



Housing Allocation Procedure

Application

Information about the Trust and availability of its homes will be made available through notices on the village notice boards, via the parish council, on the Buckland Newton website and through information available at housing advice offices and via WDDC Home Choice publicity with a clear restriction on local eligibility.

Applicants who are not already on the WDDC Joint Housing Register will be asked to complete a WDDC application form giving information about their circumstances and reasons for application. Applicants will also be asked to register their interest with BNCPT using the form downloadable from the website, or available from the Trust. This form must be returned to the Secretary within two weeks of the date a vacancy is first advertised. The secretary will acknowledge receipt within one week confirming the date of receipt of their application and advise whether the applicant/s appear to meet the local needs criteria.

The Trust Secretary will maintain a register of all applicants. This register will be copied to WDDC on an annual basis following the Trust's AGM and additionally 2 weeks after a housing vacancy is advertised. Personal information will only be held by WDDC, but will be made available for a short period to BNCPT to assist allocation. All personal information made available to BNCPT will be destroyed immediately the allocation process has been completed.

Selection

When a property becomes available, the Trust will contact all applicants on their list within one week of a property being advertised as available and inform them of the vacancy. The Trust will also request a list of all eligible persons on West Dorset's Joint Housing Needs Register and similarly contact these persons. Applicants will be asked to confirm their interest, ensure their details are up to date on the WDDC Housing register and visit the property if they wish. All applicants must respond fully within 2 weeks of properties first being advertised.

If required, additional information and back-up documentation will be requested by WDDC Housing and/or BNCPT from all those who have expressed an interest.

A BNCPT Housing Allocation Panel will be established, comprising at least two Trustees and at least one lay member. Membership of this Group will rotate and will not be a standing committee. The Group will elect a Chairperson and Secretary at each meeting. A Trustee who is an applicant or resident may not be a member of this Group.

The Allocation Panel will consider each application, taking account of all the criteria in the BNCPT Allocations Policy. Where there is insufficient information for a decision or uncertainty, the decision may be postponed while further information is collected or information is checked.

The Panel will meet 2 weeks after the property is first advertised. Postponed meetings, because of insufficient information, will be reconvened as quickly as possible.

The Panel will decide which applicant it believes should be offered the home and will record their decisions, reasons and any concerns. Contact will then be made by email or letter with the Housing Department at WDDC the day following the decision, listing the applicants who were considered and indicating to whom the offer is to be made. WDDC will be asked to respond within three working days. This record will be completely confidential and only seen by the Housing Allocation Group.

If WDDC are in agreement with the proposal, an offer will be made within a week of the Panel's decision and a deadline of two weeks from the date of offer will be given for acceptance of the offer. Should it not be possible for an applicant to obtain a mortgage offer within 2 weeks, they have a right to request an extension from BNCPT for a further reasonable time period. The offer will be subject to final confirmation depending upon any appeal from another applicant. (Objections by WDDC can only be made on grounds that decision does not conform to BNCPT's Allocation Policy)

Simultaneously with the offer, the other applicants will be advised that they have not been first choice and therefore unlikely to be successful.

If WDDC objects to the proposal, the Trust's Housing Allocation Panel or a representative from the Panel will meet with WDDC to resolve the issue within one week of WDDC's response. The Panel will then meet as soon as possible and reconsider.

In the event of the offer being declined or no response being received within the timescale, the Trust's Housing Allocation Panel will make a further offer within one week

Appeal

If an applicant wishes to appeal against the decision, they must indicate the basis for their appeal (*which must relate to a breach of the BNCPT policy or procedure*) within one week of being advised that they are unlikely to be successful. The Lead Housing Officer from West Dorset District Council plus one independent member of the Trust, neither of whom having been members of the original Allocation Panel, will consider their appeal within one week and respond in writing to the Trustees Board within that week. They may invite the applicant to a meeting to discuss their appeal.

The Trustee Board will reconsider the situation and will, through discussion, amend or confirm the decision of the Housing Allocation Panel within two weeks of the letter of appeal. The discussion will be minuted in the normal way as a confidential record.

The Secretary will inform the applicant/s of the decision in writing within three days of the decision. This decision will be final and binding.

December 2010

ACTIVITY	Weeks	Total Weeks
Property becomes available (current resident gives 1 months notice)	0	0
Applicant/s advised + WDDC Housing advised + Property Advertised	1	1
Applicant/s respond	2	2
More information acquired if necessary + acknowledgement by BNCPT of interest + send BNCPT list update to WDDC		3
Allocation Panel Meets + send decision to WDDC	1	3
WDDC responds	0.5	3-4
Housing Panel makes offer (and advises those unsuccessful)	0.5	4
Applicant responds	0-2	4-6
If not accepted or no response, Panel makes second offer	1	5-7
In the event of an appeal		
Unsuccessful applicant appeals	1	5
Trustee Board considers	1	6
Secretary responds		6
If appeal successful		
Panel makes offer (and withdraws initial offer) (WDDC to be cleared simultaneously)	1	6
Applicant responds	2	6-8
If not accepted or no response, Panel makes second offer		

