



Your Guide to Lincs Homefinder

Choice Based Lettings Scheme

City of Lincoln Council
The Property Shop, City Hall, Beaumont Fee, Lincoln, LN1 1DD
01522 873777
Housingoptions@lincoln.gov.uk

North Kesteven District Council
North Kesteven District Council Offices, Kesteven Street, Sleaford,
NG34 7EF
01529 414155
housingneeds@n-kesteven.gcsx.gov.uk

West Lindsey District Council
West Lindsey Guildhall, Marshall's Yard, Gainsborough, DN21
2NA
01427 676676 option 3
home.choices@west-lindsey.gov.uk

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Welcome to Lincs Homefinder

Introduction

Lincs Homefinder is a partnership to deliver Choice Based Lettings between North Kesteven District Council, City of Lincoln Council, West Lindsey District Council and Acis Group Limited.

Choice Based Lettings is designed to make the allocation of housing more efficient, and provide access to a wider range of properties for customers. Customers will also have much greater choice and control of their housing options which should lead to a more sustainable housing choice.

When a home becomes available it is advertised on the Lincs Homefinder website, in local authority reception areas and in other public spaces such as libraries. Other locations will be made known when you join the scheme and lists will be available on the website and in the local authority offices.

You can register your interest with us for any of the advertised properties. This is called making a 'bid' for a property, there is no money involved in Choice Based Lettings.

There is a severe shortage of social housing so properties have to be let to those considered to be in the **greatest need**. If more than one person bids for an advertised property, the person with the greatest priority will be offered the property first.

This guide explains how Lincs Homefinder works. If you need further help or information, please contact the local authority who is dealing with your application.

Further information is available in the full Lincs Homefinder Choice Based Lettings allocations policy which is available in the local authority offices or on the local authority and Lincs Homefinder websites.

Joining Lincs Homefinder

Register

You can apply to register with Lincs Homefinder in the following ways:

- Online at www.lincshomefinder.co.uk.
- Calling the local authority where you live:
 - Lincoln – 01522 873777
 - North Kesteven – 01529 414155
 - West Lindsey – 01427 676676
- Visiting the local authority office, see choosing a property.
- Emailing your local authority
 - Lincoln – housingoptions@lincoln.gov.uk
 - North Kesteven – housingneeds@n-kesteven.gcsx.gov.uk

- West Lindsey – home.choices@west-lindsey.gov.uk

The Local Authority will contact you to discuss your housing options and approve your registration. They may also ask for further information and evidence to allow them to assess your application. You will be required to provide evidence of your eligibility to join the scheme including identification for all members of your household, proof of residency and proof of child benefit for all children who are living with you.

When you are registered we will send you a letter with your confidential **User name** and **Password** These will give you access to the Lincs Homefinder Website, please keep them safe.

If you think you are registered but you do not have a User name and Password, contact your relevant Local Authority.

You will be written to annually to review your application and check you wish to remain as a member. If you do not return your review letter we will suspend your application.

Banding

Housing Need - Banding for Applicants

Banding is the way in which Lincs Homefinder will prioritise your housing need on our register. Applications in Band 1 will be considered a greater priority than applications in Band 2 and so on. Once you have made an application it will be placed into one of these bands depending upon your CURRENT housing situation. A brief summary of the four bands can be found below:

Band 1 - This is for applicants who have been considered to have an urgent need for housing by one of the partner organisations. Applicants in this band will be expected to bid each week on properties which match their eligibility as they have been given the highest priority. Those not bidding for properties deemed suitable may lose this priority status.

Band 2 - This is for applicants who may have a fairly high level of housing need as agreed by one of the partner organisations. Applicants will not be required to bid each week, but are encouraged to bid on properties which they may be interested in.

Band 3 - This is for applicants who may have a fairly low level of housing need as agreed by one of the partner organisations.

Band 4 - This is for applicants who may have a very low level of housing need, or are considered adequately housed by one of the partner organisations.

Full details of the banding criteria is available in the Lincs Homefinder Policy. This can be found on the website for your Local Authority.

Please note, if two applicants with same banding bid for a property, the applicant with the oldest application date will receive preference.

If successful in your bid for a property, you may be required to provide further information to validate your application and verify your circumstances. This may include a further interview with the housing provider.

In order to keep your banding up to date, you will need to inform us of any changes of circumstance at the earliest opportunity.

If you feel that your application band does not reflect your housing needs, you may contact your Local Authority to discuss further.

Change of circumstances

If any of your circumstances change it is your responsibility to inform us, if you do not inform the local authority dealing with your application this may prevent an offer of accommodation being made. A change of circumstances could be a change of address, a change in household members, a change in name etc. Any change of circumstances may mean your application needs to be reassessed. This could change your banding.

Choosing a home

Properties that become available are advertised weekly at the following places:

- The Lincs Homefinder website www.lincshomefinder.co.uk
- Local Authority reception areas:

City of Lincoln

The Property Shop, City Hall, Beaumont Fee, Lincoln, LN1 1DD

North Kesteven

North Kesteven District Council Offices, Kesteven Street, Sleaford, NG34 7EF

West Lindsey

West Lindsey Guildhall, Marshall's Yard, Gainsborough, DN21 2NA

- City of Lincoln remote locations

Hartsholme Community Contact Centre, 72 Hemswell Avenue, Lincoln

St. Giles Matters Building, Markham House, Swift Gardens, Lincoln

Abbey Neighbourhood Renewal Office, 53 Belmont Street, Lincoln

Ermine Library, Sudbrooke Drive, Lincoln,

Moorland Community Centre

Bracebridge Community Centre, Maple Street,

Birchwood Library, Jasmin Road, Lincoln

- North Kesteven remote locations

North Hykeham Info Link, The North Kesteven Sports Centre, Moor Lane, North Hykeham, LN6 9AX

Metheringham Info Link, 15A High Street, Metheringham, LN4 3DZ

Billingham Cottage and Parish Office, The Old Vicarage Cottage, Church Street, Bilinghay, LN4 4HN

Branston Connect Community Access Point, Branston Community Library, Station Road, Branston, LN4 1LH

Heckington Parish Office, Council Chambers, St. Andrews Street, Heckington, NG34 9RE

Navenby Village Office, 19 High Street, Navenby, LN5 0EN

Skellingthorpe Village Office, Lincoln Road, Skellingthorpe, LN6 5UT

Waddington Parish Office, High Street, Waddington, LN5 9RF

Washingborough Civic Office, Fen Road, Washingborough, LN4 1AB

Witham Office (Bassingham), 16 Torgate Lane (The Old Doctors Surgery), Bassingham, LN5 9HF

- West Lindsey remote locations

Market Rasen Housing Office, Corporate Reception, Festival Hall, Caistor Road, Market Rasen, LN8 3HT

Caistor Multi Use Centre, 19 South Street, Caistor, LN7 6UB

Acis Group Head Office, Acis House, Gainsborough

- Some libraries in Lincolnshire also have internet access.

To bid for a property you need to be a member of Lincs Homefinder and then you can choose from the advertised properties.

Selecting a property

The size and type of property you can bid for depends on the needs and size of your household. It will also depend on any other letting conditions that are set out in the advertisement.

We will let you know what size and type of home you can bid for. All the advertisements for properties will clearly state any limits and conditions. These conditions could include age restrictions or local connection requirements.

You will not be short-listed if you do meet these. For example, bids for sheltered housing may be restricted to older people.

Please use this space to make a note of your information

Your user name:	
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Your password:	
Your band:	
Your band date:	
Application number:	

The weekly bidding cycle

Properties are advertised on a weekly cycle. New advertisements appear on Wednesdays at midnight showing the week's available properties. You then have until 12 noon the following Monday to bid for a property. There is no advantage to bidding early - a bid made on Wednesday morning is treated in the same way as one made on Monday morning. However you will be able to see your actual bid position at the time you place your bid. Please note: this may change if more people bid for the same property, you will be able to check your final bid position when the cycle closes.

When logged into the website you will only be able to see properties that you are eligible to bid for. You will be able to place up to two bids per cycle so it is important that you only bid for properties you are interested in. You will need to check you meet any additional conditions set out in the property advert before placing a bid for that property.

Any Band 1 applicant who is not actively bidding for properties will be contacted by the relevant Local Authority to have their application reviewed.

How to make a bid

There are several ways you can make a bid for a property with Lincs Homefinder.

- Online – see below
- Phone the local authority dealing with your application
 - City of Lincoln – 01522 873777
 - North Kesteven – 01529 414155
 - West Lindsey – 01427 676676
- Post to the local authority dealing with your application

It is your responsibility to ensure your bid reaches us before 12 noon on a Monday. Bids received after 12 noon will not be counted.

Applicants are advised to only bid for properties which they genuinely want.

Internet bidding

If you are interested in a particular property you will need to place a 'bid' on it. This is so the council knows that you are interested in moving there and wish

to be considered for that particular property. To do this you must log in to the website using your unique username and password.

Once logged in to the website you will need to run a property search from your LINCS HOMEFINDER menu. You can select specific areas by clicking on the local authority area and then the smaller areas beneath them or look through all properties by selecting 'search all properties'. If you find a property you are interested in you will need to open the advert by selecting it and then clicking the 'bid' button at the top of the advert. If you change your mind you can also remove the bid using the option that will appear after you have placed a bid.

When you are logged in you will only be able to see the properties you are able to bid for. For example if you are a single person you will not see 2, 3, 4 bedroom properties.

You can bid for two properties in any cycle but please make sure that you only bid on properties you are genuinely interested in.

Bid Position(s)

Your bid position will let you know where you are in the queue for the property you have bid for. You can find this by selecting CURRENT BIDS from your menu. Please remember that your position can change during the bid cycle as more bids are placed. Once the bid cycle has closed your position will be finalised and you can view this by logging into your account.

Bid Preferences

If you have placed two bids but would prefer one of the properties you can let us know using BID PREFERENCES from the menu. Here you will see the bids you have placed and can specify your preference by selecting from 1, 2, or none (1 being your first choice).

The end of a bid cycle

At the end of the bid cycle the successful applicant will be contacted by the landlord of the property to check their details are correct and provisionally offer them the property. If for any reason the top bidder refuses, or is unsuitable for property, the housing provider will contact the next bidder on the list until the property is allocated. A viewing of the property will then be arranged.

You can check your position for each bid you made at the end of the cycle by logging into your online account.

Refusals

Any applicant who successfully bids for a property but later refuses on three occasions without a valid reason will have their application reviewed by the relevant Local Authority. This may result in a penalty being applied to your application. Please note: not liking the area is not a valid reason; applicants are expected to check the area before making a bid.

If you require this information in another language or format please contact your local council, contact details are provided below.

Polish

Jeśli potrzebuje Pan/Pani otrzymać te informacje w innym języku, należy skontaktować się ze swoją lokalną radą. Dane kontaktowe podane są poniżej.

Russian

Если эта информация требуется вам на другом языке, обратитесь в местную администрацию. Контактные данные приведены ниже.

Slovak

Ak budete potrebovať tieto informácie v inom jazyku, kontaktujte svoj miestny úrad. Kontaktné údaje sú uvedené nižšie.

Bengali

আপনার যদি এই তথ্য অন্য কোন ভাষায় দরকার হয়, তাহলে দয়া করে আপনার স্থানীয় কাউন্সিলের সাথে যোগাযোগ করবেন। যোগাযোগ করার তথ্য নচি দেওয়া হয়েছে।

Czech

Jestliže potřebuje tyto informace v jiném jazyce, prosíme, kontaktujte Váš místní úřad, viz níže uvedené kontakty.

Latvian

Ja jums nepieciešama šī informācija citā valodā, lūdzu, sazinieties ar savu vietējo pilsētas padomi. Kontaktinformācija norādīta zemāk.

Lithuanian

Jei ši informacija Jums reikalinga kita kalba, prašom kreiptis į vietinę savivaldybę, kurios kontaktinė informacija yra pateikta toliau.

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If you would like a copy of this in large, clear print, audio, Braille or in another language, please contact your local council, contact details are provided above.