



Your guide to Devon Home Choice

www.devonhomechoice.com



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Devon Home Choice is a way of looking for council and housing association homes.

Under Devon Home Choice you can:

- choose which homes interest you
- move within Devon

This guide explains how:

- to join the Devon Home Choice register
- to find information on available homes
- to express interest in homes (bidding)
- the successful applicant is selected

If you need more help or would like information on your housing options please contact your local housing team. The contact details are at the end of this guide.

The personal information that you provide will be held securely. The Privacy Notice on the Devon Home Choice website (www.devonhomechoice.com) explains what personal data we collect from you and how we use it.



Step 1: Register

The easiest way to join the Devon Home Choice register is to visit the website at

www.devonhomechoice.com and complete

the online application form. Just click on 'Register' from the website's home page.

User ID and Password

When you complete and submit your online application you will be provided with a User ID.

The first time you log into the Devon Home Choice website you will need to create a new password. There are instructions on the website but your password must contain 9 numbers, and include at least 4 different numbers but cannot include the same number more than 3 times.

To create a new password you will need to confirm some basic personal details (name, Date of birth and National Insurance number).

It is vital that you remember your User ID and password, as you will need them to bid for homes.

If you register with Devon Home Choice using the paper application form the local authority housing team managing your application will confirm your User ID.

If you forget your User ID or password please visit the Devon Home Choice website and follow the instructions.

All applications to register for Devon Home Choice will be assessed and placed in one of five priority bands. This will be based on our assessment of your housing need, and whether or not you have a local connection to Devon.

Please note that only 4 bands are used in Exeter, Teignbridge and Torbay. These councils have taken the decision not to register households assessed to have no housing need (Band E).

The five priority bands are:

Band A – Emergency Housing Need

Your application will only be placed in this band if your need for housing is assessed as so exceptional that you must take priority over all other applicants. For example:

- you have an urgent health or wellbeing need
- your home is in a state of emergency disrepair
- you need to move to escape violence or the threat of violence, harassment or a traumatic event

Substantial evidence must exist to award this priority.

Band B – High Housing Need

Your application will be placed in this band if:

- a Devon council has accepted that you are statutorily homeless and it is not considered possible and appropriate for you to find private rented accommodation
- a Devon council assesses that it will not be possible and appropriate for you to find private rented accommodation, you are subject to the Prevention or Relief duty of the Homelessness Reduction Act, and you are taking the actions set out in your Personalised Plan
- you are severely overcrowded
- you are a tenant of a Devon Home Choice partner landlord and want to move to a smaller home
- you have a high health or wellbeing need
- your home is in a state of high disrepair
- you are ready to move on from supported housing

Band C – Medium Housing Need

Your application will be placed in this band if:

- you are overcrowded and lack 1 bedroom
- you have been assessed as having a medium health or wellbeing need

- you have served in the armed forces and are assessed to be in urgent housing need
- you need to need to move for work, where you would otherwise have to travel more than 30 miles (each way) from home to work

Band D – Low Housing Need

Your application will be placed in this band if:

- a Devon council has accepted that you are statutorily homeless but it is considered possible and appropriate for you to find private rented accommodation
- you have no permanent home. For example you have been assessed as non priority or intentionally homeless by a Devon local authority, or are 'sofa surfing'
- you have been assessed as having a low health or wellbeing need
- you share facilities, such as a toilet, bath, shower or kitchen (for example you are living with your parents)
- you meet a local priority agreed by the local authority managing your application
- you have a housing need but have no local connection to Devon
- you have been assessed as having deliberately worsened your circumstances

Band E – No Housing Need

From your application it has been assessed that you are adequately housed.



Please note that Exeter, Teignbridge and Torbay councils do not register households assessed to have no housing need (Band E).

For full details please see the Devon Home Choice policy, available at: www.devonhomechoice.com, or contact your local housing team.

We will also assess the size of home that you can apply for. Under Devon Home Choice each of the following are usually assessed as requiring a separate bedroom:

- People living together as a couple
- Other adults, aged 16 years old or over
- 2 children or adolescents under 16 years old of the same sex
- 2 children who are both under 10 years old regardless of sex

Any exceptions to these rules will be clearly set out in the advert for a home.

In most cases we will look at your application, and confirm that you are able to start bidding for homes. We aim to write to you within 20 working days to tell you:

- what band your application has been placed in, and the reason for this
- your band start date
- the size of home that you are eligible to bid for
- your personal reference number (your User ID)

It is important that you remember your User ID and password. You will need these details to bid for homes.

You must always tell us if there are any changes in your circumstances. Any change may affect your housing need and priority, and we will then reassess your application. If necessary we will change your band and band start date. If you do not do this you may not be considered for a property at a later time.



Teignbridge



Bunting Close, Teignmouth, TQ14 9BR

Advert no: 3548365 | Type: House

2 Bedroom House, Gas central heating, double glazing, Bath, rear garden, pets allowed, own parking space, 4 weeks rent in advance required. Preference given to those with a local connection to Teignbridge.

Full property details



Example advert on www.devonhomechoice.com

Step 2: Choose

How are homes advertised?

Homes available to let in Devon are advertised each week:

- On www.devonhomechoice.com
- On the Devon Home Choice App for Android and Apple phones
- In a newsletter that is available in a variety of locations

Homes are advertised from 12:00am on Wednesday morning to 11:59pm on the following Monday night. **No homes are advertised on a Tuesday.**

The adverts tell you who the landlord is, the location, size, rent and other features of

the home.

The adverts also tell you if there are any special requirements that an applicant must meet. For example, the minimum age for older persons' accommodation, or if a local connection is required for a particular area in Devon.

Where homes have been adapted, adverts will state that priority will be given to applicants who have a mobility need, or have a disability.

The symbols that appear on the adverts tell you about a home, who can bid for it and whether applicants must have a local connection to a particular area to qualify. Full details of what the symbols mean are provided in every newsletter. If you are on the Devon Home Choice web pages, by placing your mouse over a symbol, you can see the details.

Bidding for homes

You can tell us which homes you would like to apply for.

This is called bidding.

Bidding does not mean that you will part with any money.

You can bid for up to 3 homes each week

- on **www.devonhomechoice.com**
- On the Devon Home Choice App for Android and Apple phones or portable devices
- in person at Council offices

To bid for homes you will need

- your User ID
- your password

You can only bid for homes that match your household needs. For example, if you only need 2 bedrooms you will not usually be able to bid for 3 or 4 bedroom homes.

To bid on the website

1. Visit www.devonhomechoice.com
2. Click the Login option on the left hand menu
3. Enter your User ID and password. This will bring up your 'My CBL' page

Forgotten your User Id or password?

Please follow the instructions on the Devon Home Choice website.

4. Click on the link to show the homes that you are able to bid for. The adverts will let you know your position on the list of people who have bid at that time. Please note that your position could change up until the end of the bidding period, as other people add or remove bids.



5. If you want to bid for a home click on the address of the property you want to bid for from the property results page. This will open the property details. Then click the 'Place A Bid' button.

A message will be displayed at the top of the screen to confirm that your bid has been made.

If you change your mind and want to remove a bid, you can do this by clicking the 'My Current Bids' tab. Click on the advert number which will open the advert details, then click the 'Withdraw A Bid' button.

A message will be displayed to confirm that your bid has been withdrawn.

Please make sure we have your current phone number and email address so that we can contact you as soon as possible if needed. Please note that if we do not have your current contact details:

- You may miss out on a home
- Your application may be cancelled
- You will not receive emails about available homes

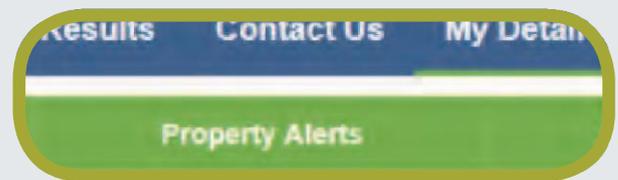
You can easily update your contact details on the Devon Home Choice website.

Property alerts

You can set up property alerts so that you are notified by email when a property matching what you have said you are looking for is being advertised.

You can set up your property alerts as follows:

- Login to your account on www.devonhomechoice.com and click on the 'Property Alerts' tab.



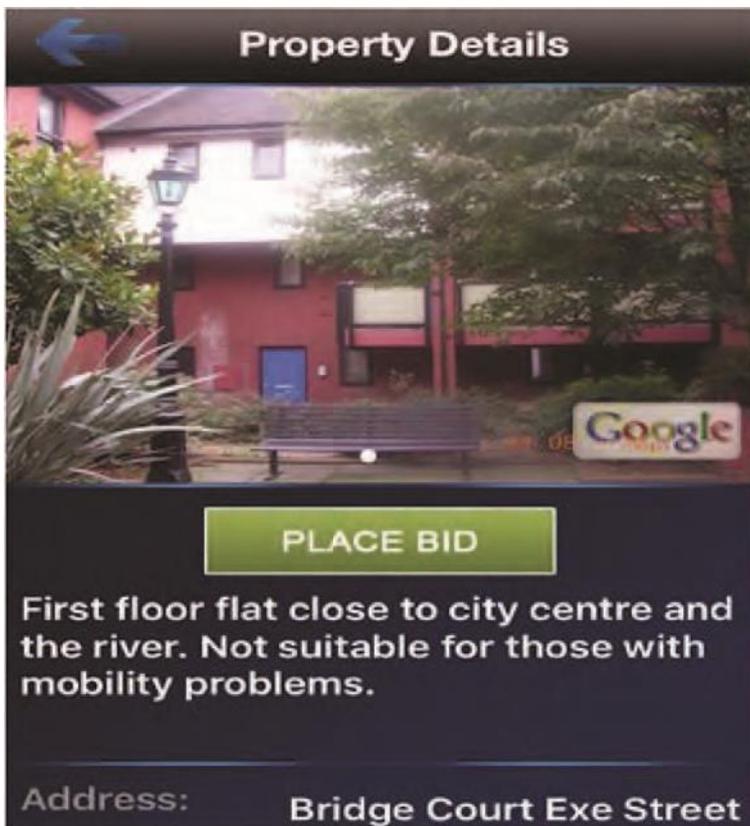
- Select whether you want to save a search by Postcode (e.g. within a radius of that postcode) or Area (e.g. local authority area), and confirm the details, including whether you are looking for homes in particular accessibility categories. You can select all or any combination of accessibility categories.
- Email alerts will automatically be sent to the email address you provided on your application. You can add further email addresses so that alerts are sent to more than one email address (for example to someone who is helping you). Please ensure that you separate email addresses with a comma.
- You can save up to 5 searches. Saved searches can be edited or deleted.

How to bid on the Smartphone App

The Devon Home Choice App is an easy way to view and bid for homes. The App can be downloaded from the Devon Home Choice website (www.devonhomechoice.com).

You will need your User ID and password to login to the App.

Once you have logged into the App it is easy to view the details of homes being advertised and place bids.



Click the Google maps logo to view the property in a map. Pinch the map to zoom in or out.

Click Place Bid to bid for the property.

A message will be displayed to confirm your bid has been placed.



Step 3: Selecting the successful applicant

At the end of each weekly advertising cycle, a list is produced of all qualifying bids. The list sorts applicants by their band and how long they have been waiting

If your bid meets all the specifications on the advert, and you are the top bidder, the landlord will carry out a number of checks which may include

- making sure your circumstances have not changed from the information we hold for you
- your rent payments are up to date
- any anti-social behaviour
- medical history

If you pass all the landlord checks, you will normally be invited to view the home. If you have had a change of circumstances that you haven't let us know about, have rent arrears or have been guilty of anti-social behaviour, and the landlord is unable to offer the home to you, they will move to the next applicant on the list. To help you with future bidding, you will get advice on the steps you would need to take to be considered for another home.

If you decide to refuse the home, it will be offered to the next applicant on the list, who meets the conditions specified in the advert.

If you refuse a number of homes you may be suspended from bidding.

If you have been accepted as homeless by a Devon local authority, you should always seek advice before refusing a home, as this could

affect your chances to be accommodated; in other words, it might end any duty to provide you with a home.

When the home is ready, you will be contacted about signing the tenancy agreement and collecting the keys.

Feedback

We publish information in newsletters and on the Results page on the Devon Home Choice website about homes that have been successfully let. We give the number of applicants that have bid for each home, the band of the top bidder, and the band start date of the winning bid.

This information will give you a better idea of

- how popular a particular home or area is
- whether you are likely to be successful in bidding for a council or housing association home
- how long you may have to wait

You can then decide whether to look for other types of home, or areas where you may not have to wait as long, or whether to look at other housing options, such as private renting.

For more information on how Devon Home Choice works please visit www.devonhomechoice.com or contact your local housing team.

You can also ask for this information in another format (such as a different language, or a large font)

Contact Details

East Devon District Council

Telephone 01395 517469

Email: devonhomechoice@eastdevon.gov.uk

Exeter City Council

Telephone 01392 265889

Email: devonhomechoice@exeter.gov.uk

Mid Devon District Council

Telephone 01884 255255

Email: devonhomechoice@middevon.gov.uk

North Devon Council

Telephone 01271 388870

Email: customerservices@northdevon.gov.uk

Plymouth City Council

Telephone 01752 305496

Email: housingoptions@plymouth.gov.uk

South Hams District Council

Telephone 01803 861234

Email: devonhomechoice@southhams.gov.uk

Teignbridge District Council

Telephone 01626 215200

Email: devonhomechoice@teignbridge.gov.uk

Torbay Council

Telephone 01803 207126

<https://forms.torbay.gov.uk/HousingEnquiry>

Torrige District Council

Telephone 01237 428849

Email: devonhomechoice@torridge.gov.uk

West Devon Borough Council

Telephone 01822 813600

Email: devonhomechoice@westdevon.gov.uk

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