



# Easy -Read Guide to the Common Housing Register

## Who can join the Common Housing Register?

Anyone who is over the age of sixteen who wishes to register their need for housing. You should apply to join the common housing register if:

- You wish to rent a Housing Association property in Merthyr Tydfil
- You already rent from a Housing Association and would like a different property

If you are 16/17 and are awarded a tenancy it will be held in trust until you turn 18. This means that another suitable person (such as parent, legal guardian or relative) will be responsible for the tenancy until you turn 18.

You can join the register at [www.livingmerthyrtydfil.org.uk](http://www.livingmerthyrtydfil.org.uk)



## **Who cannot join the common housing register?**

Although anyone over 16 can apply to be added to the common housing register you may be refused if any of the following apply:

- You are subject to immigration control
- You are not classed as being habitually resident in the UK
- You are considered to be guilty of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make you unsuitable to be a tenant
- You have knowingly or recklessly given false information or withheld information in relation to your housing application

In the event that you are not able to join Living MerthyrTydfil you will be notified in writing. This notification will include the reasons for the decision and will outline the review process if you do not agree with the decision.



## **Registration**

In order to apply for Social Housing you must first register with Living Merthyr Tydfil. To do this you will need to complete the online housing application. If you do not have access to a computer or access to an internet enabled device; support will be provided in the One Stop Shop of the Civic Centre or in the office of your current social landlord.

Once your application is completed it will be held on the system for a Housing Solutions Officer to assess your circumstances against the policy. Your application is not automatically activated and you may be expected to attend a Housing Options Consultation at the One Stop Shop. This will be a discussion between yourself and a housing solutions officer about the housing options that are available to you.

We will e-mail you to inform you when you are accepted onto the Living Merthyr Tydfil Scheme, it will contain the following information:

- Your Housing Application Number
- The band you have been awarded
- The number of bedrooms you need

The registration process may take up to 21 days to complete. However, we will endeavor to validate the majority of applications within 5 working days. Housing Solutions cannot be held accountable for any delay as a result of requesting further information to support your application.



## **Keeping your information up to date**

You must keep your personal details up to date on the system. This is so we can assess any change to see if your priority band needs to be changed. If your details are not accurate you may miss out on a chance to apply for a property. The following are examples of changes you need to let us know about:

- Change of address
- Change of contact phone number
- Change of family details
- Changes to your medical circumstances
- Notice from your landlord
- Disrepair to your home that is affecting your health
- Other issues relating to where you are currently living

If you give false information this may result in your application being cancelled. This is also an offence.

We may need to see documents or supporting information showing proof of a change in circumstances. In some cases you may need a new housing options consultation.

## Property Size

In most cases you will only be eligible for properties that are suitable for the size of your family. In general, the following households will be offered the following accommodation:

Household	Property size
Single People	Bedsit, and one bed properties
Single people 50+	Bedsit and one bed properties
Household expecting a baby which is due in the next 11 weeks	Two bed properties
Household with no children	One bed properties
Household 50+ and no children	One or two bed properties
Household with one child	Two bed properties
Household with two children	Two or three bed properties
Household with three children	Three or four bed properties
Household with four or more children	Three or more bed properties

## **Priority Bands**

There are three main priority bands. These bands are:

### **Band 1- HighPriority:**

These are applicants that are owed a statutory award of reasonable preference but whom Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council believes should also be awarded additional preference based on their urgent housing needs.

### **Band 2 - Medium Priority:**

These are applicants that are owed a statutory award of reasonable preference under the policy.

### **Band 3 - Low Priority:**

These are applicants who have not been assessed as being in the additional preference group or the reasonable preference group.

### **Note**

There are also reduced preference bands and a non-priority band. You will be placed in one of these if you have a history of ASB, rent arrears or have refused two reasonable offers of accommodation.

## Property Adverts

Properties may be advertised daily on the Living Merthyr Tydfil Website. The adverts will run for at least seven days and will provide the following information:

- The Housing Association or landlord
- Size of the property
- The weekly rent
- Internal and external photographs
- Any age limit
- Other features of the property such as any adaptations

Most features will be outlined in the form of icons which can be hovered over to get further information.



## **Applying for properties**

This can only be done online. You can apply for as many properties as you like in each advert.

If you are having problems applying for properties further help and assistance will be available at the one stop shop in the Civic Centre where the contact centre staff will provide you with assistance. Assistance is also available at MVH and MTHA offices

You can only apply for those properties you are eligible for. Applications for properties will not be accepted after the advert has closed.



## **Offer of Accommodation**

Applicants will be shortlisted based on the following sequence shown below:

- 1) Number of bedrooms needed
- 2) Priority Band.
- 3) Length of time in the priority band.

The shortlist will be passed to the relevant landlord who will carry out any outstanding eligibility checks such as a financial assessment and ensuring your current circumstances match those on your application.

If you are at the top of the shortlist you will be contacted by the relevant landlord and will be invited to view the property. A formal offer may be made within 24 hours of the viewing.

If you decide to refuse the property it will be offered to the next person on the shortlist. If you refuse two or more properties in a six month period you will be placed in the reduced preference section of your current band e.g.if you were in band two you will then be placed in band two reduced preference.The effect of which is that your priority has been temporarily demoted.

## **Circumstances that mean an offer is not made.**

In certain circumstances landlords can withdraw an offer of accommodation or skip an applicant who has been shortlisted; these reasons are:

- Since joining the scheme you have become ineligible
- Your circumstances have changed since your banding was awarded and you are no longer entitled to the same priority
- You cannot afford the rent and service charge at the property
- The landlord has a significant housing management reason not to offer a property citing one of the following reasons:
  - There is a housing debt that was not predetermined
  - Non-compliance with current or previous tenancy agreement
  - Applicant is too vulnerable to sustain a tenancy
  - Sensitive Lets MAPPA/MARAC
- You are under offer on a previous shortlist

If the landlord is unable to contact you to carry out a verification or viewing of a property this will be taken as an implied refusal of the offer of accommodation.

## **Successful bids**

If your application for a property is successful and you are shortlisted the landlord will contact you as soon as possible after the advert cycle ends. If you do not hear within 28 days of the advert closing please assume you have not been successful.

Due to the volume of applications received for each property it is not possible to provide individual feedback on every advert.

You cannot apply for other properties if you have received a formal offer of a property. Once a property is accepted your application will be cancelled and if you wish to move again in the future you will need to submit a new application and your circumstances will need to be re-assessed.



## **Refusal of an offer when owed a homelessness duty.**

Those applicants owed a homelessness duty under s.66, s.73 or s.75 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 will lose their higher priority banding award if they refuse any suitable offer of accommodation. They will still be included on the housing register but placed in band 3.

The refusal of accommodation will also bring to an end any statutory homeless duties owed under s.66, s.73, or s.75.

Applicants will be formally warned of this consequence at the point of offer.



## Feedback

We will publish information on the website about homes that have been successfully let. This information will include the number of applicants that applied, the banding and application date of the person who was allocated the property.

This information will give you a better idea of how popular an area is and how long you would usually have to wait. You can then decide whether you wish to apply for properties in areas with shorter waiting times.



## **Contact Details**

### **Address**

Housing Solutions Team  
Civic Centre  
Castle Street  
Merthyr Tydfil  
CF47 8AN

### **Website**

[www.livingmerthyrtydfil.org.uk](http://www.livingmerthyrtydfil.org.uk)

### **Email**

[housing@merthyr.gov.uk](mailto:housing@merthyr.gov.uk)

### **Phone**

01685 725000

