

## **Advice for Professionals or Friends/Family supporting someone with their Application**

### **Data Protection**

Some applicants may feel that they need additional support to complete their application and help with their renewals and bidding from friends or family or through a support worker or partner agency. Whilst you may be able to provide assistance and evidence to support an application, we will not be able to share information about their application without their consent.

### **Consent to Share**

Applicants are able to nominate someone to act on their behalf by completing you details in their application form as listed below.

**Do you want to nominate someone to act on your behalf in Devon Home Choice? For example a family member, a friend or an organisation that provides you with support.\***

They may also remove this consent via the application form at any time.

For agencies where more than one worker may be supporting an applicant, please provide a copy of your organisation's consent to share, discuss and act on the applicant's behalf; signed and dated by the applicant if they wish you to act on their behalf and/or obtain information about their application, banding and bids. This document can be uploaded to the Devon Home Choice application at the time the application is being completed or any time after it has been activated using the [Update or renew your application or finish a part-completed application](#) link on the Home page of the website.

### **Supporting Evidence**

Applicants may ask professionals to provide supporting evidence for their Devon Home Choice Application. If you are willing to support the applicant, please send a copy of your submission to the applicant in order for them to upload it onto their Devon Home Choice application. This ensures that the applicant is aware you have completed any action they have asked from you, that they are satisfied with the information provided and enables them to retain a copy. Changes in circumstances including the provision of supporting evidence is usually processed within 20 working days of the change being submitted and the applicant will be notified directly of the outcome in writing. This is usually in the form of an email to their registered email address.

Health and Wellbeing Supporting evidence forms are available and can be sent to you electronically to complete if you are a partner organisation but must be electronically emailed to the local authority managing the Devon Home Choice application or printed out and sent to the applicant or to the local authority office. Friends or family **must not** complete these forms as they are to **be completed by professionals only**. General Practitioners should not be asked to complete these forms. Please note that local authorities may accept existing OT assessments, care plans, PIP confirmation letters etc. rather than requiring that

professionals complete a Supporting Evidence form. Please contact the administering local authority to discuss further.

## **Bidding**

You may bid on behalf of an applicant if you have consent to do so by logging into their application through the website or via our Home Connections App. Bidding cycles run from 12am Wednesdays to 23:59 on the following Monday. Whilst you can log into your application on Tuesdays, there will be no properties available for bidding on Tuesdays. You can place up to 3 bids in each bid cycle and placing a bid anytime in the bid cycle does not change the final position on the final shortlist at the end of the cycle. Bid position indicated at the time of bidding is only estimated and is subject to change dependant on other people bidding throughout the cycle. You can also withdraw a bid at any time within the bid cycle for the property advertised in that period.

Alternatively, if you feel that the person is vulnerable and unable to register their own bids they may request to be placed on autobid. Bids are then placed automatically by the Devon Home Choice system on suitable homes. You can restrict the areas in which you would like bids placed and the type of properties requested. However, the system is not able to restrict bids to specific properties, roads or a part of one area so there is a risk that properties that could be suitable are neither included nor excluded depending on the stated bidding preferences.

Whilst this may be beneficial to some very vulnerable households where support to bid is not regular or practical, this does remove some of the choice from the applicant to bid on homes they would actually like. It is important to note that if the applicant does not respond to offers of accommodation or declines 3 or more offers their application may be suspended for 12 months.

Please note that no further bids will be allowed if an applicant has been shortlisted for or offered a property.