and drug dealing or if legal action has been taken against you for breaking your tenancy conditions. This will not apply where this behaviour took place 2 or more years before the date of your application and you can show that you have managed a tenancy satisfactorily in the meantime
- if you have housing debt of more than £500 owed to us or other landlords
- if you owe less than £500 you may be placed in a low priority band of our housing register
- applicants coming via the local authority with housing debt of greater £250.

We do not operate blanket exclusions and each application will be reviewed before making a decision. In reviewing the case we will take account of the reason for the exclusion, efforts to resolve the problem, as well as the level of housing need and any vulnerability.

We will let you know in writing the reason for our decision and when your application can be reviewed.

### **Applicants for sheltered housing**

For sheltered housing we will normally accept applications from you if you meet the following criteria:

- you are over 60 years of age and retired from full-time employment

### **How do I apply to go onto the Longhurst & Havelok Homes' Housing Register?**

Please complete our application form and return to the address on the front of the form. If you need help filling in the form please let us know.

If you do not complete the application form in full you may not be accepted onto the register. The application form should be returned with photocopies of the following items:

- two proofs of address for each applicant
- proof of National Insurance Number for each applicant, where applicable
- applicants from abroad must provide documentation to confirm proof of identification, nationality and immigration status. Verification may be sought from the Immigration Services or relevant local authority
- any supporting evidence that we require. Refer to the guidance when you complete the application form.

### **What happens next?**

We will check to see if we can consider you for the type of housing that you are asking for. We will tell you if we are unable to do so and where possible give advice on any alternatives you may wish to consider.

We will complete checks on the information provided on the application form. We will ask for references from previous landlords and any other agencies as appropriate.

We have enclosed information about the categories in each band within this leaflet.

In each band the priority of applicants is decided by the date we received the application. However, applications can be re-dated in certain circumstances, such as a change in circumstances and where an offer of accommodation is refused.

## **Do I have to live in the area where I want to be housed?**

In order to qualify for Urgent or High bands you must have a local connection to the borough or the neighbouring borough in which you have applied for housing. This means:

- you should currently live in the local authority or neighbouring local authority area in which you wish to live, or
- you have previously lived in the local authority area or neighbouring local authority area at any time in your life for a continuous period of not less than 5 years
- you have close family living in the local authority area or neighbouring local authority area
- you have permanent employment in the local authority area or neighbouring local authority area
- or you are fleeing violence and are unable to move to an area where you have a local connection.

- or you are over 50 and have a physical or learning disability or other community care need and our Supporting People contract allows for this
- you are able to live safely and independently with the level of support that can be provided
- you are in need of support provided and willing to accept the support provided by the Scheme Manager and the community alarm system
- you would benefit from the environment provided by sheltered housing.

When you apply you will be asked to take part in a needs assessment interview either in your own home or at your chosen sheltered scheme, to see that we can meet any physical, social or tenancy support needs that you may have.

We aim to carry out this assessment within 28 days of receiving your application and we will advise you in writing if we are unable to accept your application.

## **Fast Track Lettings**

We operate a fast track letting policy for properties that are classed as harder to let. These properties are advertised in the local press and via our Customer Service Centre. Applicants who respond to the advert will be assessed in line with Longhurst & Havelok Homes' lettings policy.

## **How do I make an application?**

First of all you should use the information sheet provided to check the way we let homes in the area of your choice.

- **Direct applications**

Where we accept applications directly you should read the section later in this leaflet called 'Longhurst & Havelok Homes' Housing Register'. You will need to complete our housing application form.

- **Nominations**

Only a small percentage of homes are let to direct applicants. You should also register for housing with the local authority and let them know that you are interested in a housing association property. Your details will be passed to us if you are selected for re-housing.

- **Common Housing Registers**

Where these are in place, you should apply directly to the organisation who manages the list.

- **Choice-based lettings**

Where these are in place, you should apply directly to the organisation managing the housing register. Once your application has been accepted, you will receive information on how you can bid for one of our empty homes. Details of properties are advertised in a number of ways, such as the local housing press and internet sites.

If you are unsure about the arrangements that are operating in your area or require help in making an application, please contact our Customer Service Centre on freephone 0800 111 4013.

## **What to do if you disagree with any of our decisions**

If you have a query about how we have processed your application, please contact us to discuss your concerns.

If you are unhappy about a decision made to either refuse or exclude you from re-housing, please contact us within 28 days of the date of our decision letter, explaining why you disagree with our decision. Your case will then be reviewed by the Head of Tenancy Services.

If you are still unhappy with our decision, you should contact us again using our complaints process.

## **Longhurst & Havelok Homes' Housing Register**

We aim to operate a housing register, which is easy to understand and is a fair way of letting our homes to people waiting for accommodation.

We make an assessment of housing need and prioritise each application by grouping applicants into one of four bands.

## **How do you decide what Band I will be placed in?**

There are 4 bands - Urgent, High, Medium and Low which reflect different levels of housing need; Urgent band is for those in greatest housing need. We have grouped different categories of need within each band and we will look at your circumstances and place your application in the appropriate band.

# Longhurst & Havelok Homes' Banding System



To qualify for Urgent and High banding, you must have a local connection to the area you would like to live.

## Urgent

- You are living in tied accommodation and you are either retiring, being made redundant, or your contract has been terminated because of your ill health.
- You are losing your home due to a recognised regeneration system.
- You are assessed as unintentionally homeless by your local Council.
- You are a private tenant and your landlord has served a valid Notice to Quit.
- You are an owner occupier and are subject to possession proceedings.
- You are currently living in a hostel, bed and breakfast or night shelter and have no other accommodation in which to live.
- You are leaving prison with no suitable accommodation in which to return.
- You are suffering violence or serious harassment.
- You are currently living in a property in severe disrepair / unsanitary conditions.
- Your circumstances are such that we can award urgent priority for welfare, support and / or hardship grounds.
- You are suffering ill health and meet our criteria for urgent medical priority.
- You are overcrowded and need at least 2 extra bedrooms or you meet the legal definition for being statutory overcrowded.
- You are ready to 'move on' from Longhurst & Havelok Homes' partnering supported accommodation.
- You are one of our tenants and we urgently require your property.
- Your current circumstances are unusual and housing is required urgently but you do not meet any of the above definitions and in the opinion of a Housing Manager you can be awarded urgent priority.
- You are in urgent need of sheltered / supported housing.

## High

- You have been assessed as intentionally homeless by your local Council, but you do not fall into Low priority band.
- You are currently no fixed abode but you have not made a homeless application to your local Council.
- You are ready to move on from supported or residential accommodation.
- You currently own your own home but it is up for sale due to financial difficulties or relationship breakdown. Or you currently rent your home and your landlord has put the property up for sale but has not served you with a Notice to Quit.
- You are currently living with family or friends or you are sharing a kitchen or bathroom with other people.
- You are currently living in a property which lacks basic, essential facilities.
- You are currently living in a flat above ground floor and have children under the age of 10 years old.
- You are living apart from your partner or children as a direct result of your current accommodation and you want to live together.
- You are overcrowded needing one extra bedroom.
- You are currently a social housing rent tenant and you have one or two bedrooms more than you need and you would like smaller accommodation.
- You are suffering ill health and meet our criteria for high medical priority.

- Your circumstances are such that we can award high priority for welfare, support and / or hardship grounds.
- You are suffering undue financial hardship as a direct result of your current housing circumstances.
- You would benefit from living in sheltered / supported housing.

## Medium

- Your circumstances are such that we can award medium priority for welfare, support and / or hardship grounds.
- You are suffering ill health and meet our criteria for medium medical priority.
- You are having difficulties maintaining your home.
- You are currently living in a caravan as your permanent home, but it does not lack any basic, essential facilities.
- You do not have a local connection to the area in which you wish to be housed.
- You do not have an urgent need for sheltered / supported housing.

## Low

- You have deliberately worsened your housing circumstances or you have voluntarily given up accommodation in which you could have reasonably continued to occupy within the last 12 months.
- You have current or outstanding housing related debt, such as arrears, court costs or rechargeable repairs of less than £500.00
- You are in breach or have previously breached tenancy conditions, but not serious enough to exclude you from the register.
- You have been assessed as having adequate financial resources with which to resolve your own housing needs.
- You do not fall into any other category listed for Urgent, High or Medium priority.
- You do not have a need for support from a scheme manager but fit the criteria for a low demand sheltered housing scheme.

Longhurst & Havelok Homes is committed to equality and diversity and recognises diversity in all areas of our work. We seek to treat people with respect and deliver services that meet individual need.

This leaflet is also available in:



large print



audio



braille



other languages

**Láingüagé Liñe**