



Applying for a Home

**How to apply for an affordable rented
property in Hart**

Further Information

We can provide this leaflet in **LARGE PRINT**, on tape and in Braille. Also, for people whose first language is not English. If you would like this translated into any of the following languages, please telephone **01252 774420**

French

Ce document est également disponible dans d'autres langues, en gros caractères et en cassette audio sur simple demande.

German

Dieses Material ist auf Wunsch auch in anderen Sprachen, in Großdruck und auf Tonband erhältlich.

Spanish

Este documento también está disponible y puede solicitarse en otros idiomas, en letra grande y formato de audio.

Portuguese

Este documento encontra-se também disponível noutros idiomas, em tipo de imprensa grande e em formato áudio, a pedido.

Polish

Dokument ten jest na życzenie udostępniany także w innych wersjach językowych, w dużym druku lub w formacie audio.

Bengali

এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায়, বড় প্রিন্ট আকারে এবং অডিও টেপ আকারেও অনুরোধে পাওয়া যায়।

Hindi

अनुरोध पर यह दस्तावेज़ अन्य भाषाओं में, बड़े अक्षरों की छपाई और सुनने वाले माध्यम पर भी उपलब्ध है

Punjabi

ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ, ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਅਤੇ ਆਡੀਓ ਟੇਪ 'ਤੇ ਰਿਕਾਰਡ ਹੋਇਆ ਵੀ ਮੰਗ ਕੇ ਲਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।

Cantonese

本文件也可應要求，製作成其他語文或特大字體版本，也可製作成錄音帶。

Mandarin

本文件也可应要求，制作成其它语文或特大字体版本，也可制作成录音带。

Nepalese

यसै नपाइलाइ यस वारेमा आफ्नो भाषामा जानकारी चाहिएमा कृपया यस नं 01252 774420 मा सम्पर्क गर्नुहोस्

1. About this leaflet

The Council transferred its housing stock to Sentinel Housing Association in 1994, and as a result, housing associations are the only providers of new and existing affordable homes for rent and shared ownership in the Hart District.

This leaflet explains how to apply to Hart District Council for a home, and how the Joint Housing Register operates. In addition, it explains how we will prioritise you for housing by awarding points to your application, and how you can choose a housing association home.

2. How to apply

You can apply to join the Hart Housing Register on-line by visiting www.harthomes.org.uk and completing the on-line application form. If you apply on-line, your details will be automatically added to the Housing Register. If we are satisfied with the information you provide, and you have completed all relevant sections of the form, your application will be activated and we will send you an acknowledgement letter telling you your reference number and how many points you have been awarded.

If you are unable to apply on-line, you can call into the Civic Offices in person to collect a Housing Register application form or you can telephone, write, or email and request one. For Hart Housing Services' contact details, please see Section 34 of this leaflet. Please return your completed Housing Register application form to the Civic Offices where we will register it. If your form is incomplete, we will return it explaining which parts you should complete to enable your application to be registered. Once your application has been registered, we will send you a letter confirming your registration and advising you how many points you have been awarded.

You are entitled to apply to other Councils for housing. Later in this leaflet we provide a list of Hart's neighbouring Councils.

If a Council says that you cannot join their Housing Register, you have a legal right to ask for a review of its decision.

3. Can I get help to make an application for housing?

If you think that you need help or assistance to complete a Hart Housing Register application form, on-line or on paper, you are welcome to contact Housing Services at the Civic Offices (contact details at the end of this leaflet) who will be happy to help you further.

Please also contact Housing Services if you want to discuss getting help with bidding for available properties through the Hart Homes Scheme.

4. Who qualifies to join the Housing Register?

Anyone can apply to join the register providing they are 16 years old or over, and the categories set out in section 5 below do not apply to them.

(Please note that applicants who are aged 16 to 18 can apply to join the register, but may need a guarantor before being offered a tenancy by a Registered Social Landlord).

5. Who does not qualify to join?












You do not qualify to join the Housing Register if:

- You, or a member of your household, are considered by the Council to be guilty of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make you unsuitable to be a tenant
- You are subject to immigration control and have no recourse to public funds
- You are not habitually resident in the Common Travel Area (UK, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, or the Republic of Ireland)
- You do not have the right to reside in the UK

6. How are applications assessed?

If you are eligible to join the Housing Register, you will be awarded points dependent on your individual circumstances. (Details of the pointing scheme follow in Section 7).

You will be registered according to the size of home you need. The table on the next page shows you the size of property that matches the size of your family:

<u>Household make-up</u>	<u>Number of bedrooms</u>				
	1	2	3	4*	5*
Single person					
Couple, or adult siblings wishing to live together					
Pregnant woman where woman is -28 weeks, with or without partner, and no other children					
Pregnant woman where woman is 28+ weeks, with or without partner, and no other children					
Parent(s) with one child					
Parents(s) with two same sex children where both children are under 10 years old					
Parent (s) with one girl and one boy					
Parents with two same sex children where one child is over 10 years old					
Parents with three children regardless of age or sex					
Parents with four or more children					

If you are separated or divorced and sometimes care for your children, we will look at how often and for how long the children stay with you. This is to establish whether it is appropriate for you to be considered for a property with additional bedrooms for your children.

Consideration may also be given to awarding additional bedrooms for applicants who are affected by medical conditions that mean they require additional space. See Section 10 for further information about how health can be taken into account.

** Please note that there is a severe shortage of affordable rented accommodation in the Hart District – particularly larger family sized accommodation.*

7. How will the Council give my application priority?

The following section explains how we award points based on housing need. The table below provides a description of each criteria under which points are awarded and how many points can be awarded:

Points	Description	Total
Local Connection	Awarded where you or a member of your household is employed in the Hart District.	10
Local Residence	Awarded to those who reside in the Hart District and have resided in the Hart District for at least 6 months (Local Residence points are awarded instead of Local Connection points where applicants meet this criteria)	15
Time on list	Awarded on the anniversary of your acceptance onto the Housing Register up to a maximum of 25 points (equivalent 5 years)	5

Sharing Facilities	<p>Shared living room Shared kitchen Shared bathroom / WC</p> <p>Points awarded where these are shared with people who are not part of your household</p>	5 points for each
Amenities Points	5 points awarded to applicants who have children under 10 years of age in their household and are lacking an enclosed garden for their own use	5
Access Points	Awarded if your home is above or below the ground floor with no lift, and one or more member(s) of your household are aged under 12 or over 60 or who is registered disabled	10
Disrepair	Awarded on the recommendation of Hart Environmental Health Officers (these points do not apply to tenants of Local Authorities or Registered Social Landlords eg Housing Associations)	1 – 20
Room Deficiency	<p>Kitchen Living Room Bathroom/WC Bedroom (based on Hart Bedroom Standard)</p>	10 per room
Under-Occupation	5 points awarded for each bedroom they have in excess of their requirements – assessment will be in accordance with the Hart bedroom standard.	5 per room

Points	Description	Total
Temporary or Insecure Accommodation (1)	<p>If you have been given a valid notice by your employer that your tied tenancy is due to end within 3 months</p> <p>OR</p> <p>If you are facing eviction or repossession through no fault of your own and have received a valid notice and/or Court Order / Bailiff's Warrant from your landlord or mortgage lender. (You will not be awarded these points if you are being evicted for rent arrears or anti-social behaviour)</p>	20
Temporary or Insecure Accommodation (2)	<p>If you have a tenancy of a limited term (eg Assured Shorthold Tenancy) less than 6 months and landlord has stated in writing it will not be renewed</p> <p>OR</p> <p>If you have been served with an invalid NTQ (these points will be reviewed when you are served with a valid notice)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>If you live in a hostel or refuge owned and/or managed by a housing association or a registered charity</p> <p>OR</p> <p>If you are leaving long term institutional care after 6 months or longer (eg hospital or residential care provided by a Social Services authority)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>If you are sharing with friends or relatives who have asked you to leave within 28 days and you have received written notice</p>	10

Homeless	If you are actually homeless, roofless or transient (sleeping on a friend's floor, moving frequently between addresses) through no fault of your own, but would not be owed a duty by Hart District Council under homelessness legislation. (You will be required to provide proof)	10
Accepted as Homeless	If you have been accepted under provisions of homelessness legislation by Hart District Council	20
Household Living Apart	If you are a separated household and are unable to live together due to lack of space	5
Medical	A maximum of 10 points per person within your household may be awarded at the discretion of the Council's Independent Health Advisor ('Medical' points are assessed within the scale 1-10 dependent on how your housing circumstances are directly affecting your health)	1-10

Points	Description	Total
Social Welfare	<p>Awarded at the discretion of the Housing Needs Manager if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • or members of your household are over 65 <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are referred by Hampshire County Council Children Services under the Children Act 1989 <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have one or more member(s) of your household with an agreed care plan to be provided by Hampshire County Council Adult or Children Services <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are under 65 and care full time for a member(s) of your household <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are cared for full-time by a member(s) of your household <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are restricted in your current home because you have suffered a severe accident <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need to live within five miles of family or friends to provide or receive essential support <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need to live within five miles of a specialist medical facility or special school 	10 (in total)

<p>Domestic Violence and Hate Crime</p>	<p>Awarded if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to escape, or recover from, the effects of violence or threats of violence from inside or outside the home • Need to escape, or recover from, the effects of hate crime that is of a sexual, racial, religious or homophobic nature 	<p>20</p>
<p>Housing Association Tenants who live in Hart</p>	<p>Awarded if you are a housing association tenant living in Hart and you want to move to a different housing association property. You will only be given these points if you have held your current tenancy at the address on your application form for one year or more.</p>	<p>20</p>
<p>Discretionary Points</p>	<p>To be allocated in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Housing Needs Manager. Examples that may be considered are included below (please note this list is not exhaustive):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 Points awarded for applicants who accept accommodation at Heathlands Court under advice and prevention. • Discretionary points award considered on receipt of Management Transfer requests from RSL's and/or decants are being considered for particular schemes • Discretionary points award considered in exceptional circumstances where there's a 	<p>1-30</p>

Discretionary Points (continued...)	<p>need to move on homeless households in temporary accommodation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discretionary points award considered where it is deemed that exceptional circumstances of a particular case are not adequately reflected within the standard points awards outlined in this policy • Additional points may be considered in order to prevent homelessness, in exceptional circumstances 	
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You will need to provide proof and supporting information to receive points for room deficiency, homelessness, social welfare, domestic violence, hate crime, and insecure tenure reasons. You may also need to provide proof of your eligibility where appropriate.

8. Rural Housing Schemes

In some rural areas rural housing schemes have been developed on exception sites for those applicants who have a local connection with the village where the scheme is situated. In such cases the allocation of the properties is in accordance with strict local connection criteria. Rural housing schemes have been developed in the following localities: Bramshill, Crondall, Crookham Village, Dogmersfield, Eversley, Heckfield, Long Sutton, Mattingley, Rotherwick, and South Warnborough.

Some other rural housing developments may not have such strict local connection restrictions, and applications to these properties will be prioritised in the usual way.

For further information, please contact Housing Services (contact details are included in Section 34 of this leaflet).

9. Will the Council visit me at home?

To confirm your housing circumstances, we may need to visit you at home. We will normally notify you in advance of when the visit will take place. At the visit, the Housing Options Officer will check your circumstances and your points may increase or decrease according to the circumstances the Officer finds.

If you would like a home visit, please contact the Housing Options team; contact details are included in Section 34 of this leaflet.

An Environmental Health Officer may be asked to visit you at home to look at the condition and repair of your accommodation. The Officer will check if your housing conditions mean that you should be awarded points. Please note that your points may also be reduced, for example, if your landlord can provide the facilities you are lacking or undertake repairs quickly. Please note that 'Disrepair' points do not apply to tenants of Local Authorities or Housing Associations. Environmental Health Officers can, however, visit tenants at home to carry out an assessment of their accommodation and where appropriate liaise with the landlord to address disrepair.

(If you are a tenant of a Housing Association in the Hart area and your home is in disrepair, you should contact your landlord first to try and resolve the problem).

10. Can my health be taken into account?

You can apply to have priority awarded to your application on medical grounds. The Council's Independent Health Advisor will assess you / your family's health. The Health Advisor will consider whether your current housing circumstances are having a direct adverse effect on you / your household's physical or mental health. The Health Advisor may also be consulted for advice regarding whether an application should be considered for larger sized accommodation on health grounds.

In some circumstances, your General Practitioner, Consultant and / or Social Worker may want to write to the Council on your behalf.

11. What if my circumstances change?

It is important that you notify Housing Services immediately of any change in your circumstances from those originally stated on your application – for example, change of address and where your household size has increased or decreased. We would prefer you to put these changes in writing to us, and we will confirm that we have made the appropriate changes to your application.

Failure to notify the Council of a change in your circumstances may lead to the incorrect assessment of your Housing Register application, or the cancellation of your application. As part of your Housing Register application form you will be asked to sign a declaration confirming you are aware that you must keep us up to date regarding changes to your circumstances.

12. How do I renew my application?

We will send you a reminder for you to renew your application from time to time – this will usually happen on the anniversary of your registration. *It is your responsibility to renew your application – if you fail to renew, your application will be cancelled.*

13. Can the Council decide not to consider me for a property?

Your Housing Register application can be deferred, or ‘put on hold’. This means that whilst you can continue to accrue points, for example for ‘Time on List’, you will not be able to be considered for properties and offers of accommodation will be withheld. Examples of circumstances where your application may be deferred for a period of 12 months include:

- If you have provided false information, or withheld information that is reasonably required in order to accurately assess your Housing Register application
- If you are deemed to have deliberately worsened your circumstances to obtain advantage on the Housing Register
- If on three occasions during a 12-month period you choose a property and are offered it, but then refuse it. (This doesn't apply if you have been accepted under the law on homelessness).

Examples of circumstances where your application may be deferred for a shorter or unspecified period of time include:

- Whilst investigations are carried out under homelessness legislation
- Whilst a review of the suitability of accommodation offered is being carried out
- If you have notified the Council of a change in your circumstances and we are awaiting an updated change of circumstances form to be returned (your application will receive active consideration again on receipt)
- Where further investigations into your Housing Register application are deemed necessary to confirm your housing circumstances (your application will receive active consideration as soon as the Council has verified your circumstances and confirmed they are as stated on your application)
- If you have rent arrears from a current or previous tenancy with a Registered Social Landlord and you have not entered into an agreement to make regular payment to the landlord, or you are not complying with the terms of such an agreement
- If you have an outstanding debt to Hart's Rent Deposit Scheme and you are not making regular payments
- If we consider that you, or a member of your household, is guilty of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make you unsuitable to be a tenant.
- If you have been nominated by the Council to a Housing Association property and the nomination is being considered

14. Can my application be cancelled?

Your application can be cancelled and removed from the Housing Register in certain circumstances, for example:

- At your request
- If you fail to return an application form or requested documentation within 21 days when requested
- If you have moved and not informed us of your new address and we are unable to contact you
- If you fail to renew your application
- If you have deliberately given false and/or misleading information
- If you accept an offer of accommodation through the Joint Housing Register
- If you cease to be eligible for assistance

15. How do I make enquiries about my application?

You may call in person at the Civic Offices, write, email, fax or telephone to enquire about your application. Contact details are included at the end of this leaflet.

When you are writing to the Council, please make sure you quote your name, address and reference number clearly. This will enable staff to reply to your correspondence quickly.

16. Can I see my file?

Under the Data Protection Act 1998 you have the right to ask for a copy of the information we hold about you (for which we may charge an administration fee), and to correct any inaccuracies in your information. By completing and returning the application form to us, you consent to our processing sensitive personal data about you where this is necessary (for example health and other personal information). As part of your Joint Housing Register application, you will sign to say that you give your consent for us to share and request information about you with / from other agencies.

17. How do I select a home?

Once a week we will advertise vacant housing association homes. We will advertise vacancies on the Hart Homes website at www.harthomes.org.uk and on a recorded 24 hour telephone message, telephone number (01252) 774470.

We will also advertise vacancies at the following sites:

- The Civic Offices in Fleet
- Hart Neighbourhood Centre, Dickson House, London Road, Hook
- The libraries in Fleet and Yateley
- Fleet & Yateley Citizen's Advice Bureaux
- Sentinel Housing Association, Lismoyne House, Church Road, Fleet

Information on properties will be available from midnight on Wednesday and bidding will close on Sunday at midnight. *You must make your bids before the closing date as we cannot consider any request made after this time.*

If you see a suitable vacancy advertised, you can bid in the following ways, outlined on the next page:

To use the website:

Go to www.harthomes.org.uk

- 1) Click Login/Your Status
- 2) Enter your Housing Register Application number and Date of Birth of the Main Applicant (use *dd/mm/yyyy* eg *01/03/1965*)
- 3) Click Property Search
- 4) Select your property requirements then click Search or just click Search to view all available properties
- 5) Click Apply Now on property advert to bid

To use the telephone:

Contact our 24 hour automated telephone service on [0845 602 4955](tel:08456024955) (Local Charges Apply)

- 1) Enter your Housing Register Application number and Date of Birth of the Main Applicant
- 2) Press 1 to bid for a property
- 3) Enter a Property Reference Number followed by # (Shown on property advert as Property: or Property Ref:)
- 4) If eligible to bid you are advised of the Queue Position (*if you are not eligible the system tells you the reason for this*)
- 5) Press 1 to confirm
- 6) You are told your bid has been Accepted

To text:

Text the following information to [0778 148 6687](tel:07781486687):

- 1) Your Housing Application Number
- 2) Date of Birth of the Main Applicant (use *dd/mm/yyyy* eg *01/03/1965*)
- 3) Property Reference Number

- *You MUST leave a space between each piece of information (for example: 10839 01/03/1965 22)*
- *Your bid WILL NOT BE REGISTERED if you do not text this information correctly*
- *It is not possible to confirm that the bid has been received*

18. How many bids can I make?

You can bid for a maximum of 3 properties each week.

You can decide to change your 3 bids during the weekly advertising cycle, but at the closing date they cannot be changed.

- Days you CAN BID are Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday
- Days you CANNOT BID are Monday Tuesday and Wednesday

(If you have been nominated to a property and invited to view it by the housing association, you will be unable to bid for further properties unless you refuse the property or the nomination is unsuccessful).

19. Can I bid for any property?

The system will check whether you meet the eligibility requirements of the property you are bidding for (for example, whether your bedroom need is appropriate for the size of property). If you do not meet the requirements, you will not be able to bid for that property. When you bid for a property on the website or through the automated telephone service you will be given the reason why you are not able to bid.

Some properties, such as 3-bedroom houses with gardens, can be very popular. To avoid disappointment we may, therefore, only invite bids from applicants with the highest number of points in certain circumstances.

There are other circumstances when we may limit who can bid for a particular property. These include when we are creating a new community by allocating accommodation on a new housing development, when we are advertising accommodation suitable for people with disabilities, or where 'local lettings' policies are in place. We may invite bids from specific types of household or applicant categories, for example, families with older children, households where the applicant or a member of their family requires adaptations, legally homeless households, or transfer applicants. Applicants may not always, therefore, be considered in point order.

The Council may also make 'Direct Offers' of accommodation outside of the Choice Based Lettings Scheme in exceptional circumstances.

20. Can I bid for homes in other areas?

From time to time you will be able to bid for homes in Guildford, Rushmoor and Waverley Borough Council's areas through the 'HomeSelecta' Scheme.

Applicants from these areas will also be entitled to bid. Applicants that bid for these properties will be considered by the date of their application and must have a housing need such as being homeless, living in unsanitary, overcrowded or unsatisfactory conditions, having welfare or medical needs or needing to live near specialist medical facilities or a carer.

Applicants, who are experiencing domestic violence, hate crime or racial harassment may be given additional preference if a move to another area would improve their situation.

The Hart Housing Register Points Scheme is not applicable to these 'HomeSelecta' vacancies.

21. How can I withdraw a bid?

You can withdraw a bid at any time during the bidding cycle. You can do this on the website and through the automated telephone service.

To withdraw a bid through the website:
1) Click <u>Login / Your Status</u>
2) Put a tick under Withdraw against a property
3) Click <u>Withdraw Bids</u>
To withdraw a bid through the automated telephone service:
1) <u>Press 2</u> to list all of your bids
2) Select the number that relates to the property
3) <u>Confirm</u> that you wish to withdraw the bid

22. What happens after the closing date?

We will nominate the three applicants with the highest points who bid for a particular property to the housing association. The association will invite the eligible applicant with the highest points to view the property first. If it is refused, the association will then contact the applicant with the 2nd highest priority and invite them to view, and so on, until the applicant with the highest priority who will accept the accommodation is offered the property.

23. How will I find out if I have been successful?

The housing association will write to successful applicants, advising them of the outcome of the selection process.

You will also be able to see the results in the same places we use to advertise available properties. The results will show how many applicants bid for a particular property and the number of points the successful applicant had. This information will give you a guide to how long you may wait before you are successful.

If you accept a property, your Housing Register application will be cancelled.

24. What happens if I'm successful and I refuse the property?

If on three occasions during a 12-month period you choose a property and are offered it, but then refuse it, you will not be able to select another property for 12 months. This doesn't apply if you have been accepted under the law on homelessness.

25. How am I affected if I've been accepted under the law on homelessness?

If you have failed to bid for a property for three months from the date you were accepted as homeless, we will contact you to find out your reason(s) for not bidding and will ensure that you understand the consequences of not bidding.

If you have failed to bid for a property for 6 months from the date you were accepted as homeless, we will select a property on your behalf. If you are successful and the property we have selected is offered to you and you refuse it, we will end our homelessness duty to you and you will be asked to leave any temporary accommodation you have been provided with. Your Housing Register application will be deferred until you have vacated your temporary accommodation and returned a completed change of circumstance form.

If you have made a successful bid for a property, it is offered to you and you refuse it, we will end our homelessness duty to you and you will be asked to leave any temporary accommodation you have been provided with. Your Housing Register application will be deferred until you have vacated your temporary accommodation and returned a completed change of circumstance form.

Please note that you would have the Right to Request a Review of our decision about the suitability of the property. For further information see Section 27 on the next page.

26. How am I affected if I am residing at Heathlands Court under Hart's Homelessness Prevention Initiative?

If you have failed to bid for a property for three months from the date your tenancy commenced at Heathlands Court, we will contact you to find out your reason(s) for not bidding and will ensure that you understand the consequences of not bidding.

If you have failed to bid for a property for 6 months from the date your tenancy commenced at Heathlands Court, we will select a property on your behalf. If you are successful and the property we have selected is offered to you and you refuse it, you will be asked to leave your accommodation. Your Housing Register application will be deferred until you have vacated Heathlands Court and returned a completed change of circumstance form.

If you have made a successful bid for a property, it is offered to you and you refuse it, you will be asked to leave your accommodation. Your Housing Register application will be deferred until you have vacated Heathlands Court and returned a completed change of circumstance form.

Please note that you would have the Right to Request a Review of our decision about the suitability of the property. For further information see Section 27 on the next page.

27. Do I have the right to request a review of the Council's decisions?

You can ask us for a review of the following decisions:

- You do not qualify to join the Housing Register
- Your details are removed from the Housing Register
- You are not considered for accommodation because you, or a member of your household are guilty of unacceptable behaviour
- You have been accepted under the law on homelessness and you refuse suitable accommodation selected by us
- You are made a Direct Offer of accommodation but do not consider that the accommodation is suitable for your needs

Your review request should be received within 21 days of notification of the decision. For more information regarding the review process, please see our 'Seeking a Review – Housing Advice and Homelessness' leaflet.

28. Can a housing association refuse to house me?

A housing association may operate a policy which means it cannot house you, for example, if you were previously a tenant of the association and you still owe rent arrears or you were evicted by them. If an association decides it will not house you, you should be provided with the reason(s) in writing with an explanation of how you can appeal. If you are not happy with the outcome, you can approach the Independent Housing Ombudsman (contact details included at the end of this leaflet).

29. Equal Opportunities

It is the aim of Hart District Council to ensure that no-one applying for housing is treated less favourably for any reason. The Council is therefore committed to not discriminating against any person or other organisation on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, disability, nationality, gender, sexuality, age, class, appearance, religion, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or with AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.

To assist us to ensure that we are administering the Housing Register fairly, you will be asked to complete a monitoring questionnaire at the back of your application form. *We will treat this information in the strictest confidence and it will not affect your application in any way. You do not have to answer any of these questions if you do not wish to*

30. How to complain

If you wish to complain about your application, you should first talk, email, or write to the Housing Needs Manager at the Civic Offices. If you remain unsatisfied, you should talk, email or write to the Head of Housing Services. If you are again unsatisfied you should ask for our complaints procedure and form. Finally, if you are still unhappy, you can contact the Local Government Ombudsman (contact details at the end of this leaflet). Please note that the Ombudsman will not normally consider a complaint that has not been through the Council's complaint procedure.

31. What happens if I give the Council false or misleading information?

If you knowingly or recklessly provide false information, or knowingly withhold information when you make an application for housing, you are committing a criminal offence. In all such cases, the Council will consider taking appropriate action, including prosecution. If

prosecuted by the Council and found guilty you could be ordered to pay a fine of up to £5,000. Furthermore, if a tenancy is granted as a result of a false statement, it is possible for housing associations to take action to seek possession.

32. Can the Council help me with private rented accommodation?

We have a list of letting agents operating in the area and further advice is available from our Housing Options team.

33. How do I apply for Homebuy properties in the Hart District?

Homebuy schemes (part buy / part rent) are administered by Swaythling Housing Society, the Government appointed Zone Agent for Homebuy in Hampshire. For further information about these schemes, please contact Swaythling Housing Society on telephone number 023 8062 8000 or go to www.homesinhants.co.uk . Alternatively, Homebuy leaflets are available from Housing Services at the Civic Offices (contact details below).

34. How can I contact the Housing Options Team at Hart District Council?

You can contact the Housing Options team by either:

- Telephoning Housing Services on (01252) 774420; or
- Calling into the Civic Offices between 9am and 4pm Monday to Friday; or
- Writing to Hart District Council, Civic Offices, Harlington Way, Fleet, Hampshire, GU51 4AE
- Faxing Housing Services on (01252) 774260
- Emailing Housing Services at housing@hart.gov.uk

35. Other useful contacts

- **Housing Benefit Section**
Hart District Council
Civic Offices
Harlington Way
Fleet
Hampshire
GU51 4AE
Telephone: (01252) 622122

- **Fleet & District Citizen's Advice Bureau**
Civic Offices
Harlington Way
Fleet
Hampshire
GU51 4AE
Telephone: (01252) 617922
Fax: (01252) 626905 Email: bureau@fleetcab.cabnet.org.uk

- **Yateley & District Citizen's Advice Bureau**
Royal Oak Close
Yateley
Hampshire
GU46 7UD
Telephone: (01252) 878410

- **Shelter Housing Aid**
3rd Floor, Old Crown Buildings
1-2 Windsor Road
Slough
SL1 2DJ
Telephone: (01753) 691844

- **Shelterline**
Free phone: 0800 800 4444
(Help with housing problems any time day or night)

- **Adult Services and Children Services**
Hampshire County Council
Aldershot Area Office
The Old Town Hall
Grosvenor Road
Aldershot
Hampshire
GU11 3FP
Telephone: (01252) 314221

- **Local Government Ombudsman**
The Oaks
No 2 Westwood Way

**Westwood Business Park
Coventry
CV4 8JB
Telephone: 01203 695999**

- **The Independent Housing Ombudsman
Norman House
105-109 Strand
London
WC2R 0AA
Telephone: 020 7836 3630
Lo-call: 0345 125 973**

36. Other Local Authorities you can apply to for housing

Basingstoke & Deane
Borough Council

Civic Offices
London Road
Basingstoke
RG21 4AH
Tel: 01256 844 844

Bracknell Forest Borough
Council

Time Square
Market Street
Bracknell, Berks,
RG12 1JD
Tel: 01344 424 642

East Hampshire District
Council

Penns Place
Petersfield
Hampshire
GU31 4EX
Tel: 01730 266 551

Guildford Borough Council

Millmead House
Millmead
Guildford, Surrey
GU2 4BB
Tel: 01483 444 244

Rushmoor Borough
Council

Council Offices
Farnborough Road
Farnborough
Hants
GU14 7JU
Tel: (01252) 398398

Surrey Heath Borough
Council

Surrey Heath House
Knoll Road
Camberley, Surrey
GU15 3HD
Tel: 01276 707100

Waverley Borough
Council

Council Offices,
The Burys,
Godalming
Surrey
GU7 1HR
Tel: 01483 523 333

West Berkshire Council

Council Offices
Market Street
Newbury
Berkshire
RG14 5LD
Tel: 01635 519364