

**Need help or
advice with the
housing register?**

We're here to help

Your guide to the

**Tunbridge Wells
Borough Council
Housing Register**

The Council administers a Housing Register for all of the people who want to be considered for social or affordable rented housing.

To apply to join the Housing Register, all applicants must complete an application form. This can be completed online at **kenthomechoice.org.uk**

The Housing Register is open to both new applicants (home-seekers) and existing social housing tenants (transfer tenants).

This factsheet has been designed to help you understand who qualifies for the Housing Register, how applicants are prioritised and the procedure for allocating housing.

Who qualifies for the Housing Register?

Local Connection

To qualify for the Housing Register, you must meet one of the following local connection criteria:

- **Current residence** - You have resided in the borough continuously for the last three years
- **Former residence** - You were formerly resident in the borough for three out of the past five years
- **Family association** - You have immediate family who have continuously lived in the borough for the last five years

- **Employment** - You work in paid employment in the borough and have done so for the past 12 months (in a permanent contract of at least 16 hours per week)

Please note - You may be exempt from the local connection if you meet certain criteria (e.g. you are a care leaver, a victim of domestic abuse or homeless). This is not an exhaustive list and the Council will assess your application depending on your individual circumstances.

Financial Assessment Criteria

When you apply to the Housing Register, you will need to provide proof of your household income, savings and capital. If your household income or savings exceed the financial assessment limits set by the Council, you may not qualify to join.

Ownership

If you own a property anywhere in the world (with or without a mortgage), you may not qualify to join the Housing Register. The exception to this is where you are an older homeowner whose current accommodation is no longer appropriate to meet your needs and you cannot afford something more suitable.

Significant Arrears

If you have significant arrears, or a former tenancy debt with a private or social landlord, you may not qualify to join the Housing Register.

Anti-Social Behaviour

If you have lost your previous home as a result of anti-social behavior, you may not qualify to join the Housing Register.

How are applications assessed?

Priority Banding

Once the Council has assessed your application, you will be notified in writing whether you qualify to join the register. If you qualify to join, you will be notified of your reference number, details of the band you have been placed in, your priority housing date and the size of accommodation you have been registered for.

The Council have adopted a four-band priority system. The four bands are:

- **Band A** - Additional Preference
- **Band B** - Reasonable Preference
- **Band C** - Specific Accommodation
- **Band D** - Homelessness

Priority Housing Date

The priority housing date is the date that an applicant provides all the required documentation and the Council is satisfied that they qualify to join the Housing Register.

Applicants with an 'active' application to the Housing Register will be prioritised depending on their priority housing band and priority housing date.

Bedroom Requirement

The Council will ensure that anyone with an 'active' application is appropriately matched to accommodation that is the right type and size for their requirements. One bedroom will be allowed for each of the following:

- a single person or a couple
- two children under 10 (regardless of gender)
- two children under 16 (of the same gender)
- anyone else residing in the household

This is not an exhaustive list and the Council will assess your application depending on your individual circumstances.

How does it work?

Choice Based Letting

The Council operates Choice Based Lettings which allows most applicants an element of choice in terms of the location and type of social housing they wish to live in.

Housing associations with properties within the Tunbridge Wells borough will advertise their properties that are becoming available on Kent Homechoice with properties advertised daily.

Applicants can log into their Kent Homechoice and place 'bids' (express an interest) on suitable properties being advertised at the time.

Shortlisting

Once an advert has closed for bidding, a shortlist will be drawn up of all the applicants who have bid on the property. Applicants within the same band will be prioritised in the order of their priority date.

The Council will nominate applicants to a property from the shortlist in accordance with the eligibility requirements. Where a successful nomination is made, the housing association will contact the applicant to arrange a viewing and to conduct pre-sign up interviews.

Refusals

If an applicant chooses to refuse an offer of accommodation that the Council deems suitable, the applicant may have their priority date re-set to the date they refused the offer (effectively reducing their priority within the priority band).

Contact Us

You can contact the Council's
Housing Options Team by:



01892 526121



allocations@tunbridgewells.gov.uk