

What is KENT HOMECHOICE?

Kent Homechoice gives people more say about where they live. It introduces a new way of letting council and housing association homes across the district. Rather than the council allocating properties, the scheme enables tenants and housing applicants to apply (bid) for the properties they are interested in.



*The name of choice based
lettings in Kent
In Shepway from early 2009*

For more information, please
call Shepway District Council
on 01303 853700
or email:
housing.needs@shepway.gov.uk



How do I get on to Kent Homechoice?

If you are already on the housing register, your application will be automatically transferred on to the new scheme; you don't need to reapply. However, if your circumstances change then you do still need to inform us of this.

If you are not already on the register, you can apply at any time by filling in Shepway District Council's housing application form.

A user guide and welcome pack is sent to all registered applicants and once you have received this you can start to bid.

Once choice based lettings starts, how will homes be let?

Every two weeks we will advertise all the available empty properties on the Kent Homechoice website www.kenthomechoice.org.uk and in the fortnightly freesheet. The advert will tell you all about the property, for example how many bedrooms, what the rent is, who the landlord is and if any restrictions apply.

You can make bids in the following ways:

- online at www.kenthomechoice.org.uk
- by telephone
- by text message or
- by posting a special coupon.

Every bid you make is registered along with your details from the housing register. The information is used to create a shortlist of applicants for the property. This is in order of points, not in order of bids received.

What type of home can I bid for?

You can bid for the properties you are eligible for and interested in. We will normally advertise properties based on the following criteria:

- Property size - the advert includes how many bedrooms the property has and the minimum/maximum number of people in the household that can apply.
- Adapted properties may be reserved for people with a specific requirement or need.
- Ground floor accommodation may be offered only to those people who have an agreed need.
- Sheltered housing is only available for people who meet the age requirements or are registered disabled.

How many bids can I make?

You can bid for up to three properties in every fortnightly cycle. The bidding cycle runs from 9.00 a.m. Monday to 12.00 noon the following Monday. If you are bidding on the web, you can start bidding at 5 p.m. on the Friday before the bidding cycle starts.

Once I've made a bid, can I change my mind?

You can change or withdraw your bid if you want to. You can bid again as soon as you are ready.

How do I know if my bid is successful?

A housing officer will contact you to arrange for you to view the property as soon as possible. You will be asked to make a decision as soon as you have viewed the property. This is because there is a very high demand for affordable rented accommodation, which is in very short supply.

We will not write to you if your bid is unsuccessful but you can check how many bids were made for each property and the number of points the successful bidder had, at www.kenthomechoice.org.uk. This will give you an indication of how long you might have to wait.

I am homeless – can I still choose a home through Kent Homechoice?

Yes, but you must first be registered on the Shepway Housing List and you must meet the eligibility criteria.

Can I bid if I am in rent arrears?

You can bid for properties you are eligible for but we will not normally make an offer of accommodation to an applicant in rent arrears. If you want to move, it is important that you keep your rent payments up to date.