

homes for change housing co-operative

The how to join leaflet!



Homes for Change
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What is a Housing Co-operative?

A co-operative is a group of people working together to benefit all of its members equally.

A housing co-operative aims to own and manage its own property. Rather than paying rent to someone else, members of a housing co-operative are both tenant and landlord as they own a share in the co-operative.

Homes for Change is a 'fully mutual housing co-op' – this means that every tenant is a member of the co-op.

Aims of Homes for Change:

- A community based on affordable rents and communal benefit, not individual profit;
- Control by co-op members of the management and development of the building;
- An exciting urban building evolving to meet the needs of future generations;
- To use the best in green design and building technology to minimise fuel costs and harm to the environment – the building was designated a '21st Century Homes demonstration project';
- To pursue all these aims to the benefit of all members irrespective of race, religion, social status, gender, age and disability.

Homes for Change works in partnership with Guinness Northern Counties Housing Association

Joining Homes for Change

Homes for change has only 75 properties, so, if your housing situation is an emergency, you are advised to approach larger housing providers.

You must be a member of Homes for Change before an application for housing can be considered.

To become a member of Homes for Change you must:

- 1) Complete and return a registration of interest form (available at a General Meeting or by contacting the HfC office). Once this has been received you will get our regular newsletter *The Big Yeller* which will keep you informed of upcoming meetings, among other things.
- 2) Attend 2 monthly General Meetings.
- 3) Attend an induction session – you should be invited to one of these after you have returned your registration of interest form. The sessions are held quarterly, but there may be extra ones if there is enough demand
- 4) Get involved in the work of the co-op by joining a working group (e.g. Maintenance Group or Publicity & Information Group). You can get an up-to-date list of working groups and contact details of co-ordinators by contacting the HfC office or the Membership Group.
- 5) Have your name added to the ‘new members’ item on the agenda of a General Meeting by Membership Group. You could ask a member of the membership group to do this for you. (This must happen no later than 6 months after your first attendance at a General Meeting). You must attend the meeting where your membership will be considered or the vote will be postponed to a later meeting.
- 6) On being successfully voted as a member of HfC you should be given a members pack containing among other things, a share certificate (costing £1) and an application form for housing.

Member of Homes for Change? Getting Housed at HfC

What's next? When the application has been received it undergoes the following process:

7) You will have a home visit to verify claims and circumstances.

8) The application form, and the report from the home visit will be analysed and points awarded according to your housing need – references and relevant medical and other evidence may be required.

9) You are placed on one or more of the waiting lists; there is a waiting list for each property size (1-bed, 2-bed etc). N.B. when waiting lists are full and 'closed' you will be placed on a 'pending' list until the waiting list is reopened.

10) You are informed in writing of your points total and position on the relevant points list. Again N.B. if your position is 'pending' this is because the list is full and closed at present.

11) Once you are on the waiting list, you must continue to be involved in a working group and you must continue to attend at least one monthly general meeting in each 6 month period. In addition you must keep Membership Group informed of changes in your circumstances and complete a new application form if you change address.

12) After every 6 months on the waiting list your application is reviewed and, subject to continued participation in the work of the co-op, 50 additional points will be awarded – these additional points are available for every subsequent 6 months.

13) When you reach the top of the waiting list – and a suitable property is available – you are invited to view the property. If it is suitable for you, the allocation of the property is presented to a General Meeting or a Committee Meeting for ratification. We then offer you a tenancy and arrange a date for you to sign your tenancy agreement.

If you have any questions about information contained in this leaflet, you could ask a member of the membership group at a General Meeting. Membership group can also be contacted on membership@homesforchange.co.uk