

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q1. What is Leicestershire Choice Based Lettings?

Leicestershire Choice Based Lettings is the new way of allocating social housing through choice, giving home seekers a greater say over where you live. Home seekers on the housing register can bid for homes that are advertised each fortnight. North West Leicestershire District Council is working in partnership with six other councils and more than 20 Housing Associations across Leicestershire so that home seekers can choose properties in more areas.

Q2. When will Choice Based Lettings start?

The new way of allocating homes will start in February 2011

Q3. Who will be able to apply?

Any home seekers on the Council's housing register will be able to apply for any advertised property for which they are eligible.

Q4. How do I apply to join the housing register?

To apply to join the housing register you must be over the age of 16 years. You will need to complete a housing application form. The same form applies to those wanting to rent and those interested in shared ownership and other home purchase options. Tenants wanting to transfer should also fill in the same form.

Q5. What if I need help completing the housing application form?

Our staff are trained to help you complete the form. For further advice contact North West Leicestershire Housing Advice Team. Freephone: 0800 183 0357, or email housing.advice@nwleicestershire.gov.uk or visit our offices at Whitwick Road, Coalville, Leicester LE67 3FJ.

Q6. What identification will I need to provide?

Once you have filled in your housing application form you will need to provide all the information and documents requested (see the "Home Seekers Supporting Evidence Checklist" enclosed with the form for examples of what is needed).

Q7. What if I don't have any photo ID?

Photographic proof of identity will normally be required in every case e.g. by supplying a copy of your photo driving licence, valid Passport or bus pass etc. If you have no photo ID, a copy of your original Birth Certificate or National Insurance Card will be accepted provided it is accompanied by a passport sized photo that is countersigned on the back by someone who can confirm your identity.

*****PLEASE DO NOT SEND IN ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS FOR YOUR PHOTO ID*****

Q8. Can you refuse to accept me onto the Housing Register?

There are some people who are not eligible to be included on the housing register. These are:

- people who are subject to Immigration Control under the 1996 Asylum and Immigration Act*
- people from abroad who are not subject to immigration control but who are not habitually resident in the UK, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland*
- people (including members of their household) whose behaviour makes them unsuitable to be a tenant.*

For more detailed information contact Housing Advice Team on Freephone: 0800 183 0357

Q9. What happens once I have sent in my housing application form?

Once we have received your housing application form we will check that all the information and documents requested have been sent in. If anything is missing we will contact you to let you know. Provided we have all the information needed, your details will be put onto the computer system and then assessed in relation to your housing need. You will be placed in one of four bands (Priority, High, Medium or Low). Priority band represents the highest need to move while the Low band is the lowest priority.

We will send you a letter **NO LATER THAN 28 JANUARY 2011** advising you which band you have been placed in, your home seeker registration number, and what type and size of property you are eligible to apply for. If you disagree with the assessment, the letter will explain how you can ask for a review.

Q10. What if I've only just filled in a housing application form?

You must complete the new style housing application form even if you have only recently applied using our old form. If you do not return the new housing application form then your application details will not be transferred onto the new scheme.

If you no longer need help finding a home tell us and we will cancel your housing application details.

Q11. I've returned my application form but I haven't heard anything

We will be dealing with hundreds of new housing application forms over the coming weeks so please be patient as you will not hear back from us immediately. Once we have completed our assessment of your housing priority, we will write to you again in January 2011 (see Q9) with important details about the new 'choice based lettings' service and how you can use it to look for a new home and make a bid to be offered it.

If you have not heard back from us by 31 January 2011, please contact the office to let us know.

Q12. How will I know where to view the properties that are to be advertised from February 2011 and how to bid for them?

In January, we will write to every home seeker on the housing register and will send out a Choice-based Lettings Scheme Guide that will explain in detail where you can view homes that are advertised and how to bid for any that you are interested in and would be eligible for. Help will also be available from our Housing Advice Team on Freephone: 0800 183 0357, or e-mail housing.advice@nwleicestershire.gov.uk or visit our offices at Whitwick Road, Coalville, Leicester LE67 3FJ. Information will be also be available on the Council's website at www.nwleics.gov.uk

Q13. What do I do if my circumstances change after I have completed my new form?

It is important that you tell us of any changes in your circumstances so that we can amend your housing application. We will tell you if this results in your housing priority moving to a different band. If you change bands your registration date may change. We will make checks before confirming any offer of accommodation and if your circumstances are different to those on your application form, the offer may be withdrawn and your application suspended until you have provided details of your new circumstances.

Q14. Will I need to renew my application each year?

Yes. Once a year, normally on the anniversary of your housing application, you will be sent a renewal form, which you must complete and return by the due date stated on the letter. If you do not return the form, we will write and tell you that your housing application has been cancelled.

Q15. How do I request a review of a decision?

If you disagree with any of the following decisions you can request a review:

- You are not eligible to join the housing register*
- You disagree with the housing priority band that you have been placed in*
- Your housing application has been cancelled other than at your own request*

To request a review you should contact the Housing Advice Team within 21 days of the date you are notified of the decision and the reason for it. You may provide additional information in writing that you wish to be taken into account when the review is carried out. You will normally be advised of the outcome of the review within 8 weeks.