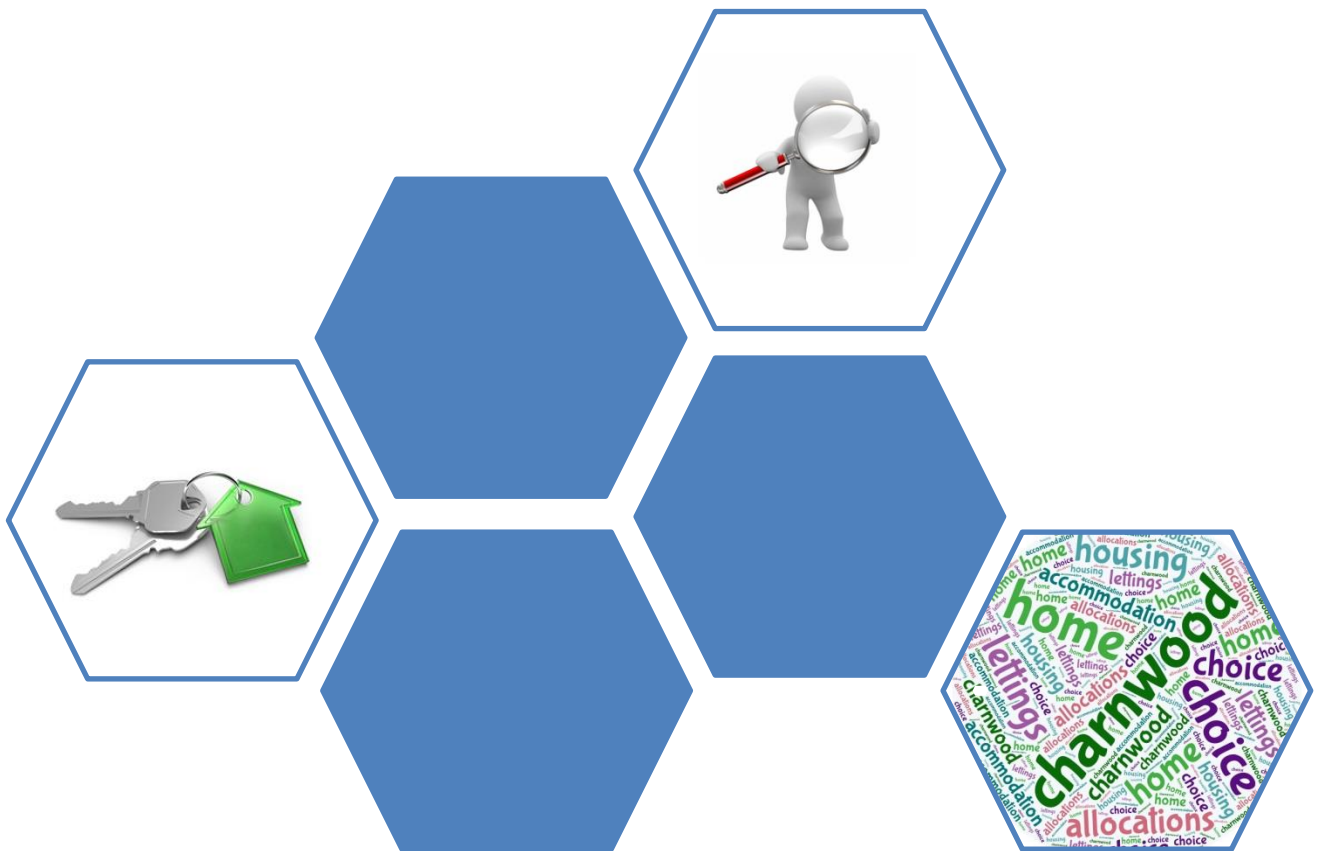


housing register applicant's guide

THIS GUIDE TELLS YOU

- How to apply
- Who can join the Housing Register
- How applications are prioritised
- How the Choice Based Lettings system works



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how do I apply?

If you would like to join Charnwood Borough Council's Housing Register, you will need to complete an online application form.

You can make an application by completing the online Housing Register application form at www.charnwood.gov.uk/homes.

You will need to complete all sections of the form and provide proof of your circumstances.

If you do not have access to the internet at home, you can use the computers in the Council's Customer Service area.

If you need help to make an online application, you can contact the Housing Allocations and Lettings Team on 01509 634567 or housing@charnwood.gov.uk.

Who can join the Housing Register?

The Housing Allocations and Lettings Team will assess the information on your application form and decide whether you can join the Housing Register.

After they have assessed your application, the Housing Allocations and Lettings Team will contact you to tell you whether you have been accepted onto the Housing Register.

Some people cannot join the Housing Register, for example:

- Applicants who are below the age of 16 years
- Applicants who are not eligible for social housing (for example most people from abroad are not eligible for social housing)
- Applicants who are homeowners or who have the financial means to purchase a property in Charnwood
- Applicants who do not have a local connection to Charnwood
- Applicants who have been responsible for serious unacceptable behaviour
- Applicants who do not have a confirmed housing need.

Financial Means

If you meet 1 of the following, you will not be able to join the Housing Register:

- You own a residential property in the UK or elsewhere, including freehold, leasehold, joint ownership or shared ownership
- You have savings, investments and/or assets of £21,450 or more
- Your annual income is more than £45,000 (if you are a single person or lone parent) or joint income of £60,000 or more (if you have a partner).

In some circumstances some people who have these financial means will be able to join the Housing Register, for example people who are applying for older person's sheltered accommodation.

Local Connection

If you do **not** meet 1 of the following, you will **not** be able to join the Housing Register:

- You are currently resident in settled accommodation within Charnwood and have been resident in settled accommodation within Charnwood for at least the last 2 years
- You have been resident in settled accommodation within Charnwood for at least 3 out of the last 5 years
- You have close adult relatives (parents/guardians, adult siblings or children over the age of 18) who are currently resident within Charnwood and who have been resident within Charnwood for at least the last 5 years
- You have paid employment or a confirmed offer of paid employment within Charnwood (the main place of work must be located within Charnwood and the employment will normally need to be for at least 16 hours per week and on a contract that is permanent or expected to last for at least 12 months).

In some circumstances people who do **not** meet any of the above local connection criteria may be able to join the Housing Register, for example some members of the Armed Forces.

Unacceptable Behaviour

If you (or any member of your household) have been responsible for unacceptable behaviour and are unsuitable to be a tenant, you will not be able to join the Housing Register.

Some examples of unacceptable behaviour include:

- Violence or threats of violence
- Domestic abuse
- Threatening behaviour or intimidation
- Harassment
- Anti-social behaviour
- Drug-dealing
- Property damage
- Serious and persistent rent arrears
- Giving false information in relation to an application for housing.



housing need bands

If you do **not** have a confirmed Housing Need, you will not be able to join the Housing Register. If you have a confirmed Housing Need your application will be placed in 1 of 3 Housing Need Bands:

- If you have a Housing Need your application will be placed in Band 3
- If you have a High Housing Need your application will be placed in Band 2
- If you have an Emergency Housing Need your application will be placed in Band 1.

Band 3 – Housing Need

Overcrowding, Disrepair or other Poor Housing Conditions

For example:

- Your home is overcrowded
- Your home has significant disrepair issues
- Your home does not have an indoor toilet

Medical or Mobility Need

For example:

- You have mobility problems and need to move to a ground floor property
- You have a mental health condition that is affected by your current home
- You need an extra bedroom for medical reasons

Welfare or Hardship Need

For example:

- You are suffering from ongoing anti-social behaviour
- You need to move closer to relatives to give or receive support
- Your home is unaffordable

Homeless or at Risk of Homelessness

For example:

- You are at risk of becoming homeless in the next 56 days
- You are homeless and do not have a “priority need”
- You are homeless and became homeless “intentionally”

Applications are placed in Band 3 for an initial period of 12 months. After this period a reassessment will be completed to confirm whether your circumstances have changed, whether you still have a housing need and whether you still qualify for the Housing Register.



Band 2 – High Housing Need

Ready for “Move-On”

For example:

- You live in a Supported Accommodation scheme and are ready to move to independent accommodation
- You live in Local Authority Care and are ready to move to independent accommodation

Management Need

For example:

- You live in a Council or Registered Provider property and are applying to downsize to smaller accommodation
- You live in a Council or Registered Provider property that has significant disabled adaptations that you no longer need
- You live in a Council or Registered Provider property that has been re-designated
- You have succeeded to a Council or Registered provider tenancy following the death of a relative but cannot remain in the property (e.g. because the property is too large for your household)

Applications are placed in Band 2 for an initial period of 16 weeks. If your application is placed in Band 2 and you do not bid for suitable properties that are advertised during the initial 16 weeks, your application will be reassessed and moved down to Band 3.



Band 1 – Emergency Housing Need
<p>Dangerous or Hazardous Housing Conditions</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your home is “statutorily overcrowded” • Your home has disrepair issues that have been classified as unsafe and that pose an imminent risk of significant harm • Your home is due to be demolished
<p>Emergency Medical or Mobility Need</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have a serious medical condition and are in hospital and cannot be discharged because your accommodation is unsuitable (e.g. because you cannot access the toilet or bathing facilities in the property) • You have a serious medical condition and urgently need to move because your accommodation is unsuitable (e.g. because you cannot access the toilet or bathing facilities in the property) • You have a serious medical condition and urgently need to move to accommodation that has significant disabled adaptations (e.g. wheelchair standard accommodation)
<p>Emergency Welfare or Hardship Need</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are suffering violence or threats of violence that are likely to be carried out • You are suffering severe harassment or severe discriminatory harassment • You are suffering domestic, physical, sexual or financial abuse
<p>Homeless Duty</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are homeless and are owed the Main Housing Duty under Section 193(2) of the Housing Act 1996 by Charnwood Borough Council • You are homeless and are owed the Accommodation Duty under Section 193C(4) of the Housing Act 1996 by Charnwood Borough Council

Applications are placed in Band 1 for an initial period of 8 weeks. If your application is placed in Band 1 and you do not bid for suitable properties that are advertised during the initial 8 weeks, the Council may place bids on your behalf until an offer of a suitable property is made. If you refuse an offer of a suitable property, your application will be reassessed and moved down to Band 3.



choice based lettings

Choice Based Lettings is a way of letting social housing.

Available Council and Registered Provider (formerly known as Housing Association) properties are advertised and applicants can 'bid' for the properties they are interested in.

Choice Based Lettings does not increase the amount of available properties, but helps applicants to see how many properties become available, where the properties are located and how likely they are to be offered one of these properties.

How does the Choice Based Lettings system work?

Every week Council and Registered Provider properties in Charnwood that are available for bidding will be advertised. Properties from Private Landlords may sometimes be advertised.

Applicants who have been accepted onto the Council's Housing Register can bid for up to 2 advertised properties per week.

All bids will be sorted into a list. When the bidding closes, the applicant who is at the top of the list is likely to be offered the property. If the person at the top of the list does not accept the property, the property is likely to be offered to the next person on the list.



How are properties advertised?

Available properties are advertised every week. The adverts will be available:

- On the Council's Choice Based Lettings website
- At the Council offices
- In local libraries across Charnwood.

You will be able to see how often the type of property that you are interested in become available for bidding.

If you have problems viewing the adverts, you can contact the Housing Allocations and Lettings Team on 01509 634567 or housing@charnwood.gov.uk.

The property adverts will tell you:

- Whether you are eligible to bid for the property
- Who the landlord is
- Where the property is located
- The size of the property
- The rent
- Whether there is an age restriction for the property
- Other information, such as whether the property has been adapted for people with disabilities.

How do I bid for properties?

When you place a bid, you are telling the Council that you are interested in being offered the property. Placing a bid does not involve money.

If you are eligible for an advertised property, you will be able to place a bid.

You can place a bid for an advertised property on the Council's Choice Based Lettings website www.charnwood.gov.uk/homes.

You will be able to bid for up to 2 properties per week.

If you have problems placing bids, you can contact the Housing Allocations and Lettings Team on 01509 634567 or housing@charnwood.gov.uk.



Which properties can I bid for?

The table below shows the type and size of properties that applicants will normally be able to bid for:

	Studio / Bedsit	1 Bed Flat	1 Bed Bungalow	1 Bed House	2 Bed Flat	2 Bed House	3 Bed Flat	3 Bed House	4 Bed Flat	4 Bed House
Single Person	X	X	X	X						
Couple		X	X	X						
Single Person or Couple + need for an extra bedroom for an overnight carer or for medical or welfare reasons		X	X	X	X					
Single Person or Couple + need for extra bedroom for overnight child access		X	X	X	X					
Single Person or Couple + 1 male					X	X				
Single Person or Couple + 1 female					X	X				
Single Person or Couple + 2 males (both under 16 years)					X	X				
Single Person or Couple + 2 males (1 or both over 16 years)					X	X	X	X		
Single Person or Couple + 2 females (both under 16 years)					X	X				
Single Person or Couple + 2 females (1 or both over 16 years)					X	X	X	X		
Single Person or Couple + 1 male and 1 female					X	X	X	X		

	Studio / Bedsit	1 Bed Flat	1 Bed Bungalow	1 Bed House	2 Bed Flat	2 Bed House	3 Bed Flat	3 Bed House	4 Bed Flat	4 Bed House
Single Person or Couple + 3 males (all under 16 years)							X	X		
Single Person or Couple + 3 males (1 or more over 16 years)							X	X	X	X
Single Person or Couple + 3 females (all under 16 years)							X	X		
Single Person or Couple + 3 females (1 or more over 16 years)							X	X	X	X
Single Person or Couple + 2 males and 1 female (all under 16 years)							X	X		
Single Person or Couple + 2 males and 1 female (both males under 16 years)							X	X		
Single Person or Couple + 2 males and 1 female (1 or both males over 16 years)							X	X	X	X
Single Person or Couple + 2 females and 1 male (all under 16 years)							X	X		
Single Person or Couple + 2 females and 1 male (both females under 16 years)							X	X		
Single Person or Couple + 2 females and 1 male (1 or both females over 16 years)							X	X	X	X
Single Person or Couple + 4 males (all under 16 years)							X	X		
Single Person or Couple + 4 males (1 or more over 16 years)							X	X	X	X
Single Person or Couple + 4 females (all under 16 years)							X	X		
Single Person or Couple + 4 females (1 or more over 16 years)							X	X	X	X



	Studio / Bedsit	1 Bed Flat	1 Bed Bungalow	1 Bed House	2 Bed Flat	2 Bed House	3 Bed Flat	3 Bed House	4 Bed Flat	4 Bed House
Single Person or Couple + 2 males and 2 females (all under 16 years)							X	X		
Single Person or Couple + 2 males and 2 females (1 or more over 16 years)							X	X	X	X
Single Person or Couple + 3 males and 1 female							X	X	X	X
Single Person or Couple + 3 females and 1 male							X	X	X	X
Single Person or Couple + 5 or more others							X	X	X	X

Some advertised properties may have minimum age criteria, for example:

- Properties in older person’s sheltered housing schemes
- Properties that may be unsuitable for young children, such as duplex flats.

Some advertised properties may be restricted by household type, for example:

- Bedsits / Studio flats will normally be restricted to single people
- Houses with 2 or more bedrooms will normally be restricted to families that contain dependent children.

There are very small numbers of the following property types within Charnwood, so these properties may not be advertised as they may need to be matched to applicants who have the greatest needs:

- 2 bedroom bungalows
- Houses with more than 4 bedrooms
- Properties that are adapted for wheelchair users.



Which areas can I bid for?

You will normally be able to bid for advertised properties in any area of Charnwood.

The following areas are in Charnwood:

Loughborough	
Ashby Road Estate	Town Centre
Forest	Thorpe Acre
Knighthorpe	Warwick Way Estate
Shelthorpe	

Villages	
Anstey	Ratcliffe on the Wreake
Barkby	Rearsby
Barkby Thorpe	Rothley
Barrow Upon Soar	Seagrave
Beeby	Shepshed
Birstall	Sileby
Burton on the Wolds	South Croxton
Cossington	Swithland
Cotes	Syston
Cropston	Thrussington
East Goscote	Thurcaston
Hathern	Thurmaston
Hoton	Ulverscroft
Mountsorrel	Walton on the Wolds
Newtown Linford	Wanlip
Prestwold	Woodhouse Eaves
Queniborough	Wymeswold
Quorn	

How will know if my bid is successful?

After a property has been advertised, all of the bidders will be sorted into a list. This is called as 'shortlist'.

The list will be sorted in Band order (from Band 1 down to Band 3).

If there is more than 1 applicant in a band, all of the applicants within the Band will be sorted in date order (from oldest to newest).

Some applicants who are members of the armed forces may be placed in a higher position on the shortlist than other applicants who are within the same Band.

If the property has any special features or criteria, for example if the property has adaptations for people with disabilities, applicants who meet the criteria may finish in a higher position on the shortlist than other applicants who do not meet the criteria.

The applicant who is at the top of the shortlist will normally be offered the property. If the person at the top of the list does not accept the property, the property is likely to be offered to the next person on the list.

In some circumstances the Council may 'skip' past an applicant who is on a shortlist, for example:

- If the applicant has already been offered a different property
- If the property is too large for the applicant
- If the applicant poses a risk to individuals or the community
- If the applicant's circumstances have changed and they are no longer eligible for the property.

If your bid is successful the Housing Allocations and Lettings Team will contact you and offer the property to you. You will normally be given 3 working days to respond to an offer.

What happens if I accept an offer?

If you accept an offer, you will be invited to view the property.

If you still wish to accept the property after the viewing, you will be invited to sign-up for a tenancy.

What happens if I refuse an offer?

If you refuse a suitable offer of accommodation, your application banding may be reduced.

If you refuse 3 suitable offers of accommodation, your application will be suspended and you will not be able to bid for properties or be considered for another offer for 12 months.

If you do not respond to an offer, do not attend a property viewing or do not attend a tenancy sign-up appointment, the offer will be withdrawn and this will be classed as a refusal.

What if I disagree with a decision about my application?

If you do not agree with a decision the Council has made about your application, you may be able to request a review of the decision. The circumstances in which you may request a review include:

- If the Council decides that you are not eligible to join the Housing Register or do not qualify for the Housing Register
- If you believe your application has been assessed incorrectly and placed in the wrong band
- If you believe you should be eligible to bid for a size or type of property that you have not been permitted to bid for
- If the Council has withdrawn an offer of accommodation
- If your application has been cancelled and the Council has refused to re-instate your application.

If you wish to request a review of a decision, you will need to submit your request in writing within 21 days of the date of the decision.

If you have problems making a request in writing, you can contact the Housing Allocations and Lettings Team on 01509 634567 or housing@charnwood.gov.uk.

In your review request you should say why you disagree with the decision and include any information that you want the Council to consider when carrying out the review.

All reviews will be completed by a Senior Officer who was not involved in the original decision. Reviews will normally be completed within 56 days.



further information and advice

A copy of the Housing Allocations Policy is available on the Council's Website at https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/housing_strategies_and_policies.

The Council can provide information and advice on services and options for people who need to move home. Further information is available at www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/housing_advice.

If you are homeless or think you may be at risk of becoming homeless in the next 56 days, please contact our Housing Options Team 01509 634567 or housing@charnwood.gov.uk.

For independent advice, you can contact The Bridge East Midlands on 01509 260550 or Charnwood Citizens' Advice Bureau on 03444 111444.

