

Homemove

Housing allocation service in Sussex



Scheme user guide

www.homemove.org.uk



Welcome to Homemove

Homemove is the lettings scheme for:

- Adur
- Brighton & Hove
- Chichester
- Eastbourne
- Hastings
- Lewes
- Mid Sussex
- Rother
- Wealden
- Worthing

Homemove gives you choice about where you want to live.

You can use Homemove to find a new home if you are an existing council or housing association tenant wanting a transfer within your area, or if you are a homeseeker applying in the area where you are registered for the first time.

You are a homeseeker if you are renting privately, living with family or friends, living outside the area you are applying to, living in temporary accommodation, or applying for housing for the first time.

To use Homemove, you need to register on the transfer or housing register in your area, and you should contact your local council to do this.

How the Homemove scheme works is explained on pages 5-7 of this guide.

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Local authority contacts

Adur District Council – Tel: 01273 263316 and 01273 263317

✉ Civic Centre, Ham Road, Shoreham-by-Sea, BN43 6PR

email: choicebasedlettings@adur.gov.uk

Brighton & Hove City Council

All homeseekers, new enquiries and housing association transfers, call **Housing Options – Tel: 01273 294400 (option 1 and hold for a duty officer)**

✉ Bartholomew House, Bartholomew Square, Brighton, BN1 1JP

email: homemove@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Council tenants contact our Customer Services Team – Tel: 01273 293030

✉ Lavender Street Housing Office, Kemp Town, Brighton, BN2 1JU

✉ Portslade Town Hall, Portslade, BN41 1YF

✉ Whitehawk Community Hub, 179a Whitehawk Road, Brighton, BN2 5FL

✉ Moulsecoomb Housing Centre, Unit 1 Fairway Trading Estate, Eastergate Road, Brighton, BN2 4QL

email: housing.customerservices@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Chichester District Council – Tel: 01243 534 734

✉ East Pallant House, 1 East Pallant, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1TY

email: contact@chichester.gov.uk

Eastbourne Borough Council – Tel: 01323 415 397

✉ 1 Grove Road, Eastbourne, BN21 4TW

email: Homemove@eastbourne.gov.uk

Hastings Borough Council – Tel: 01424 451 100

✉ Aquila House, Breeds Place, Hastings, TN34 3UY

Lewes District Council – Tel: 01273 471 600

Homeseekers: ☒ Housing Needs, 4 Fisher Street, Lewes, BN7 2DG

Transfer applicants: ☒ Housing Services, 20 Fort Road, Newhaven, BN9 9QF

email: homemove@lewes.gov.uk

Mid Sussex District Council – Tel: 0300 100 0303

Mid Sussex District Council's housing register is administered by Affinity Sutton and all enquiries should be made using the contact details below:

The application form and full details of the council's scheme are available from www.midsussex.gov.uk/homemove

☒ Homemove Team, Upton House, 7 Perrymount Road, Haywards Heath, RH16 3TN

email: mid.sussexhomemove@affinitysutton.com

Rother District Council – Tel: 01424 787 020

☒ Housing Services, Town Hall, Bexhill-on-Sea, TN39 3JX

email: homemove@rother.gov.uk

Wealden District Council – Tel: 01323 443 380

☒ PO Box 49, Hailsham, BN27 2AZ

email: housingoptions@wealden.gov.uk

Worthing Borough Council – Tel: 01903 221 063

☒ Portland House, Richmond Road, Worthing, BN11 1HH

email: housing-services@worthing.gov.uk

How the Homemove scheme works

There are five steps for you to follow in choosing your new home:

Step 1 Membership

To become a member of Homemove, you must register as a homeseeker or transfer applicant at one of the participating councils or housing associations (listed on pages 3-4).

Once you are a member, you will be given a Homemove number so you can make bids on properties advertised through Homemove in the area where you are registered.

You may not be eligible to be on the housing register. Your local council can give you more advice on this.

Step 2 Registration

When your council or the housing association administering your council's housing register has accepted you onto their register, Homemove will email you to give you your Homemove number. The email will also tell you which **band** you are in (band A, B, C or D), your **priority date** (the date you were placed in your band) and the **number of bedrooms** you are eligible for.

If you did not give an email address when you registered you will receive the same information in a written letter.

See page 8 for details on how the priority band and date system works.

You must **keep your local council or the housing association administering your council's housing register informed about any changes in your circumstances**. This means email and postal addresses, and phone number, medical conditions, household size, or anything else that affects your housing situation. This is very important as it could result in changing your band or your eligibility for certain properties. If you don't inform them of changes then this could put you in a position where an offer of accommodation is made and then withdrawn.

Step 3 Bidding

All the available properties are advertised each fortnight on www.homemove.org.uk. You will also be able to go to your local council office to view the properties either on a computer or as a printed list.

We want to make sure everyone will be able to view the vacant properties, even if they can't look on the website. So please **contact your local office if you feel you or someone you support will have difficulties**.

The adverts give you information about each property to help you decide which is suitable for you. Remember you are only eligible to bid for properties in the area you are registered in, unless they appear in the list of properties you are eligible to bid for on the website or in your printed property list.

This is the **bidding cycle**. You can bid on a maximum of **three** properties in each bidding cycle. You can bid using any one of the following four ways:

On the internet go to www.homemove.org.uk and log on with your Homemove number and date of birth

By telephone call 0906 294 2036 and follow the instructions (see page 10 for instructions on making your bids by telephone)

By text send a text message to 07781 472726 (see page 9 for instructions on making your bids by text)

Bidding opens every other Friday. Your bids must reach us by 2pm the following Wednesday.

Step 4 Offer

When bidding closes, Homemove puts the bids for each property in order – by band, local connection and priority date – to make a shortlist of eligible applicants for each property.

If you come top of a **shortlist** you will usually be contacted when the property is ready to view.

Your council or housing association will allocate from the list after doing further eligibility checks. If your name is at the top of the shortlist, you will

normally be invited to view the property. If you refuse the property, the next person on the shortlist will be invited to view the property.

You do not automatically get penalised for refusing a property you have bid for. However, your priority may be reviewed if you refuse a property and you are in a high priority band. Some types of applicants – such as homeless applicants – have a limited time to bid and may have bids placed on their behalf to make the most of their chances of being housed quickly. You will be told in advance if this applies to you.

Some landlords invite more than one applicant to view a property at the same time, which helps to speed up the lettings process. The property is still always offered to the applicant with the highest priority who attends the viewing.

If you are made an offer you will not be shortlisted for another property until you have made a decision to refuse the other offer.

Step 5 Feedback

When you log in to the website (www.homemove.gov.uk) and click on '**see what happened to your past bids**' you can see what happened with your bids. (Similar information appears if you receive a printed property list.)

If you are unsuccessful with a bid, you can use the feedback to help you understand why (but you'll need to remember the three-digit advert reference number). It tells you how many people bid for the property, as well as the band and priority date of the successful bidder. The priority date shows you how long the successful bidder has been waiting.

You may wish to use the feedback information to help you decide how to bid in future. For example, you could bid for properties of different types, in areas that attract fewer bidders, or in areas where people in lower bands have been housed. You will see that in some cases band C and D applicants are almost never offered some property types in certain areas. If you are in one of these bands you may wish to consider other housing options.

Priority Bands

When you register for housing as a transfer applicant or home seeker, your application will be assessed by your council or the housing association administering your council's housing register. You will be placed in one of the priority bands described below.

If you disagree with your priority band, you can ask the council, which holds your registration details, to review the banding decision. To do this, please put your reasons for a band review in writing to your council.

It will help if you read your council's Allocation Policy and can state which band reason applies to you and why. You can find the Allocation Policy on your council's website – or ask them to send you a copy using the contact details on pages 3-4 of this guide.

When bids are considered for advertised properties, priority will be given to eligible bids from people in the highest priority band. If people from the same priority band bid for the same property, we will consider first those with a local connection and the earliest priority date. Some applicants have a limited time for bidding. We will tell you in advance if this applies to you.

If your priority band is increased at any stage, your priority date will be the date you went into the higher priority band. If you move back to a lower band, your priority date will usually revert to your original registration date in that lower band.

The four priority bands range in priority between band A (being the highest priority) and band D being the lowest priority. You will be told the exact reason you've been placed in a band when you are given your Homemove number.

For more detailed information, please contact your local council for a copy of their Allocation Policy.

How to bid

Making your bids online

Go to **www.homemove.org.uk** and log in with your bidding number and date of birth. This is the quickest and easiest way to bid.

Making your bids by text message

Most mobile phone companies will charge you around 10p to send an SMS text message.

Action	Example
1 To begin making your bids	Open a new text message
2 Enter in your Homemove number via the keys	ABC12345
3 Then followed immediately by the hash mark	ABC12345#
4 You should now enter the advert reference number of your first bid followed immediately by the hash mark	ABC12345# 654 #
If you have finished bidding then send. If not, keep following the instructions below.	
5 You should now enter the advert reference number of your second bid followed immediately by the hash mark	ABC12345#654# 791 #
If you have finished bidding then send. If not, keep following the instructions below.	
6 You should now enter the advert reference number of your third bid followed immediately by the hash mark	ABC12345#654#791# 555 #
7 When you have entered all your bids, send your text message bid	"Send"
8 The number to send your bid to is	07781 472 726
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most mobile phone companies charge SMS text messages at around 10p per text• To add numbers to the message keep pressing the keys until you get to the digit and select	

- On most mobile phones, to find the hash mark, first press the star key then select the hash mark
- You can enter your bids in both upper and lower case.
- Check your Homemove number and bids are correct before sending.

Making your bids by telephone

Calls cost 25p per minute from a landline, and calls usually take one minute. The cost of mobile calls varies according to the network you use. Calls to our **0906** number will cost 25p per minute plus your phone company's network charge

Action	Example
1. To begin making your bids dial	0906 294 2036
2. You will hear	"Welcome to the Homemove property line. Press 01 for Adur Press 02 for Brighton & Hove Press 03 for Chichester Press 05 for Hastings Press 06 for Wealden Press 07 for Rother Press 08 for Lewes Press 09 for Worthing Press 10 for Mid Sussex Press 11 for Eastbourne"
3. You will hear	"Thank you. Please enter the number section of your reference number."
4. You should now enter the numerical part of your Homemove number only. Once you have entered the correct number you will hear	"Thank you. Please enter the day number of your birth date."
5. You should now enter the day number of your date of birth. Please remember to put the leading zero (0) in if it is a single number. For example, if your date of birth is 16/04/1970 type in 16, if your date of birth is 08/01/1958 type in 08. Once you	"Thank you. Please enter the property reference number for your first bid."

have entered the correct number, you will hear	
6. Enter the three digits of the property reference number. Once you have entered the correct number you will hear	“Thank you. If you would like to add an additional bid, press one, or press two to complete your bids.”
7. If you have pressed one you will hear	“Thank you. Please enter the property reference number for your second bid, or press the star key to complete your bidding.”
8. Enter the three digits of the second property reference number. Once you have entered the correct number you will hear	“Thank you. If you would like to add an additional bid, press one, or press two to complete your bids.”
9. If you have pressed one you will hear	“Thank you. Please enter the property reference number for your third bid, or press the star key to complete your bidding.”
10. Enter the three digits of the third property reference number. Once you have entered the correct number or if you pressed the star key previously, you will hear	“Thank you for bidding.”

If you made errors with your Homemove number you may hear some of the instructions below:

11. If you have made an error with your Homemove number, you will hear:	“I’m sorry, the reference number you have entered is not recognised. Please try again.”
12. Enter your Homemove number again, making sure that you are only entering the number part of your reference number. If you get your Homemove number wrong a second time, you will hear:	“I’m sorry, the reference number you have entered is not found. Please check with your council or housing association and call again.”

Things to consider before bidding

When choosing a property to bid for, you need to consider a number of things. You can ask your council or your landlord if any of these circumstances apply to you.

Can I bid for properties in an area I'm not registered in?

Yes, sometimes. If a council opens up a property to bids from people registered in other areas, they will advertise it as a 'cross boundary property'.

When available these will appear at the bottom of the list of properties you can see when you log into the website or on your printed property list, if you receive one. You can bid on these properties in the normal way if they match your assessed need.

Is the property available to homeseekers, transfers, or both?

Most properties will be available for both homeseekers and transfer applicants, and the adverts will display the 'H/T' icon. But if you do see an advert with a 'H' or a 'T' icon, this means only homeseekers ('H') or transfer applicants ('T') can bid.

Your bid will not count, for example, if you are a homeseeker and you bid on a property advertised only for transfer applicants.

Is there an age restriction on some properties?

Yes. Some properties have a minimum age requirement, for example in some schemes for older people. If an age restriction icon appears on the advert (see page 11) you can only bid on these properties if you are in that age range.

Some properties have a mobility group

This is intended to provide a guide to people who have different levels of mobility need. Priority will usually be given to those who have a need for this type of property. The mobility groups are explained on page 15.

Pets

Some landlords will not allow you to keep a cat or a dog unless the property has its own garden. If you have a pet, please check with the landlord.

Before you bid for a property

Check out the location of the property on a map to make sure it's really a place you would consider moving to, and make sure you meet the criteria stated in the advert.

Circumstances where you may not be invited to view a property

- you are in rent arrears
- you have been involved in anti-social behaviour
- in exceptional circumstances, eg where the offer would conflict with the objectives to ensure offers are sensitively made and that properties are let quickly.

You can ask at your housing office if any of these circumstances apply to you. You can also ask your council to review the decision to exclude you from the scheme at any time.

What kind of tenancy will I be offered?

The type of tenancy you are offered will depend on the landlord and whether you are a homeseeker or transfer applicant. If you are not sure of the tenancy being offered, contact the landlord for more information.

Affordable rented properties

The government has introduced '**Affordable Rent**' properties, which will be offered on some of the properties advertised through Homemove.

These properties will be advertised with rents set at no more than 80% of the local market rent or the housing benefit limit. As these rents are higher than traditional social rents, you may have to complete an affordability check before an offer is made.




Tenants who bid and are successful on these types of properties will be offered a flexible tenancy which will last for a minimum of five years.





If you have any questions about a property you can contact the landlord of the property - contact details are on pages 3-4 of this guide and on www.homemove.org.uk





Key to advert symbols






Our adverts are ordered by the type of property, and contain symbols for an at-a-glance guide to the details and who can bid for it. These symbols are explained below.



Some housing association properties are advertised with priority given to applicants from their own list. Where this applies it will say so in the advert.



<p>H Available for homeseekers only</p> <p>T Available for transferring tenants only</p> <p>H/T Available for homeseekers and transferring tenants</p>	<p>You will need to have your support needs assessed if you would like to be considered for seniors housing in Brighton & Hove</p> <p> Low support needs</p> <p> Medium support needs</p> <p> High support needs</p>
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   	Number of bedrooms in the property
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   	Minimum and maximum number of people who can live in the property
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    	Floor level of property, if a flat or maisonette
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 	Property designed for people of this age or above
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<p> Mobility Group One</p> <p> Mobility Group Two</p>	<p>Typically suitable for a person who uses a wheelchair full time, indoors and outdoors. The property will provide full wheelchair access throughout. Applicants assessed as needing this type of property may be prioritised.</p> <p>Typically suitable for a person with restricted walking ability and for those who may need to use a wheelchair some of the time. The property will have internal and external level or ramped access, but some parts may not be fully wheelchair accessible. Applicants assessed as needing this type of property may be prioritised.</p>
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Mobility Group Three

Typically suitable for a person able to manage a few steps, but unable to manage steep gradients. The property may have adaptations to help people with limited mobility. Applicants assessed as needing this type of property may be prioritised.

Accompanying photographs in the adverts only show typical properties in the advertised block or street. Please do not contact any occupants in these buildings.

General information

Bid deadline

Bidding opens every other Friday. Your bids must reach us by 2pm the following Wednesday. Bids received after this time will not be considered.

Need help bidding?

You can contact your local council, or the housing association administering your council's housing register, who will be able to help and advise you on how to make your bids and talk you through the bidding process (see contact details on pages 3-4).. Your landlord or local council can also arrange an appointment with an interpreter if you need one.

Unable to access the website?

If you feel you or someone you support will have difficulty accessing or using the website please contact your local office. You may be able to have a list of vacant properties sent to you in the post for free.

Bidding

On the internet go to www.homemove.org.uk and log on with your Homemove number and date of birth

By telephone call 0906 294 2036 and follow the instructions (see page 10 for instructions on making your bids by telephone)

By text send a text message to 07781 472726 (see page 9 for instructions on making your bids by text)