

A factsheet explaining what happens when you join our housing waiting list.

The aim of this factsheet is to explain what happens once you have expressed an interest in applying for housing with us. We have a separate factsheet for our housing with extra care schemes. It is unlikely that a vacancy will exist at the time of your application and there is likely to be more than one person on the waiting list at any one time; this means that we are unable to tell you if, or when you will be contacted by us regarding a possible offer of accommodation. For some schemes we operate a nomination agreement with the local authority. For such schemes we will allocate in accordance with the nomination agreement and our policy.

What is involved before I can be offered a vacancy in one of your housing for older people schemes?

Making an enquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit our website at www.lacehousing.org to find out more information or telephone us on 01522 514444 for more details on each scheme and our eligibility policy (for a summary see later within this factsheet).
Making an application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return to our website and download our application form or email us on housing@lacehousing.org Complete the application form and return to housing@lacehousing.org or Lace House, 2 Olsen Rise, Lincoln, LN2 4UZ making sure that all requested documentation listed with the application form is attached e.g. identification and proof of address and national insurance number.
Local Authority Nomination Schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On some of our schemes, we have a nomination agreement with the local authority. This will mean that priority will be given to those on the relevant local authority scheme and we may not allocate through our own waiting list. Currently the schemes are Wellington View, Ingham, The Burrows, Nettleham (West Lindsey District Council Home Choice Scheme) and Brighton Place, Washingborough (North Kesteven District Council Housing Options Scheme) If you choose one of these schemes as a preference on our housing application, we advise you to also register for housing with the relevant Council as we may be unable to help you directly.
Our initial review of your application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will carry out a review of your application form and make an initial assessment of your housing, support and social needs against our eligibility policy.
Acceptance onto the scheme's waiting list	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following this initial assessment, we will write to confirm if you have been accepted on to the scheme's waiting list or reason for rejecting your application. This is subject to a final assessment at the point of any offer (as this could be some time after this initial assessment).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will include confirming whether you have been assessed as having high, medium or low support, social and housing needs (see further explanations below).
Contact from us after being accepted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our housing is in great demand and we only have limited resources. We will contact you annually whilst you are on our waiting list to gather any updated information and to update you on our current situation. Please contact us if your housing circumstances change i.e. you move house or your needs change substantially as we will need to do a reassessment.
What do we do when we get a vacancy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We do not allocate on a first come basis, we allocate based on the banding of the applicant. Where we have 2 or more applicants with the same housing band, we have a clear decision-making tool using the social need before referring to the date of application. (see page 6) For some of our schemes where support is provided by us, we may prioritise allocations based on a specific support band (high, medium or low) so as to maintain the desired balance of support needs within the scheme and we can support the needs of the applicant. A separate assessment will be made in those cases. Before allocation for any vacancy, we will carry out a face to face assessment normally in your own home to check for any changes in need and to give the final go ahead that our eligibility policy has been complied with. We will also undertake a financial assessment to ensure affordability. If information is made available at this interview that supersedes our desktop assessment the priority banding will be amended or an application refused.
Accepting an offer of accommodation from us.	<p>If you are offered a vacancy with us, you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will be given 3 working days to decide whether to accept an offer of accommodation. If you refuse 2 offers, we will contact you to discuss your housing needs and circumstances and this may result in your removal from our waiting list. You must pay at least the first month's rent payment in advance and set up a direct debit for the 1st of each month to pay the rent and associated payments. We will calculate the exact payment in advance of the tenancy contract meeting. If you are eligible for Housing Benefit/Universal Credit you must make a claim in advance of your tenancy starting with us. You may need to finalise your claim by providing a copy of your tenancy agreement to your local housing benefit department/or the DWP.
In what circumstances will we refuse an application.	<p>We will normally only refuse applicants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where it is felt that the person's support needs cannot be met within a scheme designed for independent living. Where our eligibility criteria cannot be met (see below).

What is the eligibility criteria for housing within one of your housing for older people schemes?

To qualify for housing, you:

- Must be over the age of 55 and be able to demonstrate a need for housing for older people.
- Must be eligible for housing within the UK and be able to prove your residency status.
- Must have a realistic chance of continuing to live independently and must not have been assessed as having a level of support that is greater than that which can be offered and sustained within the scheme. The level of support must not seriously undermine our ability to support, other residents within the scheme.
- Must have a housing need.
- Must have unmet social needs that cannot be met from the existing housing environment.
- Must intend to sell your property, if you are currently a home owner, and not hold ownership, or pass its interest on to anybody else, or let it out. The Government are mindful that those selling their homes and moving into social housing may release money from the sale for their future care. (This allows us to accept homeowners onto our waiting list who need to move due to their current home not meeting their housing needs and are unable to use the proceeds to purchase anything similar in the area they live whilst supporting future care needs).

In addition:

- A local connection may apply to some schemes which you must meet.
- We reserve the right to refuse your application, if your current needs assessment identifies a risk to other residents, our employees or any other visitor to the scheme. Or where you have outstanding rent or mortgage arrears or have previously acted in an antisocial way resulting in legal intervention.
- Applications can be refused on the grounds that you have sufficient assets and income to access housing in the private market. However, it is recognised that housing for older people is a specialist market and consideration will be given to your needs and likely viability of similar private market options.

Notification of eligibility

If you do not meet the criteria for supported housing for older people we will advise you accordingly and suggest alternative schemes that may suit your current requirements. If no such schemes exist your application will be refused.

Appeals process

You will be entitled to appeal against our allocation decisions. This could include a decision to exclude you at the point of attempting to join our waiting list or overlooking you at the point of allocating a vacant apartment. A Housing Manager not involved in the original decision will carry out the appeal and notify you with the outcome of the appeal within 5 working days of the appeal being received. If you remain unhappy the details of the appeal will be passed within 2 working days to Operations Manager for consideration who will make the final decision within 5 working days of receipt of the details of the dispute. No further appeal is allowed within the Association.

How do you decide what band I am in?

We use the following criteria to determine the housing, support and social band.

HOUSING NEEDS	
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has been given notice to end current tenancy or is at risk of this. • Unable to continue to reside in current home due to a long term medical condition. • Applicant is currently in residential or hospital care and a return to current home is not possible/would result in considerable risk • Current home is unable to provide essential care due to location or extent of package required and it can be obtained at their chosen LACE housing scheme.
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current housing lacks adequate heating, hygiene or kitchen facilities (or these cannot be accessed by applicant) • Able to live in current home but due to a long term medical condition the applicant has restricted use of bathroom, bedroom and kitchen and this is impacting on independence and social interaction. • Current home is unable to provide needed care to improve standard of living due to location and it can be obtained at their chosen LACE housing scheme. • The current home has serious housing disrepair and this is having an adverse effect on health/welfare. • To receive necessary support from family or friends and is currently lacking needed support mechanisms.
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current home is affecting quality of life due to medical conditions but is currently not restricting independence or social interaction. • The applicant would benefit from a low package of care but this is not available due to location and it can be obtained at their chosen LACE housing scheme. • The current home has disrepair but is not currently impacting on health or mobility. • Struggling to maintain property or gardens. • The current home is too large for the applicant's needs and regardless of adaptations is no longer suitable. • Their current rent is unaffordable based on the applicant's available income.

This section only applies if we provide support at your chosen scheme, e.g. Almond House, Richmond House, Kathleen Court and Lauriston Court and those schemes can support your needs. A separate assessment will be made in these cases. Where support is not provided and we feel you would benefit from support throughout the allocation process, we can signpost to an appropriate support provider, e.g. The Wellbeing Service.

SUPPORT NEEDS	
High	<p>The entire low/medium support bands, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term/reactive or mild depression and anxiety* • Mild Cognitive Impairment* • Financial assistance as outlined in any well-being plan
Medium	<p>The entire low support band, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support with contacting GP's, District Nurses, Mental Health team, Pharmacists and/or any other Health & Social Care professional. • Support with obtaining benefits. • Support with health and safety risk assessments
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing general wellbeing. • Low level of support with managing their tenancy • Signposting to agencies that can support their needs

Notes:

*Short term/reactive or mild depression and anxiety has the potential to be treated and often reversed. They may only require support from a GP, with medication and their own ability and awareness to manage their symptoms, this may not impact on the person's ability to carry out day to day living tasks and personal care activities.

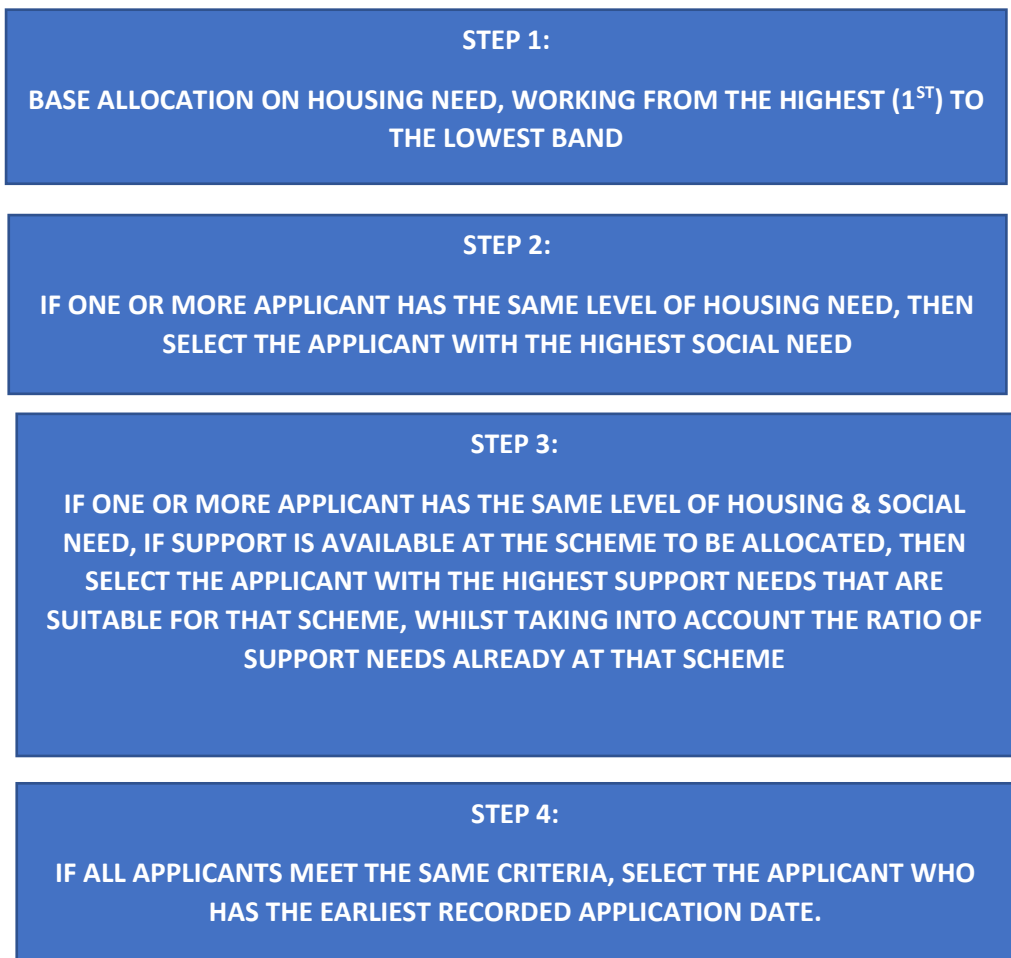
The depression, anxiety and/or low mood may have developed due to physical limitation, current living situation, loss of role or bereavement. Increased anxieties may also develop as a result of fear.

*Mild Cognitive Impairment. This can create minor difficulties with memory, attention and some language issues. It is compared to being mentally tired all of the time. This can be brought on by stress, fatigue or another illness but unlike dementia, Mild cognitive impairment has the potential to be reversed. There is no way of knowing if it will or will not develop on to dementia.

Some forms of mild cognitive impairment such as delirium can be brought on by illness, infection or too many types of medication.

SOCIAL NEEDS	
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living alone in a rural location with little or no social interaction (unless this is through choice) and this is having a serious detrimental effect on health and wellbeing.
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant states lonely and/ has limited social interaction from family and friends and would benefit from social aspect of community living. • Where social interaction is only with those providing social care services. • Socially Isolated either through geographical location/amenities/facilities/transport links and/or physical/sensory impairment.
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is independent but has limited social interaction with family and friends. • To aid wellbeing.

Decision Making Tiers:



Transfers within our accommodation

There could be reasons why a tenant may apply for a transfer from one scheme to another as a vacancy arises. There needs to be housing or social need that can only be met through a transfer. We will not normally allow a transfer where rent is outstanding or where the current apartment does not meet our lettable standard and would result in additional costs to us, such as rechargeable repairs or rent loss as a result of an extended void period.

We may prioritise the allocation of a property to a transferring tenant who has a clear housing need to move if their apartment can then be allocated from the waiting list. However, if there is an applicant on the waiting list with high housing needs and the vacancy matches their needs we will proceed with the waiting list applicant.

Pet ownership

Whilst we recognise the benefits that pet ownership can bring, we can only allow pets in certain circumstances due to many of our schemes having extensive communal areas. Please refer to our pet ownership factsheet, or seek advice from us.

Our tenancies

We offer Assured Shorthold tenancy agreements with the exception of those applicants who have held either an Assured or Secure tenancy with another Registered Social Landlord or Local Authority.

Equality and diversity

We are committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity for all existing and potential applications. No one will be treated unfairly due to gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion, disability, marital status, age, sexuality, health or other reason.

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