

**On 1 April 2019 when Dorset Council was formed under Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), it replaced East Dorset, North Dorset, Purbeck, West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland councils.**

The council was allowed a period of 3 years to implement a new Housing Allocation Policy.

This year we will be introducing a new Dorset Council Home Choice website and allocations policy. This means there will be some changes to how applicants apply for social housing and some of the assessment criteria.

The current housing register will close to new applications from 19 July 2021. This means everyone already on the housing register will need to re-apply. Their application will then be assessed using the new allocations policy.

## Temporary arrangement

If you have a change of circumstances which you think may affect your current housing register application, or an urgent need for housing after 26 July 2021, whilst the re-registration process is taking place, please tell us by completing this form:

➤ [https://dorset-self.achieveservice.com/service/Change\\_of\\_Circumstances\\_or\\_Urgent\\_Housing\\_Need](https://dorset-self.achieveservice.com/service/Change_of_Circumstances_or_Urgent_Housing_Need)

We will contact you to discuss any changes and may request further documentation from you.

If you are homeless please complete our online referral form and read our helpful information at:

➤ <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/housing/homelessness>

If you are at risk of homelessness you can find information at:

➤ <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/housing/homelessness>

## About the new website

Applicants will notice a few changes on the new website:

- it will look and feel different
- applicants will have a personal customer account, this means an applicant can log in to their account, at any time, to:
  - view the status of their application
  - submit documents
  - receive messages
  - complete outstanding actions
- applicants will be able to see all types of properties that are advertised

## Re-registration

### How to re-register

After 26 July 2021 you will need to visit our new website ➤ <https://www.dorsetcouncilhomechoice.org.uk/> to create an account. Once your account has been set up you will receive a verification email. Once you have received this email you will then be able to re-register.

You will need to include your current registration number and banding when re-registering. No additional documents will be requested at this point unless there are changes that you have not advised us about.

If further information is required you will be notified by email, prompting you to log into the portal where you will see an outstanding action to be completed.

### Deadline for re-registration

Re-registration applications need to be completed by 1 October 2021. You will be unable to bid on advertised properties if you have not re-registered by this date. You will be able to make a fresh application any time after the 1 October 2021.

Re-registering by 1 October 2021 also means you will keep your original registration date. However your banding date may change depending on your assessment under the new policy.

### If you do not have an email address

Setting up an email address is quick and easy to do. The three most popular providers are gmail.google.com, Hotmail.com and mail.yahoo.com. In the address bar at

the top of your browser, type the address of the email provider you want to use then do the following: gmail.google.com, Hotmail.com and mail.yahoo.com. In the address bar at the top of your browser, type the address of the email provider you want to use then do the following:

- visit the email providers website and select the option for 'create account'
- provide the necessary personal details
- create a password – it needs to be something you will remember but shouldn't be easy for others to guess
- make a note of any security questions you answer as these may help you reset your password if you forget it
- agree to the terms and conditions of the service

Once you have completed the process you are ready to go and can use your email address to send and receive emails.

Dorset Council has a digital champion service who will be able to help with creating an email address. Call the Dorset Digital Hotline with an IT question on ☎ **01305 221048** (select option 2) weekdays (excluding Bank Holidays) from 10am to 12noon.

## Re-registraton process when owed an accepted homeless duty

If you are owed an accepted homeless duty you will still need to submit a re-registration application by the 1 October 2021. However, your existing homeless case file will be transferred into the new system automatically.

## What happens next

Once you have confirmed and submitted your application, the status of your application will be updated on your 'My account Home Page'.

We aim to have assessed all re-registration's applications by 1 October 2021. Once your application has been assessed, you will be notified by email, this will prompt you to log into your online portal.

If you re-register we will transfer any documentary evidence and notes to your new account, where appropriate. Any information we hold that is not transferred will be kept securely by Dorset Council in line with General Data Protection Regulations.

👉 <https://preview-dorset.cloud.contensis.com/your-council/about-your-council/data-protection/data-protection.aspx>

## Appealing the outcome

If you do not agree with the outcome of your re-assessment you can request a review within 21 days of your decision.

## Documentation

Once you complete the application form, you will receive an action through your online account. This will be for supporting information and/or documents that are required to complete your assessment.

You will be able to upload documents directly into your account. There will be step by step instructions available on how to do this.

We will initially require only basic documents to be uploaded which will include the following:

- photographic ID for all main applicants (passport or driving licence)
- Birth Certificates for all those on your application (including children)
- National Insurance Numbers for all main applicants
- proof of your current address such as an up to date Council Tax bill
- evidence of settled or pre-settled status

## Bidding for properties

Properties will continue to be advertised on the current website until the 1 October 2021. You can still continue to access your homechoice account 🖱 <https://www.dorsethomechoice.org/dorset-homechoice/> to place bids. If you experience any trouble logging in please let us know.

## Banding

The new Dorset Council Homechoice Allocation Policy is different so your banding will change.

The new bands are:-

- **Band A** – Exceptional Housing Need
- **Band B** – High Housing Need
- **Band C** – Medium Housing Need
- **Band D** – Low Housing Need

Once you have re-registered your application will be re-assessed, this may result in a change to your banding for your new application.

You will still be able to bid for properties in your area, but once accepted onto the new register, you may also bid for properties in other areas across Dorset Council.

## Help with the online registration process

If you need help with re-registration you can contact the housing team on ☎ **01305 221739**