

TELFORD HOUSING OPTIONS

FAQ's

Q1: When is Choose Your Home ceasing?

A: The 'Choose Your Home' system will close on 7 July 2014.

Q2: Why is Choose Your Home closing?

A: Since 2006 The Wrekin Housing Trust has operated Choose Your Home on behalf of the Wrekin Housing Partnership. There are now c.16000 people on the Choose Your Home waiting list. The vast majority have no prospects of being re-housed. Many people registered do not regularly log into the system and actively look for housing, and those that do become increasingly frustrated by choosing unsuccessfully. The cause of this is simply that not enough social homes become vacant each year to fill the demand for them, and so having a waiting list presents false hope. Choose Your Home does not offer any other housing options or advice.

Q3: When will properties cease to be advertised?

A: The last homes will be advertised on Choose Your Home on Friday 4 July and customers will be able to choose these homes until the advert closes on Friday 11 July.

Q4: Will customers be informed that 'Choose Your Home' is ceasing?

A: Yes. The 'Choose Your Home' website is advising customers of the change and directing customers to Telford & Wrekin Council's new housing advice system. From 2 June Telford and Wrekin Council are contacting all urgent band customers, all customers who currently receive adverts by post and customers with an email address. In addition to this the Wrekin Housing Trust, Bournville Village Trust, Bromford and Sanctuary Housing will be contacting existing tenants who are currently registered for a move on Choose Your Home.

Q5: What will happen to the 'Choose Your Home' waiting list?

A: Wrekin Housing Trust have given notice to cease managing Choose Your Home from the 7 July 2014 and therefore the current waiting list will also cease from this date.

Q6: What does this mean for me?

A: The biggest change for customers is that there will no longer be a waiting list. Telford and Wrekin Council's new system will be a single point of housing advice for all customers wanting a home in Telford. This new system will advise customers of their best housing option to suit their needs. These options could include renting a

home from a housing association or a private landlord, adapting your current home or part buying a home.

From 7 July 2014 Bournville Village Trust, Bromford and Sanctuary Housing will be advertising their homes through a new choice based lettings system called Homes Direct so you will need to register with them at www.homesdirect.org.uk Homes Direct has 4 bandings which are A,B,C,D, when you register you will be given the appropriate banding for your circumstances. Once registered, it operates similar to Choose Your Home, homes are advertised and applicants can choose.

The Wrekin Housing Trust will be implementing a system that provides applicants with a realistic perspective of their chances of getting a Trust home, and for those that have a chance we will be doing much more work with them to help prepare them for their new home when it becomes available on www.wrekinhousingtrust.org.uk

Q7: I've been on the waiting list for a considerable length of time. Will that be taken into account?

A: Choose your Home will close on the 7 July 2014. You are advised to log onto www.telfordhousingoptions.co.uk where you will be provided with advice on all your housing options.

To access social/affordable housing you will need to go to either WHT web site (www.wrekinhousingtrust.org.uk) or Homes Direct (www.homesdirect.org.uk) to register for properties owned by Bournville Village Trust, Bromford and Sanctuary Housing.

Telford Housing Options will not operate a waiting list but is designed to help customers find the best options for them. The aim of the Council's scheme is to ensure customers get realistic housing advice and the focus will be on providing customers with greater opportunities to meet their housing need, rather than sit on a waiting list for a long period of time.

Q8: Why have I been waiting so long for a council house?

A: The Council has no housing stock.

Social/affordable housing is available through a number of Housing Associations. Locally the largest of these is the Wrekin Housing Trust.

There are presently more people looking for social housing than there are properties available. Only around 900 properties become available each year and there are over 16,000 people wanting social rented property.

From 7 July 2014 Telford Housing Options will provide you with a wider set of housing options. By signposting alternatives the intention is to reduce the number of people waiting for social housing and ensure that those in greatest need are housed.

Q9: What will happen to my banding?

A: If you register with Homes Direct your banding will be reassessed under their criteria and you will be provided with the appropriate band within the Homes Direct system. The Wrekin Housing Trust will be operating a completely new allocations system and your existing band will not be taken into consideration.

Q10: Will I lose my registration date?

A: If you are an existing tenant of Bournville Village Trust, Bromford and Sanctuary Housing your registration date will be kept if you register with Homes Direct by the 18 July 2014. If you are **not** an existing tenant you will not retain your registration date. If you register with the WHT you will not retain your application date.

Q11: How do I know if I am eligible for social housing?

A: From 7 July 2014 you can find out if social housing is a realistic option for you by using the simple pre-assessment tool on the www.telfordhousingoptions.co.uk web pages. If you don't have access to the internet, you can visit First Point or the Library or telephone the Housing Options Team on 01952 381925.

Although there will be different systems, all Registered Providers of social housing will still be prioritising housing for people in Housing Need, taking nominations from Telford and Wrekin and applying reasonable preference to their Lettings to help people with the greatest needs that meet the landlords eligibility criteria.

If you are currently homeless or threatened to be homeless within the next 28 days please contact the Council's Housing Options Team on 01952 381925

Q12: Will I continue to receive listings of available properties in the post?

A: Homes Direct who will be advertising the local properties owned by Bournville Village Trust, Bromford and Sanctuary Housing, do not send property listings out in the post either but they will be available to view in local branches. If you cannot get to a local branch or the Housing Association advertising the property has no branch in the area, you will be able to contact Homes Direct on 0345 60 20 540. Wrekin Housing Trust contact number 01952 217100.

Q13: Where are the First Point and library locations?

- **Telford First Point**
Addenbrooke House, Ironmasters Way, Telford, TF3 (note as of the 14 July this will be within the Southwater Development)
- **Madeley First Point**
Madeley Library, Russell Square, Madeley, TF7 5BB
- **Wellington First Point**
Wellington Civic & Leisure Centre, Larkin Way, Wellington, TF1 1LX
- **Newport First Point**
Newport Library, 53-55 High Street, Newport, TF10 7AT

Q14: How do I access social housing if this is identified as an option for me?

A: Where social housing is an appropriate option you will be signposted to The Wrekin Housing Trust web site (www.wrekinhousingtrust.org.uk) where you will be able to register for their properties or to Homes Direct (www.homesdirect.org.uk) for properties in the Borough managed by Bournville Village Trust, Bromford and Sanctuary Housing.

Q15: How can I contact local housing associations?

A: You can contact the local housing associations direct using the following details:

- **Wrekin Housing Trust**
Tel: 01952 217100 or web: www.wrekinhousingtrust.org.uk
- **Bromford**
Tel: 0845 6010 878 or web: www.bromfordhomes.co.uk
- **Bournville Village Trust**
Tel: 01952 293777 or web: www.bvt.org.uk
- **Sanctuary**
Tel: 0800 131 3348 / 0300 123 3561 or web: www.sanctuary-housing.co.uk

From 7 July 2014 you can register for social housing with Bromford, Bournville Village Trust and Sanctuary by visiting 'Homes Direct' at www.homesdirect.org.uk
Wrekin Housing Trust www.wrekinhousingtrust.org.uk

Q16: What might my options be once I have access the Telford Housing Options tool?

A: Telford Housing Options will provide a range of housing options including:

- Home adaptations to allow people with disabilities and the elderly to remain in their homes

- Private rented accommodation let through the Council's new letting agency Telford Home Finder
- Help to buy
- Advice on eligibility for social housing
- Links to Social housing let through Homes Direct or The Wrekin Housing Trust

Q17: If I complete the Telford Housing Options assessment online what will happen next?

A: The housing assessment tool will provide you with a bespoke housing action plan that includes realistic, tailored advice across a range of housing options, adaptations and financial support.

If you are homeless or threatened with being homeless within the next 28 days you will automatically be booked an appointment with the Council's Housing Options Team

Q18: How long will it take before the Housing Options Team contact me?

A: This will depend on your housing need but if you are homeless today or going to be homeless within the next 28 days you can contact the Housing Options Team directly on 01952 381925