

# Applying for Housing

in the  
London Borough of  
Richmond upon Thames



*LONDON BOROUGH OF  
RICHMOND UPON THAMES*

*HOUSING*

# Applying for housing in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames

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# Introduction

This booklet will explain who we can include on the Richmond housing register and how you can apply. We use the points scheme to decide priorities for housing. The greater your housing need, the more points you will get, which will increase your chances of getting an offer of accommodation. We work out your points on the basis of the information you give on your application form, so you should make sure you fill in the form fully.

We do not own any properties, so you will be offered accommodation by a registered social landlord (housing association), for more detail see section 5.

They will offer you accommodation when we nominate you (give your details to them and ask them to make you an offer).

# Who can apply?

## Who is eligible for the housing register?

The Richmond housing register is our main housing waiting list.

We will not accept you onto the register if:

- you are under the age of 16
- another council has placed you in the borough under homelessness laws
- you are under immigration control
- you are from abroad and you fail the habitual residence test (conditions you must meet to be regarded as having good cause to live in the UK)

We will put you on the Richmond housing register, but we will not consider you for any accommodation (unless there are exceptional circumstances) if:

- you own a property
- you have a leasehold interest in a property or
- you have a taxable income of over £28,500 or your savings are over £55,000 (or both)

We will consider you later on if your circumstances change.

# Who can apply?

**If you live outside the borough, you will be a low priority for rehousing unless:**

- you work on a permanent basis in the borough
- there are exceptional circumstances that require you to live in the borough
- we have accepted you from another borough
- the Housing Options Team has accepted a duty to rehouse you
- you are living in accommodation and this is not of your choice because you are in prison and before this you had been living in the borough

**We will not consider you for any accommodation, if we think you or someone you want to live with, have behaved unacceptably.**

This behaviour would have to be so serious that it would make you unsuitable to be a tenant of a registered social landlord. We may make this decision if for example:

- you have lost your home because of high rent arrears
- you have lost your home because of your behaviour towards your neighbours
- you were granted a council or registered social landlord tenancy as you provided false information

Before we make this decision, we would have to look at your case very carefully. We would put our decision in writing to you and if you disagreed, you could appeal to the Head of Housing Operations. You can let us know at a later date, if you think your behaviour should not be held against you anymore. We will then re-assess your application.

# How to apply?

You must fill in a Richmond housing register application form, giving as much information about you, the people you want to move with, and your current housing situation.

## What happens next?

We will write to you within 7 working days of receiving your form. The letter will contain your reference number and the number of points we have awarded your application. It is important to keep a note of your reference number and quote it when you write to us or phone us. We will not be able to give you any information without this number because of the rules on confidentiality.

Because of the shortage of social housing, it is difficult to be precise about if and when a registered social landlord will be able to offer you accommodation.

We publish levels of points for each size of property to show how many you need to be approved for housing. Once you have a certain number of points, we will either visit you at home or interview you at our council offices to confirm that the information you provided on your application form is still correct. We will then approve your application for an offer of accommodation.

We nominate people for accommodation in strict points order, so although we may approve you for rehousing, it may still be some time before we can nominate you.

**The number of points that are needed to be approved for housing can go up or down, depending on the amount of accommodation that is available to the Council. When there is less accommodation available, the number of points needed will be higher than when more accommodation is available.**

## The points scheme

We award points for the following categories of need and, where shown, we work out the time-in-need points automatically every month and add them to your points total.

(Time-in-need points are those we award, for certain categories of need, for each month you are on the housing register.)

**These are the points that we give for each of these categories.**

### Referred cases

The housing department agrees with various organisations to rehouse people under special arrangements. If you are referred to us in this way, we will give you **200 points**.

**Time-in-need points: Two a month (up to 48).**

Other referred cases include people who are helping the police as witnesses and are referred by police authorities.

If we receive a general referral to support your application, we will consider the information through the medical or welfare and social assessment process (see next page).

### Local Connection

We will give you **100 points** for having a local connection with this borough if you meet the following:

- you live in the borough and this residence is of your own choice. (It is not of your own choice if you are in prison)
- if you work on a permanent basis in the borough but live elsewhere
- we consider there to be exceptional circumstances which require you to live in this borough
- you are living/working in the borough or previously lived/worked in the borough whilst serving in the armed forces.

## The points scheme

### Welfare and social

If you have welfare or social needs, you should fill in a housing welfare/ social grounds form. The welfare panel will assess this form. If the panel decide that your current housing situation is causing you severe social or welfare problems, they will award points to your application. They will not award you points if your situation has already been considered in another category, for example, overcrowding.

#### **Examples of social and welfare needs where we may award points.**

The need to be nearer to carers.  
The need to be near a special school.

If the panel think that you have complicated social and welfare needs, they will refer your case to the assessment panel who will consider whether to award you priority points. We will write to you with the panel's decision.

The Welfare panel can give you **50 points**

The Assessment panel can give you **200 points**

**Time-in-need points: Two a month (up to 48).**

### Medical

If there are strong medical reasons why you or anyone on your application needs to be rehoused, please fill in a medical self-assessment form. We will then contact your doctor for more information if necessary. Our medical adviser will then look at the information you and your doctor provide, and assess whether your current housing situation is affecting your health or the health of anyone else on your application. The points we award you depend on how bad the illness is and how your current accommodation is affecting it. **We award points on a sliding scale, up to 50 points.** The medical adviser will assess all the medical needs of your family and may award extra points on a sliding scale up to 100 points.

**In exceptional cases, the medical adviser may give your case priority by awarding 200 points.**

This only happens if your condition is life-threatening or terminal and your existing accommodation is making your health worse.

We will write to advise you of the number of points awarded.

**Time-in-need points: Two a month (up to 48).**

## The points scheme

### Property defects

If your property needs repairs, please let us know. If the repairs are only minor, we will give you **10 points**. If the disrepair problems are very serious, we will refer your case to the Environmental Health Section. If they confirm that your property is in serious disrepair, you will receive **200 points**.

### If you are living in temporary accommodation

If you have made a homeless application and the council has accepted a duty to rehouse you and provided you with temporary accommodation (or you are living in a women's refuge), we will give you **50 points**.

**Time-in-need points: 25 a month (up to 900)**

### Priority at home

If you have made a homeless application and we consider you to be faced with homelessness, but you can stay in your current home temporarily, we will give you **50 points**.

**Time-in-need points: 30 a month (up to 900)**

### If you are threatened with losing your home

If you are living with relatives and friends and they are asking you to leave, we will give you **50 points**.

If you own your own home and the mortgage lender has issued you with a valid Notice, we will give you **50 points**.

If you are renting privately and your landlord gives you a valid Notice, we will give you **50 points**.

### Court order

If you are renting privately and your landlord obtains a court order to evict you, we will give you **25 points**.

### If you have no facilities or are sharing facilities

If you don't have a living room, kitchen, bathroom, toilet or hot water, or if you have to share them with people other than your household, you will receive the following points.

## The points scheme

Room or item	No facilities	Sharing facilities
Cooking facilities	10	5
Hot water	5	
Bath or shower	15	5
Toilet	15	5
If any of the above are in an inconvenient place: one point for each facility.		
Separate living room	10	

We won't give you these points if you do not have or have to share certain facilities while you are in temporary accommodation that we have provided.

### Overcrowding

The table on the next page shows the size of accommodation that different households need. We will give you points if your present accommodation is below this, for example, if you do not have enough bedrooms for the size of your family.

We will give you points if children of the opposite sex have to share a bedroom and one or more of them is over 10. Similarly, if a child over five has to share a bedroom with a parent of the opposite sex, we will give you extra points for each person who sleeps in the bedroom.

**If your children share bedrooms, it is important that you tell us when they reach the appropriate age so that we can reassess your points.**

## The points scheme

Number of occupants	Size of accommodation
One person	Bedsitting room, kitchen and use of bathroom.
A couple without children	One bedroom, a living room, kitchen and bathroom
<p>A couple, or single parent, with one child</p> <p>A couple, or single parent, with two children of the same sex with an age difference of less than 10 years</p> <p>Two people of either sex who are not married or living together as partners (for example, brother and sister, mother and son)</p>	Two bedrooms, a living room, kitchen and bathroom
<p>A couple, or single parent, with three children.</p> <p>A couple, or single parent, with one child and one dependent relative (for example a grandparent)</p> <p>A couple, or single parent, with two children of the opposite sex</p> <p>A couple, or single parent, with two children of the same sex where the age difference is 10 years or more</p>	Three bedrooms, a living room, kitchen and bathroom.

# The points scheme

For each extra bedroom you need, we will give you **30 points**.

For each person who doesn't have a bedroom, we will give you **5 points**.

For each person who shares a bedroom with a child of the opposite sex over 10, we will give you **10 points**.

If a child over five has to share a bedroom with a parent of the opposite sex, we will give you **10 points** for each person.

If a person over 10 has to sleep in a room less than 50 square feet (4.6 square metres), we will give you **20 points**.

### Separated families

If your family have previously lived together but now have to live in two separate homes, we will give you **20 points**.

If you have to live in more than two separate homes, we will give you **40 points**.

**Time-in-need points: One a month (up to 24).**

### Age points

We will give you points if you or your partner are over 65. The points will be based on the older person's age.

65 to 74:	<b>10 points</b>
75 to 79:	<b>20 points</b>
80 and over	<b>30 points</b>

## The points scheme

### **Pregnancy**

If you are pregnant, we will give you **5 points**.

### **Low income and savings**

If you receive benefits such as Income Support, Housing Benefit or Family Credit, which depend on your income, we will give you **5 points**.

If you have savings of less than £3000, we will give you 5 points.

We aim to give you priority if you are in private-rented housing and your low income means that you have difficulty finding other accommodation.

### **No fixed address**

If you are sleeping rough in this borough, we will give you **80 points**. We will need information from agencies within the borough that can confirm you are sleeping rough.

# Registered social landlords

Registered social landlords are independent, non-profit organisations that provide accommodation, at lower than market rents, for people who need housing. They vary in size, with many having homes in more than one borough. They are run by voluntary committees, with paid staff carrying out the day-to-day management.

The Tenant Services Authority (TSA) monitors them to make sure their work is carried out fairly and efficiently.

When they have suitable accommodation available they will ask us to nominate people for rehousing. We will then put forward people on the housing register to the registered social landlord if they have enough points and are approved for rehousing. We nominate people in strict points order.

The following are some of the registered social landlords that operate within this borough.

### **Richmond Housing Partnership**

PO Box 162  
Twickenham TW1 3XM  
Phone: 020 8404 5500

### **Richmond upon Thames Churches Housing Trust**

13 Castle Mews  
High Street  
Hampton, TW12 2NN  
Phone: 020 8481 7277

### **Thames Valley Housing Association**

Premier House  
52 London Road  
Twickenham TW1 3RP  
Phone: 020 8607 0607

## Registered social landlords

### **London & Quadrant Housing Trust**

L&Q Direct

Marlowe House

13th Floor

109 Station Road

Sidcup, DA15 7ET

Phone: 0800 015 6536

### **Family Mosaic Housing Association**

Albion House

20 Queen Elizabeth Street

London SE1 2RJ

Phone: 020 7089 1000

### **The Guinness Trust**

5 The Office Village

4 Romford Road

Stratford E15 4EA

Phone: 020 8519 2599

### **Places for People**

1 Chinchilla Drive

Beaver Estate

Hounslow TW4 7WP

Phone: 0800 432 0002

## Other information

### **Change of circumstance**

If your circumstances change, you must tell us in writing or fill in a change of circumstance form. It is very important that you tell us about any changes, for example, if you have a baby or move house, as this could affect the amount of points we give your application.

### **Re-registration**

Each year, we will ask if you want to stay on Richmond's housing register.

### **Sheltered accommodation**

Sheltered accommodation is purpose-built or converted housing for older people who, although they are independent, want the security of a resident Scheme Manager to give help if they need it. Tenants can use a 24 hour central alarm call system in an emergency when the warden is off duty. The units are usually self-contained one-bedroom flats for couples and studio flats for single people. The studio flats have their own kitchen and toilet and shared bathroom. We will only consider you for sheltered accommodation if you are over 60.

We have a detailed booklet available which you may find useful, called 'Housing For Older People'. It describes all the sheltered accommodation in this borough.

## Offer of accommodation

We will only nominate you for an offer of accommodation if you have enough points and we have approved your application for housing. We nominate people in points order so we will nominate people with the highest points first.

We will nominate you for one offer of suitable accommodation.

### Offer of accommodation

We will ask you where you would prefer to live. We have divided the locations where we have nomination rights into five areas (see table below) and will ask you to rank the areas in order of preference from 1 to 5. The area you would most prefer to live in would be ranked as number 1.

AREA A	AREA B	AREA C	AREA D	AREA E
Hanworth	Hampton Hill	Barnes	Twickenham	Richmond
Hounslow	Hampton North	Mortlake	Teddington	Kew
Whitton	Hampton	Sheen	Hampton Wick	Ham
				Petersham

We will try to rehouse you within your top three areas. However, this may not always be possible due to the extreme shortage of housing.

Please tell us if you have specific reasons why you cannot live in a particular area.

We will consider this request and let you know if it is possible or not.

We will not guarantee to nominate you for a property with a garden unless you have an essential medical need for one. You will not be allowed to keep a dog in a property unless the property has direct access to its own garden.

### Refusing an offer

If you refuse an offer of accommodation, we will carefully consider your reasons for refusal. We will use the information you provide to decide if the offer is reasonable or unreasonable. If we feel the offer is unreasonable, we will withdraw the offer and nominate you for another offer. If we feel that the offer is reasonable, we will give you another chance to accept the property. If you still refuse the offer, we may defer your application for two years. You have the right to appeal to the Head of Housing Operations.

## Moving home

### **Sponsored Moves Scheme**

If you are a Housing Association tenant, live in family sized property and would like to move to a one bedroom property, we may be able to help you under this scheme. If you are eligible, we will give you a cash grant of £2,500 for each bedroom you give up (up to £7,500). We will also arrange to pay for your removals and redecorate the property. You can choose where you want to live and the type of property you would like. You will not be limited to one offer. (You may also like to consider the Seaside and Country Homes Scheme detailed further in this booklet).

If you would like more information on this scheme, please contact us on 020 8891 7497. We also have a Sponsored Moves leaflet available.

### **Seaside and Country Homes**

Seaside & Country Homes is a housing mobility scheme that offers households living in housing association property in Greater London the opportunity to move home.

The Scheme manages approximately 3,500 bungalows and flats along the southwest coast to Cornwall, through the countryside from Shropshire to Cambridge, over to Norfolk and Lincolnshire in the east.

The Scheme does not guarantee you to move and priority is given to tenants who are giving up larger sized properties. In the London Borough of Richmond we are able to offer the same grant incentives as the Sponsored Moves Scheme, that is £2,500 for each bedroom you give up (up to £7,500)

To be eligible one member of the household has to be aged 60 and over. In cases where the other member of the household is under 60 they must either be the partner, joint tenant or registered carer of the lead applicant. Applications can only be considered for up to two persons.

If you would like more information on this scheme, please contact us on 020 8891 7497. We also have a Seaside & Country Homes leaflet available or you can download information from the website on [www.housingmoves.org/seaside-country-homes](http://www.housingmoves.org/seaside-country-homes)

## Moving home

### **Homeswapper**

Homeswapper is for social housing tenants (in rented property) who want to house swap (or flat swap). This is also called mutual exchange. If you live in council housing or housing association property you can swap your accommodation through this scheme.

If you are interested in swapping your home you can register and find details on [www.homeswapper.co.uk](http://www.homeswapper.co.uk)

If your landlord is a partner of Homeswapper the service is free. If your landlord is not partnering with Homeswapper there is a small administration charge for membership.

## Low cost home ownership

Low cost home ownership is a form of housing for people who would rather buy a home of their own than rent, but who are unable to afford the full purchase price of a suitable property on the open market.

### **New build Homebuy** (formerly known as shared ownership)

This scheme is sometimes referred to as part buy/part rent. The Council works in partnership with Housing Associations to provide small housing schemes to be offered to shared ownership purchasers. Shares of 50% (although can be less) are purchased on mortgage and then rent is paid to the Housing Association to cover the remaining share. Additional shares in the property are available to purchase in the future, eventually buying outright.

### **Shared Ownership Resales**

Occasionally properties in Homebuy become available for resale. Each Housing Association has its own policy on dealing with resales. The Council has limited control over shared ownership resales. Contact the Housing Provision Section on 020 8487 5454 for Housing Association details.

### **Social Homebuy**

Housing Association tenants interested in buying their current home on a part rent/part buy basis with an element of discount will need to contact their landlord to find out if this scheme is available to them. This scheme is not statutory and not all landlords will currently be offering this assistance.

### **Housing Options**

In addition to the New Build Homebuy scheme the Council operates in partnership with the Housing Associations, there are several other homeownership initiatives designed for housing association tenants, key workers and first time buyers. We have various leaflets with further information on low cost homeownership we can give you.

### **Key Worker Schemes**

For information on Key Worker Schemes (including rental housing) please visit the section on 'home ownership and housing for key workers' on our website [www.richmond.gov.uk/housing](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/housing). Please note that Richmond's Allocated Zone Agent, L&Q Housing Options currently deals with all applications for Key Worker and affordable homes through the Housing Options programme. Enquiries can be made to L&Q Housing Options Enquiries and Applications Team on 020 8294 5000 or download an application form at [www.housingoptions.co.uk](http://www.housingoptions.co.uk)

## Other queries

### Contacting us

Please contact us if you need any advice about how to apply for housing, help with filling in forms or an update on how we are dealing with your application.

We can also explain how the points system works and give you general information about housing.

You can contact us by phone, write to us or send an email. We can make an appointment to meet with you in the Civic Centre or visit you at home to discuss your application. You can also come and see us at the Civic Centre without an appointment, if you would like some information or help with filling in a housing related form. Please note we cannot see you on a Wednesday morning.

### Contact us at:

Housing Provision

Civic Centre

44 York Street

Twickenham TW1 3BZ

Phone: **020 8487 5454**

Email: **[housingallocations@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:housingallocations@richmond.gov.uk)**

You can also visit our website for further information:

**[www.richmond.gov.uk](http://www.richmond.gov.uk)**

**Please contact us if you need this in braille,  
large print, audio tape or another language.**

Housing Provision  
Civic Centre  
44 York Street  
Twickenham  
TW1 3BZ

Phone: 020 8487 5454  
Minicom: 020 8891 7423

If you have difficulty understanding this publication, please visit reception at the address below where we can arrange for a telephone interpreting service.

Nese keni veshtersi per te kuptuar kete botim, ju lutemi ejani ne recepcionin ne adresen e shenuar me poshte ku ne mund te organizojme perkthime nepermjet telefonit.

إذا كانت لديك صعوبة في فهم هذا المنشور، فنرجو زيارة الإستقبال في العنوان المعطى أدناه حيث بإمكاننا أن نرتب لخدمة ترجمة شفوية هاتفية.

এই প্রকাশনার অর্থ বুঝতে পারায় যদি আপনার কোন সমস্যা হয়, নিচে দেওয়া ঠিকানায় রিসেপশন-এ চলে আসুন যেখানে আমরা আপনাকে টেলিফোনে দোভাষীর সেবা প্রদানের ব্যবস্থা করতে পারবো।

اگر در فهمیدن این نشریه مشکل دارید، لطفاً به میز پذیرش در آدرس قید شده در زیر رجوع فرمایید تا سرویس ترجمه تلفنی برایتان فراهم آورده شود.

જો તમને આ પુસ્તિકાની વિગતો સમજવામાં મુશ્કેલી પડતી હોય તો, કૃપયા નીચે જણાવેલ સ્થળના રિસેપ્શન પર આવો, જ્યાં અમે ટેલિફોન પર ગુજરાતીમાં ઇન્ટરપ્રિટીંગ સેવાની ગોઠવણ કરી આપીશું.

जेकर तुहानुँ इस परचे हुँ समझत वित्त मुसकल पेस आउंटी है तं हेठां दिँते गेदे पडे उँपर रिसैपसन 'ते आँदि जिँधे असीं टैलीफोन ते गँलघात करन लडी ईँटरपूटर दा पूँषण कर सकदे हां।

اگر آپ کو اس اشاعت کو سمجھنے میں کوئی مشکل ہے تو، براہ کرم نیچے دیئے ہوئے ایڈریس کے استقبالیے پر جا کر ملیئے، جہاں ہم آپ کیلئے ٹیلیفون انٹریپریٹنگ سروس (ٹیلیفون پر ترجمانی کی سروس) کا انتظام کر سکتے ہیں۔

Civic Centre, 44 York Street, Twickenham TW1 3BZ