

# Leeds Homes

A GUIDE TO LEEDS CITY COUNCIL'S LETTINGS POLICY



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This leaflet is a summary of Leeds City Council's lettings policy. A copy of the full lettings policy is available in any housing office or it can be downloaded from Leeds City Council's website;

[www.leeds.gov.uk](http://www.leeds.gov.uk)

## Introduction

The Leeds Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) and Belle Isle Tenant Management Organisation (BITMO) follow Leeds City Council's lettings policy when they rehouse customers.

### The Leeds ALMOs are:

- Aire Valley Homes
- East North East Homes
- West North West Homes

### The lettings policy sets out:

- how the Leeds Homes Register operates
- how we assess a customer's housing need
- how we let our properties

The current version of the lettings policy was implemented on 5 January 2011.

There is very high demand for council housing in Leeds. There are around 28,000 households on the housing register and we currently let around 5000 properties a year. This means that we are unable to rehouse the majority of households on the register.



## The Leeds Homes Register (LHR)

The Leeds Homes Register is a register of households who are looking for social housing in Leeds. Leeds Homes will share your information with our partner housing association landlords who may contact you directly with offers of housing.

There are several housing associations in Leeds who are not part of the Leeds Homes Register, so you should consider registering with them separately. Contact details of all housing associations in Leeds can be found in the 'Landlord Contact Details' leaflet.

Anyone aged 16 or over can apply for housing by completing a membership form. Membership forms are available from housing offices, One Stop Centres, the Leeds Homes website [www.leadshomes.org.uk](http://www.leadshomes.org.uk) or by telephoning 0113 222 4413.

We may not accept applications from people with a history of rent arrears or anti-social behaviour. There are some people who arrive in the UK from abroad that the law says we cannot rehouse. If this is the case, we will write to you to explain why we are unable to rehouse you. If your circumstances change please let us know as soon as possible to get your membership details updated.

We will write to you every year to check that you want to remain on the register and to make sure your information is up to date.



## The priority bands

Members of the Leeds Homes Register will be placed into one of three bands according to their housing needs.

**Band A** - This band consists of households who have a **very urgent** need to be rehoused.

**Band B** - This band consists of households who have a **moderately urgent need** to be rehoused.

**Band C** - This band consists of all other households including those with a **low or no housing need**.

When deciding which band you should be in we will look at your medical needs, your housing conditions, whether you are homeless or any other reason that you need to be rehoused.

### How long is priority awarded for?

Priority awards last for 120 days. We will write to you to let you know when your priority is due to expire.

### Can priority awards be extended?

Yes. Extension requests should be made to the local housing office, One Stop centre or by calling 0113 222 4413. All extension requests are considered on an individual basis.

### Can priority be withdrawn?

Yes, if your circumstances change or if you refuse an offer of a home and your refusal is considered 'unreasonable.'



## How do I find out about available homes?

Available council homes are advertised through the Leeds Homes flyer and website [www.leedshomes.org.uk](http://www.leedshomes.org.uk). The flyer is available in housing offices and is published in the Ad Trader every Thursday.

## How do I 'bid' for a property?

Members of the Leeds Homes Register who are interested in a particular property can register their interest by making a 'bid'. This can be done by telephone, text, on the website [www.leedshomes.org.uk](http://www.leedshomes.org.uk) or in person at a housing office or One Stop Centre.

We then create a shortlist of bidders who meet the requirements for the property, for example in terms of the number of bedrooms. Our properties are let in one of the following ways:

- 75% of council homes are advertised in the **housing need quota** where the property is let to the person in the highest priority band. If there is more than one person in the same band then the person who has been waiting the longest in that band will normally be offered the property.
- 25% of council homes are advertised in the **date of registration quota** where the property is let to the person with the earliest date of registration and a local connection to the area.

Sometimes the person at the top of the shortlist is not offered the property, for example, if they have a history of rent arrears or anti-social behaviour or people who have deliberately worsened their housing circumstances.

Waiting times vary between areas and property types. Property adverts include information about recent lets of similar properties in the same area. You can find out the number of bidders, as well as the priority and length of time in priority of the successful bidder. The date of registration of the successful bidder is given for properties advertised in the date of registration quota.

We publish more detailed information on the Leeds Homes website [www.leedshomes.org.uk](http://www.leedshomes.org.uk)



## What size of property can I bid for?

Each household on the Leeds Homes Register has a bedroom entitlement based on the number of people in the household and the age and gender of any children.

A household will not normally be shortlisted for a property which does not match their bedroom entitlement.

Couples and single people aged 16 and over are entitled to their own bedroom. Children of the same gender are expected to share a bedroom if they are both under 16 years old. Children of different genders are expected to share up to the age of 10 years.

Sometimes a household may be assessed as needing an extra bedroom due to medical needs or for a carer.

## Which property types can I bid for?

Properties will only be let if the property is suitable for a household's needs. For example:

- Preference for adapted properties will be given to people needing adaptations;
- Sheltered housing will normally only be let to people aged 60 and over who require the warden service;
- Preference for houses will be given to households with the primary care of dependent children. People with access to children can bid for flats with an extra bedroom.

Before bidding you should check the property advert for other lettings criteria such as local lettings policies.



## I am going to lose my home, what should I do?

Leeds Housing Options aims to prevent homelessness by offering advice and assistance on housing and accommodation to those in housing and/or homelessness related need. Contact them on 0113 222 4412.

## What do Leeds City Council do with the information on the form?

By law, all the information on the Leeds Homes Register will be kept confidential. We do share information with other agencies in some circumstances, for example:

- To assess your application;
- To ensure the accuracy of the information provided;
- To prevent or detect fraud.

Leeds City Council aims to ensure that everyone who applies for housing is treated fairly irrespective of age, caring responsibilities, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race (including ethnic or national origins, colour and nationality), religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Regular monitoring takes place to ensure that Leeds City Council offers equal access to services.

## Can I appeal against a decision?

If you feel that a wrong decision has been made, you have the right to a review of the decision. Contact Leeds Homes for a right to review form on 0113 222 4413.

If you would like more information about Leeds City Council's lettings policy you can contact us in one of the following ways:

**Telephone:** 0113 222 4413

**Minicom:** 0113 222 4410

**Email us at:** [leeds.homes@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:leeds.homes@leeds.gov.uk)

**Write to us at:**

Leeds Homes Team, Merrion House, Merrion Centre, Leeds LS2 8BB

Please refer to our other leaflets for guidance;

- Guide to choice based lettings
- Landlord contact details

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