

TRANSLATIONS

If English is not your first language and you need a translation, we can get one for you.

ALBANIAN

Nëse anglishtja nuk është gjuha juaj amtare dhe keni nevojë për një përkthim, ne mund t'ua sigurojmë atë.

BENGALI

ইংরেজী আপনার মাতৃভাষা না হলে এবং আপনার কোন অনুবাদের প্রয়োজন হলে আমরা তা প্রদান করতে সক্ষম।

CHINESE

如果英文不是您的第一語言，而您需要翻譯的話，我們可以為您安排。

GUJARATI

જો તમારી પહેલી ભાષા અંગ્રેજી ન હોય અને તમને ભાષાંતરની જરૂર હોય તો અમે તમને તે આપી શકીએ છીએ.

HINDI

यदि अँग्रेज़ी आप की पहली भाषा नहीं है और आप को अनुवाद की आवश्यकता है तो यह हम आपको प्रदान कर सकते हैं

KURDISH

Heke îngilîzî zimanê we yê yekem nîne û pêwîstîya we bi wergêr heye, em dikarin yekî ji we re bibînin

POLISH

Jeżeli język angielski nie jest Twoim językiem ojczystym i wymagasz tłumaczenia, możemy to zapewnić.

PORTUGUESE

Se o Inglês não é a sua língua materna e precisa de uma tradução, nós podemos obtê-la.

PUNJABI

ਜੇਕਰ ਇੰਗਲਿਸ਼ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਅਤੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰਤ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਲਈ ਅਸੀਂ ਇਸਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ।

SOMALI

Haddii Ingiriisku aanu ahayn afkaaga kowaad oo aad u baahan tahay turjumaad, annagaa kuu samayn karra.

URDU

اگر انگریزی آپ کی پہلی زبان نہیں ہے اور آپ کو ترجمہ کی ضرورت ہے تو ہم آپ کے لئے فراہم کر سکتے ہیں۔

VIETNAMESE

Nếu quý vị không thạo Anh văn và cần bản dịch, chúng tôi sẽ giúp quý vị một bản.

If you would like this information in another language, Braille, audio tape, large print, easy English, BSL video or CD rom or plain text please contact us.

www.bristol.gov.uk

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Introduction to HomeChoice Bristol

What is HomeChoice Bristol

HomeChoice Bristol is the name of the scheme that Bristol City Council and partner housing associations within the city use to allocate their properties. All properties are advertised and people on HomeChoice Bristol who qualify for that size of property can express an interest in properties they want to be considered for. This is called placing a 'bid'.

You cannot bid until your HomeChoice Bristol application has been fully assessed. You will receive a letter confirming your reference number and banding award once the assessment has been completed.



www.homechoicebristol.co.uk



Citizen Service Points

Opening hours are Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 9am to 5pm, Wednesday 10.30 am to 5pm and Friday 9am to 4.30pm, with the exception of Ridingleaze which is closed on Monday and Temple Street which is open until 5pm Monday to Friday.

All Citizen Service Points except Ridingleaze offer an appointment only service for Homechoice Bristol unless you only need help with bidding or are handing in evidence in which case you can just drop in to the office.

Appointments can be made by calling **0117 922 2400**

■ Fishponds

Robinson House,
Hockeys Lane,
Fishponds,
BS16 3HL

■ Ridingleaze

Ridingleaze House,
Ridingleaze,
Lawrence Weston,
BS11 0QE

■ Hartcliffe

Symes House,
Peterson Square,
Hartcliffe,
BS13 0BD

■ Southmead

Southmead House,
Greystoke Ave,
Southmead,
BS10 6BQ

■ Central - 100 Temple Street

(By appointment only)
100 Temple Street,
Bristol,
BS1 6AG



and send you a letter telling you what band you are in.

Your application will be placed in one of four bands with the highest being Band 1 and the lowest being Band 4. Applications will be considered in date order within each band.

Your application will be considered by each of the housing association partners in the scheme.

Information about banding and the Housing Allocation scheme policy can be found on the HomeChoice Bristol web site at www.homechoicebristol.co.uk

Service Standards that you can expect from us

- We aim to acknowledge application forms within five working days of receiving them.
- We aim to assess your housing need within four weeks of receiving your application.
- We will tell you what priority we have awarded you.

Who can apply

In order to be accepted onto HomeChoice Bristol you must be eligible for an allocation of social housing and qualify to be included.

You may not be eligible if you are subject to immigration control.

The following groups of people will not qualify and their application will be rejected:

- Applicants under 16 years of age at the date they apply
- Applicants not currently living in the Bristol city boundary or not having lived in the Bristol city boundary for at least 2 years at the date which they apply.
- Applicants earning over £40,000 per year
- Applicants with savings over £40,000
- Applicants who own their own home
- Prisoners still serving a sentence
- Applicants guilty of serious breaches of a current or previous tenancy
- Applicants providing false or misleading information
- Applicants not currently living in the United Kingdom
- Applicants who have been assessed but have subsequently not placed any bids

- Statutorily homeless applicants who refuse a suitable offer.

If you qualify to be included on HomeChoice Bristol, your application will be assessed. Some people will be suspended from bidding.

The following groups of people will be suspended from bidding:

- Applicants owing £500 or more to Bristol city Council or one of our partner housing associations
- Applicants guilty of anti-social behaviour where a notice has been served
- Applicants who refuse two suitable offers.

Changes in circumstances

If your circumstances change (for example, you move to another address or there is a significant change in your financial situation), you must tell us as soon as possible. We can then make sure that we give your application the correct priority. You can tell us about a change in your circumstances online at www.homechoicebristol.co.uk Every year, we will ask you whether you want to renew your application.

If you do not respond, we will cancel your application.



Complaints, comments or compliments

Bristol City Council is committed to providing a high quality service to all its Citizens. We welcome feedback from Citizens.

If you would like to submit a compliment or complaint about the services you have received, you can email faircomment@bristol.gov.uk or write to us at

Freepost RTKJ-SGBZ-ULSH
Customer Relations Team
(100TS)
PO Box 3176
Bristol City Council
BS3 9FS

Or you can go to any of the Citizen service points

How to contact us

If you have a rehousing enquiry or want to discuss your application you can talk to a Citizen Advisor at the **Citizen Service Centre**. The centre is open 8.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. You can contact the centre by:

- Telephone: **0117 922 2400**
- Textphone: **0117 357 4444**

Alternatively, you can contact HomeChoice Bristol by post.

- **By Post:**
HomeChoice Bristol (TS),
PO Box 3176,
Bristol BS3 9FS

From what date will my application be considered?

Applications will be considered in date order within each band. The date an application will be considered from is known as the effective date. For applications in Band 4, the effective date is the date the application is received. For applications in Bands 1–3 the effective date is the date the application is assessed into that band.

What if I have more than one need?

If an application falls into two or more band categories indicated by housing need (HN), the application will be placed in the higher of the two bands and the effective date will be back dated by six months. This is to ensure those with the greatest housing need have preference. When taking into consideration composite need, an application will only ever be backdated for a maximum of six months.

How many bedrooms am I entitled to?

Each of the following will be entitled to one bedroom:

- An adult
- Two adults that live together as partners (unless the council's Health and Housing Officer recommends they require separate bedrooms).
- Two same sex siblings under 21 years of age.
- Two siblings of the opposite sex under 10 years of age.

Applicants will normally only be able to bid for a size of property that matches with their bedroom entitlement. There may be occasions where a landlord permits a property to be under occupied and may allow smaller households to bid. This will be specified in the advert.

Bidding

Once your application for HomeChoice Bristol has been accepted you will be given a reference number and password which you will need in order to make bids for the properties advertised online at www.homechoicebristol.co.uk

Properties will be advertised on a weekly cycle starting at 00.01am on Tuesday morning and ending the following Sunday night at 23.59pm. You can place a bid for a maximum of three bids in each cycle.

Properties are **NOT** allocated on a first come first serve basis. The person in the highest band who has been waiting the longest will usually be offered the property. However, this may not apply to properties which have been advertised with restrictions, for example, properties that have been adapted in some way, or where a minimum age limit applies.

Before you place a bid for a property, you must read the advert so that you are certain that you want to be considered for the property.

There are three simple ways of bidding for properties on HomeChoice Bristol as follows:

On the internet: The easiest way to bid is via the HomeChoice Bristol web site, www.homechoicebristol.co.uk

If you do not have access to the internet you can visit any of the Citizen Service Points (*see page 10 for locations and opening times*). A Citizen Advisor will be available to help you make a bid online if you are having difficulties or would like to be shown how to use the web site. Other free Internet access is available at your local library.

By phone: Bid through the automated 24 hour phone line **0845 270 1382** which is available in the following language options: English, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Farsi, Gujarati, Hindi, Kurdish, Polish, Portugese, Punjabi, Somali, Urdu.

By text message: You can send a text message to **07781 486 941**, including your reference number and the reference number for the property you want to bid for.

Alternatively: If you are unable to use any of the above ways to bid, please call **0117 922 2400** where we can discuss alternative options with you.

If you would like more information on how to bid for properties please see the 'How to bid for properties' help sheet.

The Banding scheme

Band 1. An applicant will be placed in Band 1 if:

- They need to be moved by the council or housing association within three months for redevelopment or major repairs.
- They need to move to larger accommodation to become a foster carer (as recommended by Children and Young People's Services).
- They are a council or housing association tenant and are under occupying accommodation by at least two rooms.
- They are severely overcrowded in that they are at least three bedrooms short. **HN** (Housing Need – see 'What if I have more than one need?' page 8).
- They are a provider of the Branchout Supported Lodgings scheme as confirmed by the Childrens and Young People Service, and require a larger property in order to perform this role.
- They do not come within any of the categories already reflected within the scheme, but have an exceptional and urgent need to be rehoused within three months.

- They or a member of their household has a serious and/or life threatening physical or mental health problem which is directly linked to their current housing. There is an urgent need to move to a different type of housing or area in order to enable the applicant (or household member) to function independently and safely. **HN**
- They are a member of the regular Armed Forces and meet one of the reasonable preference categories in Band 2.
- They are a care leaver moving from Externally Supported accommodation.
- They are moving out of an adapted social housing property.
- They are being discharged from hospital and do not have suitable accommodation.
- They have learning difficulties or mental health issues and have been accepted onto the Community Supported Accommodation scheme.

Band 2. An applicant will be placed in Band 2 if:

- They are severely overcrowded in that they are two rooms short of their bedroom entitlement. **HN**
- They qualify for the Move-On scheme.
- S/he qualifies under the Supported Lodgings Scheme and is ready to move to independent social housing.
- They or a member of their household needs to move urgently due to harassment and is at significant risk of harm.
- They are owed a full homeless duty.
- They are a care leaver.
- They are a member of the Key Ring supported living network.
- They are under-occupying a Bristol Housing partnership property that is in high demand
- They are living in unsanitary or unsatisfactory housing and there is a threat to their health and welfare.
- They are a Bristol housing partnership tenant who is overcrowded and a category 1 space and crowding hazard exists.
- They are a member of the regular Armed forces and meet one of the reasonable preference categories in band 3.

Band 3. An applicant will be placed in Band 3 if:

- They are a Bristol Housing Partnership tenant and are under occupying accommodation by one room, and requesting a move to accommodation with one room less than they currently occupy.
- They are overcrowded in that they are one bedroom short of their bedroom entitlement. **HN**
- They or a member of their household has a physical or mental health problem that is in part related to their current housing and could be helped by rehousing into a different type of accommodation or area. The property cannot be reasonably adapted and the problem does not meet the criteria for Band 1. **HN**
- They are homeless but a full duty has not been accepted.
- They or a member of their household, needs to move to a particular locality of the city, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship to themselves or to others. **HN**

Band 4.

If an application does not meet any of the criteria set out in bands 1–3 it will be placed in Band 4.