



How the Housing Register works



Do you need help with this leaflet?

Maybe English is not your first language, you have difficulty reading it because the print is too small, or you are not sure what it means.

Please phone **01395 517446**.

If you wish to be considered for social rented housing in East Devon you will need to complete an application form which is obtainable from the Council Offices, Knowle, Sidmouth or alternatively at the Town Hall Offices, Exmouth. The questions we ask on the form will help us work out your type of housing need so it is important that you complete every question on the form. Without an address your application will not be registered.

In most areas there is a long waiting list for vacancies and limited empty homes for letting.

When we have placed your application on the Housing Register we will write to tell you:

- which banding your application has been placed in
- the size of home you can apply for
- the application date and registration number.

If we refuse to register your application, you will be given a written explanation of the reasons why it was refused. If you disagree with our decision or the banding

we have put you in, you have a right to request a review of either decision within 21 days of our notification to you.

If you wish to move home but we feel there is no particular housing problem, you will be placed in the Bronze banding. **The chances of you being rehoused if your application is placed in the Bronze band are very limited.**

We will place you in the Silver banding if you have a degree of housing need. For a list of examples of what we consider to be a housing need see item 2: '*Silver banding*', later in this booklet. Again, the opportunity to be housed by the Council is limited.

If you have an urgent need to be rehoused, we will place you in the Gold banding. For a list of examples of what we consider to be a housing need see item 1: '*Gold banding*', later in this booklet.

The Housing Register works on a date order basis. There is usually a long wait for housing because of limited availability and, in some

cases, a very long wait. However, if you are in the Gold band you will make steady progress to the top of the housing register as those above you are housed.

If your application is assessed by our Housing Needs Manager and considered to be so urgent that it

should take priority over all other applicants, we will issue you with a priority card. The use of priority cards is strictly controlled and if you do not use your priority within three months (by failing to 'bid' for a property) your need for a priority card will be reviewed.

I. Gold banding

East Devon District Council applicants only

This section only applies if you are not a tenant of this Council or a tenant of a partner Housing Association.

We will place you in the gold band if you experience one or more of the following:

- You are threatened with homelessness, are in priority need and eligible for assistance within the meaning of Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002).
- Your home is unfit for human habitation or in serious disrepair, and is substantially affecting your living conditions.
- You are living in temporary or insecure accommodation.
- Your home is lacking essential facilities.
- You have a high priority due to welfare, medical or economic circumstances which are being affected by your current housing, and re-housing would improve or alleviate this issue.

- You are sharing essential facilities with other households.
- Your household is split or separated because there is no suitable accommodation you can all occupy together.
- You are eligible for (and wish to move into) sheltered accommodation.
- You have been referred for rehousing by the Agricultural Dwelling House Advisory Committee in accordance with the Rent Act 1976.
- You have been designated as an essential worker (providing an essential local service) and are unable to secure alternative

settled housing within easy reach of your workplace.

- Your household is overcrowding your home.
- You have a need to move to a particular locality within the district and failure to meet that need would cause hardship to yourself themselves or others.

Please note that applicants who experience more than one of the criteria above may be given priority over other applicants in the Gold banding (other than applicants with a priority card).

East Devon District Council existing tenants or partner RSL existing tenants only

This section applies if you are a tenant of East Devon District Council or partner RSL.

We will place you in the gold band if you experience one or more of the following:

- You have welfare, medical or economic circumstances which are being affected by your

housing and which are best improved or resolved by re-housing you.

- You wish to return to a designated parish where you have a local connection.
- Your household is split or separated because there is no suitable accommodation you can occupy together.

- You are eligible for (and wish to move) into sheltered accommodation.
- Your household is overcrowding your home.
- Your household is under-occupying your home.
- You are living in a designated isolated area and wish to live in a different parish and you have serious welfare, medical and/or economic reasons to move.

- You have a need to move to a particular locality within the district and a failure to move would cause hardship.

Please note that applicants who experience more than one of the criteria above may be given priority over other applicants in the Gold banding (other than applicants with a priority card).

2. Silver banding

East Devon District Council new applicants only

This section only applies if you are not a tenant of this Council or a tenant of a partner Housing Association.

We will place you in the silver band if you meet one of the following criteria:

- You are homeless or threatened with homelessness but are defined as “non-priority” in accordance with

Section 189 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002).

- You have been referred to this Council by another Local Authority under Section. 193 of Part VII of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002.
- You hold an Assured Tenancy or an Assured Shorthold tenancy.

- You have medium priority on medical or welfare grounds. (see explanation under Item 5 of this leaflet).
- You share essential facilities with extended family members in your household.
- You have poor accessibility. For example, you need to pass through other tenants or owner’s accommodation to access the garden and so on.
- There are physical defects in property. For example:
 - dampness
 - lack of natural lighting
 - drainage
 - lack of water supply.
- You are resident in a caravan under 22ft in length.

East Devon District Council existing tenants or partner RSL existing tenants only

This section applies if you are a tenant of East Devon District Council or partner RSL.

We will place you in the silver band if you are in one of the situations shown on the list below:

- You are homeless or threatened with homelessness but are defined as “non-priority” in accordance with Section 189 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002).
- You have dependent children and you live in a flat.
- You have medium priority on medical or welfare grounds.
- You have poor accessibility, for example, you need to pass through other tenants or owner’s accommodation to gain access to the garden and so on.

3. Bronze banding

We will place you in the Bronze banding:

- If you do not demonstrate any element of housing need but have a genuine reason to move to East Devon, we will be placed into the “Bronze” category banding.
- If you qualify to appear on the Housing Register and are in housing need you may be allocated into this category if you have the ability to secure your own accommodation in the private sector.

4. Priority card

You will be given a “Priority” card if your need for housing is assessed as so urgent that you should take priority over all other applicants. This decision will be made by the Housing Needs Manager.

We will strictly control the use of priority cards and if you do not use a priority card within three months, your need for a priority card will be reviewed.

If you hold a priority card you will be given preference over gold band applicants if you choose to use your card in bidding for a property.

We list below some examples of the type of situations that would qualify for a priority card (this is not a complete list):

- A very urgent need to move on welfare, medical or economic grounds.

Examples of this ground would include the following:

- your present home is regarded as unsuitable on discharge from hospital
- your admission to hospital or a residential home could be prevented by you moving to a more suitable home

- serious matters of a social welfare nature requiring a move
- where serious financial circumstances require a move
- An emergency move is necessary in accordance with the provisions of the Housing Act 1996 – Part VII (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002).
- Any other specific emergency situation, for example major structural defects; fire damage; flooding; or serious estate management issues.

5. Medical, welfare and/or economic circumstances

Where you or a household member has a significant medical condition, welfare problem or economic circumstance which is caused or aggravated by the property you occupy, and where

this condition needs to be eased or resolved by re-housing, you will normally be considered to be in urgent housing need.

5.1 Welfare priority will be defined as follows

We will first consider your wellbeing with information provided by you and from

appropriate partner agencies such as Housing, Social Services and Health.

1. Urgent Case (Priority Card)

If you have a significant welfare, social or economic circumstance that puts you in urgent housing need.

2. High Priority (Gold)

If you are experiencing a high level of risk and there is a serious housing need because of the threat to your independence.

3. Medium Priority (Silver)

If a move would help with daily living tasks and your mobility would be improved, but there is not a serious threat to your independence.

4. Low Priority (Bronze)

If your quality of life would improve by moving but where you still have your independence in your existing home.

5.2 Medical priority will be defined as follows

A system of self certification by applicants is detailed on a medical assessment form. The Housing Needs Manager will decide the banding status after seeking a medical opinion if considered necessary.

You will be awarded a degree of medical priority only if your medical condition is aggravated by your current accommodation, or if your disability is such that it renders your current accommodation unsuitable.

1. Urgent Case (Priority Card)

If you have an urgent need to move as your current accommodation has a serious impact on your present health.

2. High Priority (Gold)

If your need to move is vital to your present health.

3. Medium Priority (Silver)

If you have a substantial need to move due to your present health.

4. Low Priority (Bronze)

If you have no real medical need to move.

5.3 Economic Circumstances

The Housing Needs Manager will decide the degree of priority under this heading.

Your case will need to be supported by appropriate agencies. We will assess your degree of priority after considering the support they have provided and the following:

- your income and expenditure.
- the type and condition of property you currently occupy.
- The distance to your employment and to schools and your transport arrangements.

It is expected that the number of cases in this category will be small.

6. Tackling anti-social behaviour and rent arrears

If we consider you to be unsuitable to become a tenant because of anti-social behaviour or significant rent arrears, you may

not be offered any housing at all, or you may have your priority reduced.

7. Housing Association/ Registered Social Landlords

There is no distinction between the allocation of a Council house or the nomination to a Housing Association or to a Registered

Social Landlord who have housing in the district. A nomination is where we are invited to refer a tenant to one of our partners.

However, we do not have nomination rights to all Housing Association homes that become empty. The names and addresses of the Housing Associations with

housing stock in the District are available from the Housing Needs Team or can be found on our website www.eastdevon.gov.uk.

8. Exceptions to indicators of need

The following are some examples of exceptions to indicators of need. If you have income, assets or equity to purchase a property or can afford private rent levels or perhaps to put right any problems

experienced in your current home. We will class your application as low housing need. We will deal with individual cases on their own merits.

9. Review Procedure

You have the right to request a review of the following decisions:

- your eligibility to join the Housing Register
- if we refuse to register you
- our assessment of your housing need or your allocation of housing
- your initial “banding” category.

You must request a review of any of the above decisions in writing within 21 days of receiving our original notification. Similarly you will be notified in writing of our decision on the review within 56 days of you requesting the review.

10. Refusals of offers and deferrals

If you apply for a property and then later refuse the property we offer to you, you may have your applications suspended for six months. Similarly, if you are

classed as statutory homeless we may notify you that we have discharged our duty and we will make no further offers of accommodation to you

11. Worsening of circumstances

If we consider that you have deliberately worsened your housing condition arrangements,

we will place your application in the Bronze banding category for a period of twelve months.

12. False statement and withholding information

It is a criminal offence if you knowingly or recklessly make a statement which is false or if you withhold information which you

are required to give. We will take legal action to evict anyone who has misled us in this way.

13. Equal opportunities

We have adopted an Equal Opportunity Policy and Racial Equality which covers allocations and nominations. In operating this policy we will comply with the Data Protection and Freedom of

Information Legislation. This policy is also consistent with our Customer First Policy which attempts to ensure our services are provided how, where and when the customer needs them.

14. Keeping us up to date with your application

Remember to tell us of any changes that may effect your application. Changes may include:

- a new child
- a family member leaving home
- a change of address
- you have moved to the district, and have now been resident in the area for at least one year.

We will regularly review applications on our housing register. You will be sent a review letter. You must response to this

review letter and provide details of any changes with your application. If you do not respond you will be deleted from the Housing Register.

A copy of the Council's *Housing Allocation Policy* and details of the Choice Based Lettings Scheme can be found on our website www.eastdevon.gov.uk.

Contact us



Phone:

01395 517469 between 8.30am and 5.00pm



Visit us at:

- **The Council Offices, Knowle, Sidmouth**
daily between 8.30am and 5.00pm
- **Exmouth Town Hall**
daily between 9.00am and 4.30pm



Write to us:

Housing Needs
East Devon District Council
Knowle, Sidmouth EX10 8HL



Email us:

housingneeds@eastdevon.gov.uk

Visit our website:

www.eastdevon.gov.uk