



*Cumbria Choice*

**Choice Based Lettings**

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# Housing Allocations - The Councils Role

- Strategic Housing Authority
- Council is required to have a Housing Allocation Policy- Housing Act 1996.
- Statutory responsibility for homelessness
- Housing Register – or waiting list
- Different delivery models across Cumbria
- Housing Association partners are vital

# Current process – Waiting List (or black art...)

- Applicant fills in a form. Points awarded to reflect need.
- Potentially long waiting times dependent on preferred location and need.
- This not a queuing system. Position on list changes with every new applicant.

# Current process - Drawbacks

- Gatekeeping approach - passive role of applicant.
- Not transparent - applicants don't understand how priority and houses are awarded leading to misunderstandings and urban myths.
- Unrealistic expectation that an offer of housing will be made.

# Cumbria Choice Partners

- Cumbria Wide scheme.
- 6 District Councils
- 8 Housing Associations : Eden Housing Association, Riverside, Impact, Two Castles, South Lakes Housing, Derwent and Solway, Home Housing Group, Accent.
- 14 Partners in total – 30,000 properties.

# Governance Structures

- CBL project management board, reps from all partners established in 2007.
- Reports to the Cumbria Housing Executive Group.
- Working groups to address issues including :Consultation, IT, Vulnerable clients, allocation policy, literature, procedures etc...etc....

# Cumbria Choice-Assessing Housing Need

- One Allocation Policy and one application form for the County.
- Customer completes application form and 'banded' based on circumstances.
- 5 bands to reflect priority.
- Consistency across providers

# How it works

- Properties are advertised for one or a number of bands.
- Applicants express an interest (or bid)
- Short listing by:
  - Band
  - Date of Registration or entry into Band
  - Local Connection
- Offer not made for reasons of good housing management

# Band A – Urgent Need for Housing

- Statutory homeless
- Domestic violence
- Severe harassment/threat to safety
- Medical need/disability
- Statutorily overcrowded(Housing Act 2004)
- Unsanitary or unfit conditions

## Band B – High Need for Housing

- Cumulative need (2+ housing needs from Band C)
- Welfare grounds- leaving supported accommodation, young people leaving care
- Under occupation by 2+ bedrooms
- Prevention of Homelessness

# Band C – Medium Need for Housing

- Homeless but no priority need/intentionality
- Homeless but no further statutory duty
- Lower level medical needs
- Hardship – employment. Give/receive care
- Overcrowded- 1 bedroom
- Under occupation by 1 bedroom

# Band D –Low need for housing

- Adequately housed.
- Community Contribution – Employment within District, positive contribution to local community, positive tenancy history.

# Band E – Reduced Priority

- Customers owed a reasonable preference under the scheme, but given reduced priority until action is taken by them to rectify their behaviour.
- Reasons include – rent arrears, breach of tenancy condition.
- Plus – refusal of 2 reasonable offers in a 12 month period, financial resources, no local connection.

# Advantages of CBL

## For the customer

- Choice- properties advertised and customer bids only for those in which they are interested
- Feedback- information published on who (no names) was successful and why.
- Creates transparency-No myths, just facts.
- One access point for the whole of Cumbria

## For the provider

- Saves time and resources
- Consistency across the County.
- In low demand areas creates sustainable communities
- In high demand areas creates realism around availability of affordable housing.
- Excellent performance management tool

# Disadvantages

## For customer

- Does not increase the supply of housing
- Must actively seek housing, look for adverts, check the website etc
- Accessibility issues- vulnerable clients may slip through net.
- Geography of Cumbria

## For provider

- Does not increase the supply of housing
- Staff time redirected towards advertising processes and deadlines and supporting vulnerable customers.

# Current progress

- Cumbria Choice allocation Policy – Extensive consultation with tenants, applicants, stakeholders and partners carried out in spring 2010
- Policy adopted by all Council and Housing Association Boards in July 2010.
- IT Implementation plan underway.
- 'Go Live' Feb 2011.

# Geeky details

- Web Based system. No central admin function.
- System will band applicants automatically to ensure consistency across county.
- System also creates the adverts.
- Bids taken via internet, text, automated phone line, letter or in person.

# Advertising

- Property list advertised fortnightly on:
  - website
  - Offices
  - Libraries
  - Newspapers (cost implications)
  - Radio

# Website appearance



## About AnyBorough HomeChoice

AnyBorough HomeChoice is designed to give you better access to your housing options by publishing details of available properties. You can then decide which properties you wish to be considered for.



### How to Bid

If you are on the housing register, you can bid for properties:




- By calling 0845 123456 (typically 3p per minute)
- By sending a text message to 07799 123456
- On the website at [www.anyborough.org.uk](http://www.anyborough.org.uk)
- On our public kiosks (see user guide for locations)
- Using Digital TV (see user guide for details)

Please see the user guide for more details of how to bid. If you need help bidding, please call us on 0845 654321. One of our staff will ensure that you get the support you need.



[www.anyborough.org.uk](http://www.anyborough.org.uk)  
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## CBL Property - Jun 27 2009 to Jul 2 2009

<p><b>CBL Property</b> Rent: £77.66 Service charges: £0.00 Total Cost: £77.66 - 1 Landlord: Demo Bedrooms 1</p>		<p><b>Okus Road, Anyborough, GL53 8DU</b> Bungalow, Garden: Own garden, Heating: Gas radiator, Parking: Off street parking, 1 bed bungalow within walking distance of town centre. Suitable for single/couple over 55.</p> <p>Icons: P, W, M, D, H, A Ref no :118</p>
<p><b>CBL Property</b> Rent: £66.21 Service charges: £0.00 Total Cost: £66.21 - 1 Landlord: Demo Bedrooms 1</p>		<p><b>Mason Drive, Anyborough, GL56 3FF</b> Bungalow, Garden: Communal garden, Heating: Gas radiator, Parking: Permitt parking, One bed bungalow close to town centre suitable for applicants over age of 60 or where ground floor is essential</p> <p>Icons: P, W, C Ref no :119</p>
<p><b>CBL Property</b> Rent: £132.26 Service charges: £22.31 Total Cost: £154.57 - Landlord: Demo Bedrooms 1</p>		<p><b>Frogmore Drive, Anyborough, AS4 6DG</b> Flat, 4th floor, Garden: Communal garden, Heating: Gas warm air, Parking: Residents parking scheme, Conversion flat with excellent transport links to Central London and Stoke Newington High Street. Nearest train station is Rectory Road.</p> <p>Icons: P, W, C Ref no :127</p>

### Key

- CBL
- Shared Ownership
- Mutual Exchange
- Supported housing scheme
- Sheltered property
- Off road parking
- Own garden
- Suitable for people with mobility need
- Only available to people of the age shown and below.
- At least one household member must be the age shown.

[www.anyborough.org.uk](http://www.anyborough.org.uk)  
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# Things to do.....

- Measures to ensure that all potential customers can access CBL :
- Vulnerable customers
- Homeless
- B and ME groups
- Rurality /lack of Broadband etc
- Staff training- procedural details

Result is.....



Questions.....