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choose & move

Newsletter Issue 2 Autumn 2007

Keeping it in the family

Not a month goes by without new customers moving into their whg homes, but it is not every month that two members of the same family are offered separate properties, in the same trust, within weeks of each other. This is what happened to Kelly-Marie and her Mum, Diane.

Kelly-Marie, a Gold banded applicant, made her first bid in January 2007 but she was not successful on that occasion.

After another failed bid Kelly was starting to feel that she would never be successful but she did not give up. Her third bid, on the 8th May, was for a

house in Bassett Street, Central Walsall. She was then surprised and delighted when she received a letter on the 5th June telling her that her bid for Bassett Street had been successful.

The house was ready for Kelly and her family to move into on the 11th June.

Kelly's mother Diane, who had been staying with friends and relatives for a while, made her first ever bid in May 2007. Diane says: 'over the next few weeks I made lots more bids. You can imagine my surprise when I received a letter in the middle of June telling



me that my first ever bid, for the 2 bedroom flat in Sandwell Street, had been successful'. Her new life in her new home started on 25th June.

Number of homes let from 1st April to 30th September 2007

KEY	
	Bungalows
	Low rise flats (age 60+)
	Low rise flats
	Multi-storey flats
	2 bedroom house/maisonette
	3+ bedroom house/maisonette



Aldridge & Brownhills Housing Trust - total homes let 186



Bloxwich Housing Trust- total homes let 247



Central Walsall Housing Trust- total homes let 172



Darlaston Housing Trust- total homes let 174



Willenhall Housing Trust- total homes let 174



Bidding Tips

Are you ready?

When we advertise a property, it could be ready to move into immediately and you will be asked to pay the rent in advance - so before bidding you should make sure that, if necessary, you would be ready and able to move in straight away.

Make it count

Although you are allowed to bid for up to three properties each week. You should not bid just to make up the numbers. This is important because you will not be allowed to bid again for 12 months if you have bid for and refused three offers in a 12 month period.

Check it out

Please make sure that the property ticks all the right boxes and that you really want to make this your new home before you make a bid.

- Is it the right property?
- Is it in the right area?
- Will it be okay for work, school, shopping etc?

You have from Thursday to the following Tuesday to place your bid so you have plenty of time to check it out.

Making the right choice

Before you bid make sure that you are really interested in the property and/or the area.

Check out the location by:-

- clicking on the *upmystreet* link on the website
- contacting any whg service point.

This is really important if you are in the Gold band because you could go back to the Silver or Bronze band if you bid for and then refuse an offer.

Are you waiting for a transfer?

If the answer is Yes, then you will be interested to know that whg has now signed up to the Homeswapper service.

This helps people like you to find someone to swap homes with (this is what we call a mutual exchange).

This might be quicker than waiting for a transfer through whg and also helps those who want to move to another town or to a different part of the country.

You can check out the service by using the link from our website. If you have any problems with registering or using the homeswapper service please let us know - we need your feedback on this new service. We would also be interested in good news stories so let us know if the service has helped you.

Have you noticed?

Since the last edition we have made improvements to the website - you can now register on-line, check out the properties available and you can even bid on-line too - simply visit chooseandmove.co.uk

Starter Tenancies

Applicants waiting for a whg home should know that if we make an offer to you this will be for a starter tenancy (this does not include whg existing tenants who are wishing to transfer to another property, or to tenants of another social landlord who hold a full tenancy). The starter tenancy will be for 12 months and during this time we will visit you several times to make sure that you are keeping to the agreements we made. This includes things like paying your rent on time, looking after the property and being a good neighbour.

If everything is OK, the tenancy will be converted to an assured tenancy after 12 months but if you have not kept to the agreement you could lose your home.



Your questions answered

Here we answer some of the questions applicants have been asking us recently.

Q I am homeless – can you help?

A You should contact us first for advice. We might be able to help but this will depend on your personal circumstances. Our contact details are on the back page.

Q I have noticed that sometimes there are properties that are advertised on the web page and in offices but not in the newspapers. Why is this?

A This is usually because the properties advertised in this way have been advertised before but, for some reason, we have not been able to find a new tenant. In this situation we might change the eligibility rules which could, for example, allow other bands to bid or we might even make the property available to all bands.

These properties can be advertised in different ways, or on different days or with different closing dates so you will need to regularly check on the website or at whg property shops. You may also be able to use the internet at libraries and community centres or ask a friend or relative to help you.

Q How do you decide who is offered a property that is advertised to all bands – preference to Gold band?

A Generally these will be ground floor flats or homes that have



previously been reserved for applicants aged 60 plus.

Preference is given to the Gold band first because applicants who need this type of property for health related reasons are in this band.

By doing it this way we try to

make sure that the property is offered to the person in most need.

If the property has previously been reserved for applicants over 60 then the person closest to this age will be offered the property.

For more information

If you have any questions about how we decide which banding you are in, then there are rules about this and details are given in the choose & move leaflet – ask for a copy at your local property shop or office. You can also download it from our website.

Did you know?

If you owe a debt to whg or another landlord or you have been found guilty of anti-social or unacceptable behaviour then whg might decide to restrict your access to a home.

This means that you will not be offered a home with whg even if you are at the top of a bidding list.

If you think that this restriction might apply to you, call into one of the service centres listed on the back page for a leaflet or to discuss this further.



choose & move Survey

Thank you to everyone who completed and returned the choose & move survey form.

We had over 300 forms returned to us over the summer and this gave us some really useful feedback on the service we provide.

For example we found out that 72% of those who replied had read the choose & move leaflet and that most understood this. The majority (86%) understood how the banding system worked, 94% knew what kind of property they could bid for and over 80% understood how we make the decision when we offer a property.

The survey also gave us some useful information about where people wanted to live, the type of property they wanted, and who lived in their household.

The survey allowed plenty of opportunities for people to comment about different aspects of the service, and we will be using this information to develop and improve the service in the future.

Thanks!

As a thank you to those who completed the survey, all forms returned on time were entered into a prize draw. The three lucky winners were Judith Longmore from Darlaston, Samantha Hale from Willenhall and Deron Cutter from Chesterfield. £25 shopping vouchers are on their way.

Do you know?

- how we decide which band you are in?
- what sort of property you can bid for?
- how to make a bid?
- how we make the decision when we come to make an offer?

If your answer to any of these questions is No then please contact us in any of the ways shown on the back page – we can send you a copy of the choose & move leaflet which will give you the answer.

If you think that you are in the wrong band or if you think we have got something else wrong then let us know – we can check this for you.

What do you think?



We are looking for people from the waiting list who would be prepared to come along to a couple of meetings a year to discuss what goes into these newsletters. We can pay your travelling expenses and provide refreshments so it will not cost you anything but your time. Please let us know if you would be interested.

Are you related?

If you work for whg or if you are a member of a whg board you must let us know.

The same applies if you are related to someone who works for whg or is a member of a whg board.

This is because we have to follow specific rules about letting one of our homes to ensure that there is no bias.

If you do not tell us and we find out at a later date we could cancel your application, withdraw an offer

we have made or take action to re-possess your home if you have already moved in.

If in doubt about whether a relationship counts, or if you cannot remember whether you mentioned it when you completed your application, please ask us to check. It is better to be safe than sorry.



Wanted!

Are you aged over 40 and looking for somewhere decent to live?

If you want a flat at an affordable rent then we need you to register your interest in the 1 or 2 bedroom flats that are advertised as available to more mature applicants.

Call into one of the property shops or service centres listed on the back page, or for further information check out the website at chooseandmove.co.uk

Contact us

Aldridge & Brownhills Housing Trust

Tel: 0845 330 8045

13 Silver Court, High Street, Brownhills WS8 6HA
chooseandmove.aldridgebrownhills@whgrp.co.uk

Bloxwich Housing Trust

Tel: 0845 330 8044

Blakenall Village Centre, Thames Road,
WS3 1LZ
chooseandmove.bloxwich@whgrp.co.uk

Central Walsall Housing Trust

Tel: 0845 330 9948

Property Shop at 10-12 Bridge Street, Walsall, WS1 1EW
chooseandmove.centralwalsall@whgrp.co.uk

Darlaston Housing Trust

Tel: 0845 330 0842

45 King Street, Darlaston, WS10 8DE
chooseandmove.darlaston@whgrp.co.uk

Willenhall Housing Trust

Tel: 0845 330 9949

Property Shop at 39/39A Market Place,
Willenhall, WV13 2BF
chooseandmove.willenhall@whgrp.co.uk

visit our website at

www.chooseandmove.co.uk

English

For interpretation, translation, large print, Braille or audio formats, ask an English speaking friend to help you contact your local housing trust

Bengali

ভাষান্তর, অনুবাদ, বড় হাতের, ব্রেল কিংবা অডিও ফরম্যাটের জন্য, ইংরেজী বলতে পারেন আপনার এমন কোন বন্ধুকে আপনার স্থানীয় হাউজিং ট্রাস্টের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করার জন্য সাহায্য করতে বলুন।

Punjabi

ਵਿਆਖਿਆ, ਅਨੁਵਾਦ, ਵੱਡੇ ਫੋਂਟ, ਬ੍ਰੈਲ ਜਾਂ ਆਵਾਜ਼ੀ ਫਾਰਮੈਟਾਂ ਲਈ, ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਬੋਲਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਕੋਈ ਦੋਸਤ ਨੂੰ ਕਹੋ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਮਦਦ ਕਰੇ।

Gujarati

અર્થઘટન, ભાષાંતર, મોટી પ્રિન્ટ, શ્રેણી અથવા ઓડિયો ફોર્મેટ માટે, તમારા ઈંગ્લીશ બોલતા મિત્રને તમારા સ્થાનિક હાઉસિંગ ટ્રસ્ટનો સંપર્ક કરવા મદદ માટે કહો.

Hindi

भाषांतरण, अनुवाद, बड़े फ़ॉन्ट, ब्रेल अथवा ऑडियो फ़ॉर्मेटों के लिए, अंग्रेजी बोलने वाले किसी दोस्त से कहें कि वह आपकी स्थानीय हाउसिंग ट्रस्ट से सहायता करने में आपकी मदद करे।

Urdu

اشرح، ترجمہ، بڑے چھاپے، بڑے یا آڈیو فارمیٹ کے لیے انگریزی بولنے والے کسی دوست سے دریافت کریں کہ وہ آپ کی مقامی ہاؤسنگ ٹرسٹ سے رابطہ کرنے میں آپ کی مدد کرے۔

French

Pour toute demande d'interprétation, de traduction, ce document en gros caractères, en braille ou en format audio ; veuillez demander à l'une de vos relations parlant anglais de contacter le bureau local de l'association de gestion de votre logement.

Turkish

Sözlü ya da yazılı tercümesini, ya da büyük puntolu a. körlere tabesıyla ya da sesli kayıt halinde edinmek için İngilizce bilen bir tanıdığınızdan bölgenizdeki konut vakfıyla temas kurmamıza yardımcı olmasını isteyin.