

How to apply for a property for the first time or move from one property to another



 **Hounslow**

Hounslow Homes
Managing quality homes for  **Hounslow**

Introduction

This booklet explains what to do if you want to apply for social housing for the first time. It also explains what to do if you already live in a Council or housing association home and want to move. We hope this booklet will help get you into the home you need as quickly as possible.

How To Use This Booklet

Please read this booklet for general guidance on how to apply for a home. More information is available through your local housing office, by calling Hounslow Homes or visiting www.hounslowhomes.org.uk.

London Borough of Hounslow/Hounslow Homes Roles

Hounslow Homes Ltd was formed in 2002 as one of the first Arms Length Management Organisation's in the country. Hounslow Homes is owned by the London Borough of Hounslow (LBH) and manages the Council's housing stock.

All forms detailed in this booklet can be downloaded from Hounslow Homes website: www.hounslowhomes.org.uk

The London Borough of Hounslow as the social landlord continues to own all Council properties in Hounslow and manages all allocations. But day to day management and administration is carried out by Hounslow Homes, a Council owned company.

What you need to do

Application forms

If you want to move, you will need to fill out an application form.

Moving from one property to another

If you are a Council tenant, you need to complete a Hounslow Homes housing transfer form. You can pick up a form at your local housing office or by calling the general enquiry number for your area. You should receive your form within 2 working days of contacting us.

Transfer forms should be sent to the Hounslow Homes area housing office nearest to where you live, listed on page 13. You can download a form at www.hounslowhomes.org.uk which you need to return signed to your local Hounslow Homes housing office.

Applying for a property for the first time

Private sector applicants

If you rent your home from a private landlord, or you live with your parents or other relatives (even if they rent their home from

the Council) you need to complete an application form. The Council's Rehousing Unit deals with private sector forms. To obtain a form please contact Rehousing at 020 8583 3814.

Housing Association tenants

If you rent your home from a Housing Association, Co-op or Trust, you need to complete an application form. Housing Association forms are also available from the London Borough of Hounslow's Rehousing Unit.

When you have fully completed your form, please return it in person or post it.

New application forms for Council homes should be sent to the Rehousing Unit at:
The Civic Centre, Lampton Road,
Hounslow TW3 4DN

Filling out your form

It is very important you answer all the questions on the form fully. We need as much information as possible from you to assess your circumstances fully and place you in the right band. There are guidance notes printed on the form to help you.

If you have any difficulty in completing the form please contact us and we will try and help you over the telephone.

If we can't do this, we will arrange for you to come into the office and receive help. In some cases, we can also come and see you at home. If an interview or home visit is necessary, we will arrange for you to be seen within 10 working days of you contacting us.

Processing your form

When we receive your form, we will date stamp it so we know the date we received it. We will do this the day it is received in our offices as this will also be used as your application registration date. It is a record of everyone who is accepted for rehousing.

We will then check the information you have put on the form and contact you if there is information missing or we need further details from you. To assist us with this please ensure that a contact telephone number is included with your application.

If we cannot register your

application, we will write to you and explain why this cannot be done within 10 working days of receiving your form.

When we have all the information we need, we will input the information onto our computer system, within 5 working days.

Once your details have been entered onto the database, they will be transferred via a secure link to the Locata office. You will become a member of Locata, the choice based lettings scheme and you will receive an information pack. See page 7, **Being a member of Locata.**

Medical assessments

If you feel your housing situation causes a medical problem or makes an existing problem worse for any member of your household included for rehousing, please tell us about it so we can see if you need increased priority to move.

Once you have told us you have medical problems, we will send you a medical self-assessment form within 5 working days. We will continue to process your

application or transfer form while we wait for you to return the medical form to us.

You do this by completing a medical self-assessment form. You need to give us as much information as possible, such as the types and amounts of medication you take and whether you are being treated by a hospital. You do not need further supporting evidence from your doctor, but if this is available anyway, please attach it to the assessment form.

If we need further information from your doctor or from the hospital, we will let you know.

Please send or take the completed form to your local Hounslow Homes housing office if you are a tenant, or to the Rehousing Unit or the Homeless Persons Unit at the London Borough of Hounslow if you are a homeseeker. When we receive your medical form we will date stamp the form. We will do this the same day we receive it in our offices.

We will consider your medical information and if necessary, seek

further specialist advice from either a doctor or occupational therapist. We will write to you with the outcome within 20 working days of receiving the medical information.

We will also amend our database to show any recommendations within 5 working days of receiving the recommendations.

Your right to appeal our decision

If you disagree with any of our decisions, you can appeal against them. If you are a homeseeker, please write to the Rehousing Manager or the Homelessness Manager at The Civic Centre, Lampton Road, Hounslow TW3 4DN. Tenants need to write to the Operations Manager, Hounslow Homes, St Catherine's House, 2 Hanworth Road, Feltham, TW13 5AB.

You will need to give us as much information as possible so we can consider your appeal. We will do this within 10 working days of receiving it, and we will write to you and give you the decision on your appeal and the reasons that

decision has been reached.

If you are not happy with the decision, you may then write to the Customer Complaints Officer at Hounslow Homes or the London Borough of Hounslow.

Your right to appeal a medical assessment

If you are unhappy with a medical decision, you need to ask us for an appeal form, or you can collect one from your local housing office or the Civic Centre. We will send you an appeal form within 48 hours.

You will need to complete the appeal form fully, explaining the grounds for your appeal, and return it. You do not need your doctor's support to appeal. When we receive the form we will date stamp it. We will do this the same day we receive it.

We will then refer the information in the appeal form and the medical form you previously sent to us for further consideration. We will advise you of the outcome of your appeal within 20 working days.

We will update your records to reflect any recommendations from the appeal within 5 working days of receiving the decision.

Locata - the choice based lettings scheme

The London Borough of Hounslow has joined with four neighbouring boroughs and several housing associations to form Locata, a choice based lettings scheme.

When you become a member of Locata, after you have completed and returned your application form, you will be sent a letter. The letter will confirm your band and the size of property you are eligible to bid for and a batch of coupons.

Locata - Choice based lettings means that you can bid for a vacant property rather than waiting for the Council to find you a home.

If you are a Council tenant, rent privately or are homeless, you will become a member of Locata when you apply for a Council home or transfer to another property.

Locata members are placed in one of four bands, A to D, according to their housing need and date order within band.

Locata gives you more choice of where you want to live, and the type of home you want to live in, but there is still a very severe shortage of homes available. This means you may still have a long wait to be housed.

In some cases, you are unlikely to be rehoused in Council housing.

If this happens, we have suggestions that could help you find a new home under 'Other options to move to a new property' on page 11.

Are you eligible for Locata?

You may not be eligible to become a member of Locata, if:

- You are a tenant with a Notice of Seeking Possession outstanding
- You are a homeseeker under immigration control
- You are a homeseeker living in one of the partner boroughs

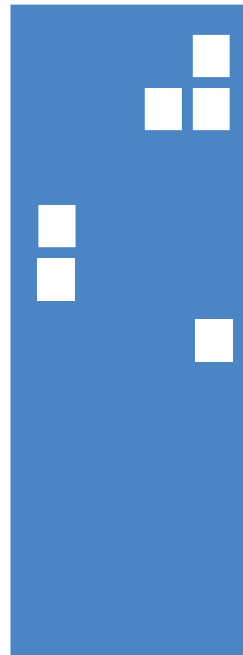
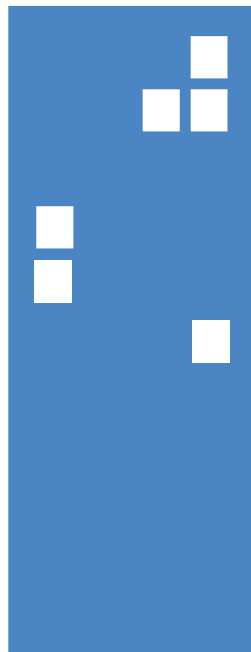
If these circumstances apply to you we will write to you with the reasons why you cannot be added to the Locata list. We will do this within 10 working days of receiving the form.

Being a member of Locata

When you become a member of locata you will be sent:

A Locata Freesheet

The freesheet is published each fortnight, and is usually available on alternate Fridays. The first one is sent to you. You will need to collect future editions from a number of pick up points such as local offices and libraries. A full



list of available pick up points is in the back of the freesheet. You can also download it from the internet at **www.locata.org**

You can also ask to have it posted to you. There may be a small charge for this to cover postage and administration costs. Details of how to arrange this are in the user guide.

Bidding Coupons and Envelopes

You will also receive a supply of coupons for you to bid by post. They have your Locata Individual Number (LIN) printed on them so do not pass them onto anybody else. You can also bid via telephone, SMS text message and by the internet. Details of how to do this are in the user guide.

What should I do when I receive my pack?

Read it carefully and check that the information is correct. Make a separate note of your LIN number.

If you feel anything in your pack is wrong, contact us straight away. If you are a tenant, contact your local Hounslow Homes area office. If you are a homeseeker, contact

the Rehousing Unit, or your caseworker if you have applied as homeless. We will try and resolve your query over the telephone.

If we cannot do this, we will arrange to see you either in the office or at home. We will arrange to see you within 10 working days of you contacting us.

You are now ready to start bidding.

Bidding

You can bid for up to 3 properties in each edition of the Locata freesheet. The "deadline" for bids is printed on the front of each freesheet. Bids not received by that time will not count, so if you choose to bid by post make sure you allow enough time for your coupons to reach the Locata office.

Refer to the letter in your pack to make sure you bid for the right size of home, and read the scheme guide and make sure you understand the different symbols on the advertisements. It may seem confusing at first, and if you need any help, contact us.

We will arrange to interview you either at home or in the office,

and explain to you in detail how to bid. We will do this within 10 working days of you contacting us.

You can arrange for a friend or relative to be present when we interview you if you wish.

In some very limited circumstances, we may arrange for you to be offered a home outside of the Locata scheme. Please see the section on page 11, "Special Arrangements".

Most properties, which are advertised, are advertised for only tenants and/or homeseekers living in the borough where the property is located to bid for. However, at least 1 in 10 homes are available for everyone to bid for, and these are called "cross borough".

They are in a separate part of the freesheet.

Make sure you only bid for homes you are eligible for, or your bid will not count.

When the "deadline" for bids passes, all the bids from all members are processed centrally at the Locata office.

Lists of members who have made bids are then passed back to partner boroughs. We call these lists "shortlists".

Are your details correct?

It is very important we make sure the details we have are correct, so we will "check" an application before we make a formal offer.

This means we may need to come and visit you and confirm the details are still the same as when you applied. Alternatively we may ask you to come into the office.

We aim to do this within 2 working days of the shortlist being received. It is important you do all you can to be available for us to visit or interview you as soon as possible. We may need to see documents such as birth certificates, so please try and have these available.

Offer

Once your circumstances are checked, a formal offer will be made.

In order to let homes as quickly as possible we usually invite up to three households to view the property. Your offer letter will tell

you if you are first, second or third priority. We will always give the highest priority case first refusal, but sometimes second or third priority bidders are offered the tenancy if the higher priority cases refuse.

You will be given a date and time to look at the property. You will need to travel there yourself, and you will be met by a housing officer who will show you the home and answer any questions you have about repairs, rent etc.

You will be encouraged to make a decision to accept the home when you view it, but if you aren't sure we will give you 24 hours from the time of the viewing to make a decision.

You must contact us within 24 hours or we will think you don't want the property and may offer it to somebody else.

If you don't want it you can refuse it, but please think very carefully...it may be a long time before you bid successfully again.

Feedback

Because we have far more members of Locata than available homes, we can't offer everyone a home quickly. In fact, many people will face a very long wait to be rehoused.

You can look in the back of the Locata freesheet and see the band and waiting time of successful bidders.

Remember, houses, and property with a private garden will always attract a very high number of bids.

We can tell you about other possible options, which may help you to find a new home.

Please see the section beginning on the next page about other options.



Special Arrangements

If you are a tenant experiencing exceptional problems such as domestic violence or harassment, we may need to make special arrangements to help you move quickly.

It is essential you talk to us as soon as possible so we can discuss available options. Telephone us or come to the office. We will ensure you are interviewed straight away. If you wish to be interviewed by a member of staff of the same sex as yourself please tell us.

We may refer you to be considered for a "Management Transfer". This offers quicker rehousing in emergency situations. A housing officer will explain the process to you and if appropriate present your case to a panel of senior staff.

Providing you give us the information we need, we will do this within 15 working days.

If you have special needs such as serious medical problems and severe overcrowding, we may be able to refer you to a social welfare panel.

Other options to move to a new property

Homeswap

If you are a tenant of the Council or have a permanent tenancy such as an assured tenancy with another social landlord, in another borough or a housing association, you may be able to do a "Homeswap". This is also known as a "Mutual Exchange".

This means you agree to swap homes with another household. Sometimes more than 2 households are involved.

To register for a Homeswap you need to complete an application form. Forms are available at all Hounslow Homes area offices.

Lawn scheme

This scheme gives you the opportunity to move away from London. Local Councils and Housing Associations with available housing participate in the scheme. Some have houses with gardens available far more quickly than in London. However, all the property is a long way away, for example, the Midlands, Scotland and Wales. It is therefore

important you are sure you want to move, as if you move and find you don't like it, it will be exceedingly difficult to move back to London.

If you are interested in moving please telephone your area housing office and you will be sent information on the scheme.

You can also visit the LAWN website at www.lawn.org.uk

Trading Places

This scheme encourages tenants with spare rooms they no longer need to "trade down" into a

smaller dwelling, with a lump sum payable when we receive vacant possession of the previous home. For more information and an application form, please contact your local area housing office.

Sheltered Housing

There are a number of schemes all over the borough which provide independent housing opportunities for people aged 60+, with the added security of a Sheltered Scheme Manager on hand. Contact your housing office to discuss sheltered accommodation in more detail.

Useful Contacts

Hounslow Homes

Central area – Hounslow & Isleworth/Heston & Cranford

020 8583 4382

020 8583 3959 (minicom)

The Civic Centre, Lampton Road,
Hounslow, TW3 4DN

Email: [info.housingcentral@](mailto:info.housingcentral@hounslowhomes.org.uk)

hounslowhomes.org.uk

East area – Chiswick/Brentford

020 8583 4220

020 8583 4390 (minicom)

Chiswick Town Hall, Heathfield
Terrace, Chiswick, W4 4JE
or 58 – 59 Brentford High Street,
Brentford, TW8 OAH

Email: [info.housingeast@](mailto:info.housingeast@hounslowhomes.org.uk)

hounslowhomes.org.uk

West area – Hanworth, Bedfont & Feltham

020 8583 4383

020 8583 4387 (minicom)

St Catherine's House, 2 Hanworth
Road, Feltham, TW13 5AB

Email: [info.housingcentral@](mailto:info.housingcentral@hounslowhomes.org.uk)

hounslowhomes.org.uk

London Borough of Hounslow

Homeless Persons Unit

The London Borough of
Hounslow, Civic Centre, Lampton
Road, Hounslow TW3 4DN.

Rehousing Unit

The London Borough of
Hounslow, Civic Centre, Lampton
Road, Hounslow TW3 4DN.

If you are a homeseeker call 020
8583 4525

Translations

This booklet explains what to do if you want to apply for a property for the first time. It also explains what to do if you already live in a council or housing association home and want to move. If you require a copy of this leaflet in another language or format, please call 020 8583 2299 or minicom on 020 8583 3122.

Albanian

Nese keni nevojë për kopjen e kesaj broshure ne ndonje gjuhe tjetër, me shkronja te medha, Braille (gjuhen e te verberve) ose ne ndonje format tjetër ju lutemi kontaktoni 020 8583 2299 ose minicom 020 8583 3122. Kjo broshure eshte lidhur me aplikimin për vendbanim me Hounslow Homes.

Arabic

إذا كنت تحتاج للحصول على نسخة من هذا المنشور بلغة مختلفة أو مطبوع بالاحرف الكبيرة أو بلغة برايل أو بأي شكل اخر الرجاء الاتصال على 020 8583 2299 أو على المني كوم 020 8583 3122 . هذا المنشور حول التقديم على مسكن في هاونسلو هومز .

Farsi

اگر به این بروشور به زبان دیگر، چاپ درشت، با الفبای نابینایان و یا شکل دیگر نیاز دارید، لطفاً با شماره تلفن 020 8583 2299 یا مینی کوم 020 8583 3122 تماس بگیرید. این بروشور درباره تقاضا برای خانه از سازمان های هانزلو می باشد.

Gujarati

જો તમને આ પત્રિકાની નકલ બીજી ભાષામાં, મોટા છાપેલા અક્ષરો, અંદાલિપિ (બ્રેઈલ) અથવા બીજી કોઈ રચનામાં જોઈતી હોય તો કૃપા કરી 020 8583 2299 અથવા મિનિકોમ 020 8583 3122 ઉપર સંપર્ક સાધો. આ પત્રિકા હંસલો હોમસ સાથે રહેઠાણ માટે અરજી કરવા વિષે છે.

Translations (contd)

Hindi

यह पत्रक हाउंजलो होम्ज़ के घर के लिए आवेदन करने के बारे में है। यदि इस पत्रक की कॉपी आपको अन्य भाषा में, बड़े अक्षरों में, ब्रेल में या अन्य किसी रूपांक में चाहिए तो कृपया 020 8583 2299 पर या मिनीकॉम 020 8583 3122 पर संपर्क करें।

Punjabi

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਪਰਚੇ ਦੀ ਇਕ ਕਾਪੀ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ, ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ, ਬਰੇਲ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਸ਼ਕਲ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ: 020 8583 2297 ਜਾਂ ਮਿਨੀਕਾਮ ਕਰੋ: 020 8583 3122. ਇਹ ਪਰਚਾ ਹੰਸਲੋ ਹੋਮਜ਼ ਵਿਚ ਰਿਹਾਇਸ਼ ਬਾਰੇ ਅਪਲਾਈ ਕਰਨ ਬਾਰੇ ਹੈ।

Somali

Haddii aad u baahantahay koobbi warqaddan ah oo ku qoran luqaddaada, farta waawayn, farta loogu talagalay dadka indhaha la' ama ku qoran qaabkale fadlan la xidhiidh 020 8583 2299 ama minicom 020 8583 3122. Warqaddani waxay ku saabsantahay sida guri looga dalbado Hounslow Homes.

Urdu

اگر آپ کو اس لیفلٹ کی نقل اردو زبان، بڑے حروف، بریل (ناپینا لوگوں کیلئے) یا کسی اور ڈسٹریکشن میں درکار ہے، تو اس نمبر فون پر کریں: 020 8583 2299 منی کوم کیلئے نمبر یہ ہے: 020 8583 3122۔ یہ لیفلٹ ہاؤنسلو، ہومز میں گھر کی درخواست دینے کے بارے میں ہے۔