

Finding a home in East Staffordshire with *The East Staffordshire Housing Register*



If you would like this document in another language or format, or if you require the service of an interpreter, please contact us.

اگر این اطلاعات را به زبانی دیگر و یا در فرمتی دیگر میخواستید لطفاً از ما درخواست کنید
Farsi

यदि आपको सूचना किसी अन्य भाषा या अन्य रूप में चाहिये तो कृपया हमसे कहे
Hindi

ئەگەر زانیاریت بە زمانیکی که یا بە فۆرمیکی که دەوی تکایه داوامان لی بکه
Kurdish

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔
Urdu

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, prosimy dać nam znać.

Polish

Obratite nam se ako želite ove informacije na nekom drugom jeziku ili u drugačijem formatu.

Croatian

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。
Cantonese

如欲索取以另一语文印制或另一格式制作的资料，请与我们联系。
Mandarin

Introduction

If you want a home with Trent & Dove or any other East Staffordshire Housing Partner you need to complete a form to join the East Staffordshire Housing Register. The East Staffordshire Housing Register is a scheme managed by Trent & Dove Housing and East Staffordshire Borough Council along with other housing associations in East Staffordshire. This means you only need to come to one place to look for housing association properties in East Staffordshire to rent or to buy under shared ownership.

The Register offers customers choice in where they wish to live providing access to a wide variety of homes for rent and shared ownership throughout East Staffordshire. We allocate our rented properties through a scheme called „Choice-Based Lettings“, a scheme which allows you to apply for a home of your choice rather than having to wait for an offer of a property that we think is suitable for you. Everyone accepted onto the Housing Register will be placed into a priority band depending on their housing need. Properties available to rent will be advertised weekly with details of the property and local amenities. If you see a property advertised that you are interested in, you can „express interest“ for the property. Your expression of interest is your way of telling us that you would like to live in a particular property. At the end of the advertising time, the applicant with the highest housing need will be allocated the property.

Who can join the East Staffordshire Housing Register?

Anyone over 16 can apply to join the Register.

In certain circumstances, applicants may be excluded from the Housing Register. If your application is refused then you will be given a detailed reason in writing and details of how you can appeal against this decision.

Shared ownership housing

With shared ownership housing you buy the amount of your home that you can afford - between 25% and 75% - and pay rent on the remainder. By joining the Housing Register you can tell us about your interest in shared ownership housing. Note that banding and bedroom entitlement restrictions do not normally apply to shared ownership housing, giving you more choice.

Is it worth me joining?

If you are interested in rented housing please be aware that most housing associations including Trent & Dove are registered as charitable organisations and therefore have to ensure that tenancies are granted to qualifying applicants. This would include people who are of pensionable age, registered disabled, those with chronic or long-term physical or mental health problems and those who have a net household income of less than £30,500 (as at April 2009). Applicants will be assessed by the relevant housing association at the point of being offered a property to take account of any changes in their circumstances.

Also note that there is high demand for most housing association rented housing. You can work out below which Band you are likely to be in. If you will be placed in Bands 1 or 2 it is definitely worth applying because you will have a good chance of being offered a home. If you are placed in Band 3 you have a reasonable chance. If you are placed in Band 4 you are much less likely to be offered a home. You can find more information about your chances and waiting times at www.trentanddove.org or www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk.

If you are aged 16 or 17 you cannot legally hold a tenancy until you become 18, You can only be allocated a rented home if you have a suitable trustee. Landlords may also require a guarantor.

For advice about finding other accommodation contact East Staffordshire Housing Options at the Burton Customer Service Centre or by phoning Burton (01283) 508121.

How do you assess my Housing Application?

We will assess your application form based on the answers you give us and any other information we ask of you or get from the East Staffordshire Housing Register Landlords or other agencies. When we have finished assessing your application we will write to tell you that your application is **'active'**. We will also tell you which **'band'** of housing need you have been awarded, the number of **bedrooms** you are entitled to, and your application **registration number**.

Change in circumstances

If your circumstances change, it is your responsibility to notify us as this may effect your eligibility for certain types of property and / or your banding priority.

Application Review

All applications will be fully reviewed on an annual basis. Trent & Dove Housing will send out a review letter to you, asking you to confirm your housing circumstances, number of household members, contact numbers and provide any further documentation you wish to be considered. You must sign and return the letter within 28 days to remain on the Housing Register.

Service Standards

Trent & Dove Housing has set service standards that the company aims to achieve in dealing with your housing application and the allocation of properties, based on fully completed applications with all relevant information provided:

- Process new applications and write to applicants within 10 days
- Process transfer or change of circumstances applications within 15 days
- If we are unable to reach a decision within these times we will write to you with an update.

Entitlement to Property Sizes and Types

Applicants of working-age must be aware that your bedroom entitlement under the current Allocations policy may not be the same as entitlement under Housing Benefit rules.

If you are not reliant on Housing Benefit at present, you are asked to consider your responsibilities should your circumstance change.

It is the tenants responsibility to meet any shortfall between the rent due and their Housing Benefit entitlement.

Applicants will be considered for properties according to the size of their household, based on the assumption that a separate bedroom is allowed for:

i) House hold members:

- Each couple (including people in a same sex relationship);
- Each individual, of any age, not part of a couple;
- An expected child is included from 6 months prior to the expected date of birth
- Couples will be entitled to 2 bedrooms in flats or bungalows if either of them is aged 60+.

ii) Children to whom an applicant has significant access:

- If there are no resident children, a separate bedroom will be allowed for each of up to 2 children but only in respect of flats
- If there are also one or more resident children then entitlement will be to 3 bedroom houses and flats.

iii) A carer who is not part of the household but who needs to stay overnight (as verified by a relevant professional).

iv) A prospective foster or adoptive child following approval to foster or adopt (as verified by a registered fostering or adoption agency).

Incentive to Move Scheme

Tenants who under occupy family accommodation may benefit from a £1000 incentive payment if they are prepared to move into a flat or bungalow. Please contact us for further details.

Other provisions:

- Properties with 4 or more bedrooms are allocated to the largest households because very few such homes become available. Applicants are eligible for properties with fewer bedrooms than they are entitled to, providing this would not result in overcrowding. For example, although a household with 3 children is entitled to 4 bedrooms, they may also express interest in three-bedroom houses.
- Applicants placed in Band 1 because they are Housing Association tenants who are prepared to move (categories i and ii) *and* who are entitled to 1 bedroom will be treated as Band 1 applicants when they express interest in one-bedroom homes but they may also express interest in two-bedroom flats or bungalows in which case they will be treated as Band 2 applicants.
- If an applicant is in Band 2 because they need to move to a particular locality within the Borough to give or receive appropriate support or care, to be near particular local facilities, or to take up or retain employment (categories 2 and 3), and there is no realistic prospect of them being housed in a property matching their entitlement as calculated above in that locality, they will be considered for allocation of a larger property.

Age Restrictions

All Trent & Dove bungalows sheltered schemes plus flats in certain areas have been designated for applicants over 60 years of age unless a specific medical need is identified. Additionally many of the partner Landlords have Local Lettings Policies which apply to properties in some areas. This means priority may be given to certain applicants for example applicants over 30 years old.

Allocations Policy

Housing is allocated in accordance with the East Staffordshire Housing Allocations Policy which is shared between East Staffordshire Borough Council, Trent & Dove Housing and the 7 Registered Social Landlords listed on the front of this leaflet. The policy is reviewed on an annual basis.

If you would like to view the full Allocations Policy please contact Trent & Dove Housing or East Staffordshire Borough Council and request a copy.

What are the needs bands?

We have four bands to help categorise a variety of housing needs. The Bands are called:

- Band 1
- Band 2
- Band 3
- Band 4

Bands 1 & 2 are for applicants with the most housing need. For this reason many properties will be let to applicants in Bands 1 and 2.

This does not mean that applicants placed in Bands 3 & 4 will never be offered a property, but it is less likely. Applicants in these bands can maximise their chances by expressing interest in less popular areas and types of property.

Which Band am I likely to qualify for?

In the following definitions “you” means the applicant’s household.

Band 1	
1.	The Council has accepted a statutory duty to secure that accommodation is or does not cease to be available to you. If you have been in this category for more than 4 weeks and then fail to express your interest in a suitable property, you will be made a direct offer of a suitable property when one becomes available. An offer of suitable accommodation after 6 weeks in this category will be a Final Offer and declining it will end the Council’s duty to you so that you cease to fall into this category.
2.	The Council has agreed to assist another Council that has accepted a homelessness duty under Section 193(2) of the Housing Act 1996 to secure that accommodation is available to you because of violence or threats of violence likely to be carried out, and you urgently need re-housing outside of that council’s district. The Council’s agreement to assist and your status in this category will be reviewed after 4 weeks if suitable properties have been advertised that you have not expressed interest in or you have declined suitable offers.
3.	Your current home is within East Staffordshire and is subject to a Prohibition Order covering a main part of the dwelling and you do not have suitable alternative accommodation available to you on reasonable terms. You will move into Band 1 category 1 on the date 28 days before the date the Prohibition Order takes effect.
4.	Your present home is short of at least 3 bedrooms, or an adult has to share a bedroom with 3 or more children. Only resident children are counted.
5.	You have an urgent need to move because your current accommodation is severely detrimental to your quality of life for medical, welfare or disability reasons as verified by a relevant professional and you are unable to remedy this by modifying that accommodation.
6.	You fall into more than one category of need in Band 2 and it is considered that Band 1 status would be fairer reflection of your cumulative need.
7.	You are presently living in supported housing, you were normally a resident in East Staffordshire of your own choice to prior to living in that accommodation, the accommodation provider has assessed that you no longer need the support provided and you have no other accommodation available to you. You may express your interest in properties, but expressions of interest may also be registered on your behalf. You will lose this status if you decline the offer of a property deemed suitable.
i.	You are presently the tenant of a Housing Association <i>house</i> within East Staffordshire in an area where there is a demand for houses, and you are prepared to move to a flat or bungalow, or from your current 4+ bedroom house to a 3- bedroom house, thereby making your current home available to a household that needs it.
ii.	You are presently the tenant of a Housing Association property in East Staffordshire which has a significant adaptation which your household does not need and which another household on the Housing Register does need. You are prepared to move thereby making your current home available to a household which needs that adaptation.

Band 2	
1.	You need to move to be able to take up or retain employment. The employment must be for at least 16 hours per week and be due to last at least 6 months and this must be evidenced in writing by the employer.
2.	You need to move closer to a relative so that you can give them support or care. The extent of their need for your support or care will need to be proven, for example by receipt of attendance allowance.
3.	The Council has decided that you are homeless or threatened with homelessness within the meaning of Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 but you do not qualify for Band 1 status. This status lasts 4 weeks from the date of the decision (or where applicable the date you are ready to leave emergency accommodation). It can be extended beyond 4 weeks if you satisfy the Council that you have done everything you can to resolve your homelessness within this time but without success. Failing this, if the Council is made aware that you are still homeless you will move into Band 3. If you do not contact the Council it will be inferred that you are no longer homeless and your application will be cancelled.
4.	You need to move because your current accommodation is having a significant detrimental impact on your quality of life for medical, welfare or disability reasons as verified by a relevant professional, and you are unable to remedy this by modifying that accommodation.
5.	Your present home is short of 2 bedrooms. Only resident children are counted.
6.	You are presently the tenant(s) of a Housing Association property in East Staffordshire and your home has been specifically designated for an age group to which you do not belong or you no longer meet the criteria of a Local Lettings Policy covering your current property. You are prepared to move thereby making your current home available to a person or household that needs or would benefit from its designation or thereby contributing to the sustainability of the local community.
7.	You have a resident child under 11 and you are living in a flat above first floor.
8.	You were placed into Band 3 category 7 prior to 30 June 2013, you have been in that category for 12 months, you have been regularly expressing interest in properties for which you are eligible, and you have not been offered a suitable property. You need to actively express interest in properties for which you are eligible and will lose this status if you fail to.

Band 3	
1.	You have a resident child under 11 and do not have an enclosable private garden.
2.	Your present home is short of at least 1 bedroom. Children to whom the applicant or joint applicant has significant access are counted as well as resident children.
3.	You do not own your own home or hold a tenancy and you do not qualify for any other category in Bands 1-3.
4.	You presently have to share a kitchen, bathroom or WC with another household and you are over 25 years old, or a couple, or your household includes children

5.	You would benefit from a move for medical, welfare, or disability reasons as identified by a relevant professional but you do not qualify for bands 1 or 2.
6.	A local Housing Authority has decided that you are homeless or owed a homelessness duty, this is still the case, but you do not qualify for Bands 1 or 2.
7.	You are presently the tenant of a Housing Association property in East Staffordshire, you are (will be from April 2013) subject to benefit reduction because you are under occupying, you wish to move to a smaller home, you are prepare to move to a flat, and you do not qualify for Band 1.

Band 4	
1.	You qualify only for Band 4 because you have worsened your circumstances and you did not meet the criteria for any other category before taking the action in question.
2.	You have been placed in Band 4 because you have sufficient capital to purchase a property to meet your needs.(Disregarding any lump sum received by a member of the Armed Forces as compensation for an injury or disability sustained on active service).
3.	You do not meet the criteria for any other category in this allocations policy.

Homelessness

If you are homeless or threatened with homelessness you will need to speak to East Staffordshire Housing Options. A member of the Housing Options Team will be able to advise you on what action you need to take.

Contact Housing Advice & Homeless Prevention Tel: 01283 508 120 /1/2/3/4/5 or by attending the office at Customer Service Centre, Market Place, Burton upon Trent.

In some circumstances Housing Options may opt to place an expression of interest on your behalf or consider a direct allocation to you.

Banding Review

If you are unhappy about a decision taken about your housing application, please contact Trent & Dove Housing in the first instance. If you remain dissatisfied following this, you can request a review. Applicants are reminded that a formal review of banding is subject to evidence that they qualify for an alternative band as per the allocations policy.

To request a formal review, please contact our Customer Services Team on 01283 528528 or contact us via our website at www.trentanddove.org and request an Appeal form, within 21 days of your banding decision.

How do I apply to join the East Staffordshire Housing Register?

You will need to complete an East Staffordshire Housing Register application form. If you require any assistance with registering, help is available at Trent & Dove offices. All information can be provided to you in Braille, large print, other languages and on audiotape. We also have a network of support agencies that can provide help if required.

Application forms are available



To Download

www.trentanddove.org
www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk
[enquiries@trentanddove.](mailto:enquiries@trentanddove)



01283 528528



Post Collecting in person or being posted to you from:

Trent & Dove Housing

Trinity Square
Horninglow Street
Burton on Trent

Trent & Dove Housing

Old Mill Building
Church Street
Uttoxeter

East Staffordshire Borough Council

Customer Service centres

What do I need to provide with my application?

Once you have completed your application form in full you will need to provide two forms of identification. If for any reason you cannot provide the relevant information you will need to explain the reasons for this in a covering letter

One should be photographic such as a driving licence/passport and one should be proof of address such as a utility bill

- You will also need to provide proof of residency for any children you wish to re-house with you such as child benefit/child tax credit
- If any member of the house hold is pregnant, proof of pregnancy and estimated due date
- Any further supporting documentation you wish to be considered in your application for housing
- Landlord references for tenancies held within the last two years
- Please note at a later date we may need financial information as all offers are Subject to an affordability assessment

How do I look for available properties?

East Staffordshire Housing Register landlords normally advertise available properties for at least one week.

Every Tuesday you can see the latest properties available:

On the Trent & Dove website: www.trentanddove.org

At Trent & Dove's offices in Burton and Uttoxeter

At East Staffordshire Borough Council's Customer Service Centres in Burton and Uttoxeter

How do I express interest in properties?

On-line at www.trentanddove.org

To apply for a property online you must provide

- Your full name
- Your contact telephone number
- Your individual housing application number

By Telephone 01283 528528 or 01889 561870

To apply for a property by phone you can call Trent & Dove's Customer Service team at their Burton or Uttoxeter offices. Please make sure you have to hand:

- Your Housing Application number
- The CBL property reference number
- Your full name and contact telephone number

Direct Lets

Occasionally properties do become available that are let directly. For example, temporary accommodation used for housing management purposes and extra care schemes.

Can I express interest in any property?

You should only express your interest in homes that are of a suitable size and type for your needs. When we register your application we will write to you stating how many bedrooms we have assessed your household as being entitled to.

What happens when the advertising cycle closes?

Every East Staffordshire Housing Register applicant who has expressed interest in a property to which they are entitled is placed on a list. This is called a shortlist. Applicants on the shortlist are prioritised by:

- 1.) Priority needs band, and then within each needs band
- 2.) In order of the date that the applicants were awarded that band, subject to them having maintained an active application since that date.

What happens after I have expressed an interest in a property?

The advertising landlord will only contact the successful applicant or up to three applicants to view the property prior to offering the property to the top applicant.

What feedback is given for properties allocated?

We publish feedback each month in the newspapers listed previously and on the Trent & Dove website. The feedback states how long the successful applicant had been registered for accommodation and what needs band they came from.

What if I feel a wrong decision has been made on allocation?

If you feel that a wrong decision has been made or that you believe you should have been offered a property that you expressed interest in please contact Trent & Dove Housing to discuss your concerns.

Mutual Exchanges



www.homeswapper.co.uk

Trent & Dove Housing, Orbit Heart of England, Sanctuary Housing, Midland Heart, Waterloo Housing Association, Derwent Living and Spirita have partnered with HomeSwapper, the largest mutual exchange service in the country.

For Trent & Dove tenants this partnership provides a **free** service. By going online you can search for homes; your results include maps of the area to help you work out the location of the properties, once you've registered you can contact suitable swappers directly. There is a direct link to Homeswapper on the Trent & Dove website at www.trentanddove.org along with further advice about housing in East Staffordshire. If you are the tenant of another landlord as them for further details.

So, what is a mutual exchange?

A mutual exchange involves two social housing tenants swapping or exchanging homes.

Who can exchange properties?

Tenants of either a Council or a Registered Social Landlord (Housing Association) have a right to exchange, providing both of the landlords agree.

Are there any conditions?

- You must have permission from your landlord prior to the exchange
- You cannot be an introductory / starter tenant
- You don't have a County Court Judgement for rent arrears on your property, or a Notice of Intention to Seek Possession
- Your present property is in an acceptable state of repair and decoration as required within your tenancy agreement
- Any anti-social behaviour may affect your application
- An exchange should not leave either household substantially over or under crowded

Helpful Links

www.trentanddove.org
www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk

www.homeswapper.co.uk
enquiries@trentanddove.org

Do you have access to the internet ?

If you do not have

Burton Customer Service Centre, Market Place, Burton On Trent, Staffordshire, DE14 1HA

Burton Library, Riverside, High St, Burton-On-Trent, Staffordshire, DE14 1AH
01283 239556

Barton Under Needwood Library, Dunstall Rd, Barton-under-Needwood, Staffordshire,
DE13 8AY
01283 713753

Uttoxeter Library, 57, High St, Uttoxeter, Staffordshire ST14 7JQ
01889 256371

Waterside Advice Shop, 104-106 Short Street, Burton On Trent, DE15 9LT
01283 740599

Information Handling & Equality

By applying to join the East Staffordshire Housing Register you consent to information being shared amongst the partners. Beyond this by law, all the information you give will be kept confidential unless:

You have consented for us to share information with other organizations

- We are required to disclose such information by law, for example, when there is an issue of child protection
-

You can see any information held about you, Trent & Dove will check your identity for data protection purposes before they give you the information. They require 10 days notice before they can give you information and by law they are not allowed to show you information from third parties, for example, letters from other people about you, such as a letter from a GP.

Trent & Dove Housing is committed to providing the best level of service it can regardless of ethnic origin, gender or disability and in conjunction with tenants is constantly looking at ways of improving services.

Help us to Help you

Please return your comments to **Housing Needs, Trent & Dove Housing, Trinity Square, Horninglow Street, Burton on Trent, DE14 1BL**

Did you find this leaflet useful?

Yes No Comments:

Is the application form easy to fill in?

Yes No Comments:

Do you have any comments or suggestions about the process of registering for housing in East Staffordshire?



Head Office (Registered Office)
Trinity Square, Horninglow Street,
Burton-upon-Trent,
Staffordshire. DE14 1BL

Telephone : (01283) 528528
Facsimile: (01283) 528699
Email: enquiries@trentanddove.org