



Dudleyathome

Housing options in Dudley borough

**Applying for a council property
- is this service for me?**



Applying for a council property - is this service for me?

Before applying to join the housing register (waiting list) for council housing with Dudley MBC please read the following information; you can then decide if this service is right for you.

In Dudley, as in other parts of the country, there are more people looking for council housing than there are available properties. Council housing is not suitable for everyone and there are other affordable housing options available. For more information please contact Dudley Council Plus on 0300 555 2345 or visit the Dudley website at www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/housing/finding-a-home/

Who can apply for housing?

Our housing waiting list is open to people who have lived and/or worked in Dudley for at least the last two years, except for:

- People who are excluded from housing because of their immigration status
- People we individually exclude because of serious anti-social behaviour or breach of tenancy conditions with any landlord

Applications from existing tenants of Dudley Council who wish to move will only be considered following a visit from their Housing Manager to confirm that their home is in good order and all other tenancy conditions are being maintained.

Applications for a transfer to an alternative property will not normally be accepted from any Dudley Council tenant within two years of their tenancy start date.

Some people can join our list but will be given lower priority:

- People who currently own a property or have sold or transferred ownership of a property within the last five years and can afford to rent privately
- People who owe rent or other housing related debts but are not excluded

Applications from people who want sheltered housing or extra care housing will be individually considered. Applicants may be accepted despite having sold a property or being an owner-occupier who has not sold their property – however, they will need to have an intention to sell their property.

Who will get priority for housing?

The Council uses a banding scheme that shows what priority you may be awarded. Your application will be assessed on your individual circumstances and you will be placed in one of seven bands.

The seven bands are:

Band 1 - People the Council needs to move

any of the following:

- people whose homes the Council is planning to demolish;

- people who are tenants of a family house in the borough, owned by the Council or a housing association, and who will be moving to a flat or one bedroom bungalow;
- people who have to leave a Council tenancy following the death of the tenant;
- people giving up a joint tenancy of a Council or housing association rented property following a relationship breakdown, for the partner with the care of the children to remain there;
- people giving up two Council or housing association rented properties in the borough for one property of similar or lower demand;
- people who are ready to move on from supported housing that is subject to Dudley's Move On Protocol or to be discharged from hospital subject to a change of accommodation;
- people who have a disability and whose homes cannot reasonably be adapted to meet their needs. This includes members of the Armed Forces and former members, including reservists and those injured in active service.

Band 2 - People with urgent needs

any of the following:

- Members of the Armed Forces and former members, including reservists, who are entitled to additional preference under SI 2012 No 2989
- people the Council has accepted as unintentionally homeless and in priority need from a settled address within the borough - this need will be awarded band 2 for one month and can only be extended if it was not possible for the need to be met in that time;
- people who are severely overcrowded (lacking two or more bedrooms);
- families who are approved by Dudley Council's Children's Services as foster carers or adoptive parents and need an extra bedroom to accommodate the children placed by the council;
- people who need to move urgently from a rented home with a serious hazard that cannot be repaired;
- people with urgent medical, disability, or related support need;
- people with approval for an urgent management move usually because of violence or serious risk of violence;
- people who have to leave armed forces accommodation;
- people who have to leave a tied tenancy because their employment has ended through no fault of their own;
- people with other urgent and exceptional needs not covered elsewhere including those the Council has accepted as referrals from partner agencies.

Band 3 - People with more than one need

You will be in this band if:

- you have more than one reason from the list in Band 4

Band 4 - People with one need

any of the following:

- people accepted by the Council as needing to move into the borough to work - this need cannot be combined with other needs to create a Band 3 need;
- people who are homeless but not included in Band 2 because they are non priority or are homeless intentionally - this need cannot be combined with other needs to create a Band 3 need, because the homelessness decision and award of Band 2 or 4 will have taken account of all relevant factors;
- people with moderate medical, disability, or related support needs;
- Lodgers with children who need up to one bedroom more than they have;
- Tenants who are overcrowded and need one more bedroom than they have;
- Single people over 18 and couples who are lodging and do not have their own bedroom;
- people who are Council or housing association tenants within the borough and will be releasing a family home;
- people who are Council or housing association tenants within the borough, who are single or childless couples and will be moving from a home that is not for their age group or household type to one that is;
- people who have no other housing need but can no longer afford to remain in their home for an unforeseen/unavoidable reason;
- people with other exceptional needs not covered elsewhere including those the Council has accepted as referrals from partner agencies.

Band 5 - People with reduced priority (subject to a right of appeal)

any of the following:

- People with one or more housing needs but whose present or last settled address is not within the borough and who have no particular need to live here;
- people with one or more housing needs, but who have or have had sufficient equity to afford private rental;
- people with one or more housing needs, but who have reduced priority because they have failed to pay rent, have caused neighbour nuisance or anti social behaviour, or have breached other conditions of tenancy.

Band 6 - People with no recognised need

for example:

- single people or couples who are lodging and have their own bedroom;
- people who have a tenancy or own a property that is adequate for their needs.

Band 7 - People with no recognised need who also have reduced priority (subject to a right of appeal)

any of the following:

- people who would be in Band 6 (no need) and have reduced priority for reasons such as those described in Band 5;
- People who have a housing need but have had all priority removed due to very serious anti-social behaviour that makes them unsuitable to be a tenant.

How will medical priority be decided?

If you are applying for housing and you have a medical need you will be able to complete an online medical assessment form as part of your online housing application if this is appropriate.

Will other exceptional circumstances be considered?

Every situation is different; occasionally there are circumstances that are not adequately recognised in our general policy. If you feel that this applies to you please let us know when you make your application so that your circumstances can be considered and, if justified, a higher priority may be given.

What are my options if I am in a lower band?

Some properties are less popular than others; for example, if you are over 35 years of age you may be offered a flat in certain areas.

There are a range of other housing options which you may wish to consider; for example, private renting, rent deposit scheme or shared ownership.

You do not need to join the waiting list to use our Housing Options service but must live in the Dudley borough.

For further information contact Dudley Council Plus on 0300 555 2345 or visit: <http://www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/housing/finding-a-home/>

I am unsure if I should apply to join the waiting list?

For further information and advice:

Telephone Dudley Council Plus on 0300 555 2345;

Visit Dudley Council Plus, 259 Castle Street, Dudley
Dudley Council Plus at: dudleycouncilplus@dudley.gov.uk
Stourbridge Library, Crown Centre, Stourbridge;
Brierley Hill Library, High Street, Brierley Hill;
Halesowen Library, Cornbow Centre, Halesowen;

How and where do I apply for housing?

You will need to complete an on-line housing application. This can be found on the Dudley website at:

www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/housing

Computers for use by the public are available at Dudley Council Plus and borough libraries. You will be required to complete an application pre-assessment before deciding whether to continue with a full application.

Application pre-assessment

By completing this short on-line assessment you will be given some indication as to which band you will be awarded and an approximate waiting time for accommodation. If, once you have completed your on-line pre-assessment, you decide to continue with an application you will need the following information:

- National Insurance number for yourself, partner or joint applicant where applicable
- names and dates of birth for everyone in your household - whether they are moving with you or not
- address history for the past 10 years for yourself and your partner, or joint applicant where applicable
- names and contact details for anyone supporting you, your partner or joint applicant

- income details.

If after completing the pre-assessment you decide not to continue at this stage you will need to repeat this process before you are able to complete a full on-line application.

It is also important to remember when applying for housing that you must have the financial capability to afford the rent and other associated costs. This could be in the form of Housing Benefits. For further information contact Dudley Council Plus on 0300 555 2345.

I have completed my on-line application form - what happens now?

Once you have submitted your housing application the Housing Options team will contact you within 28 days and, if necessary, book you an appointment to attend an interview. You will be advised what supporting evidence is required to process your application.

Any information supplied will be verified and if all is in order you will be contacted to arrange a telephone interview (this will not apply if you have already had a face to face interview). During this call we will go through your application, explain the processes, banding, bidding and Housing Options. Your application will then be made live for bidding.

If we are unable to proceed to make your application live for any reason, you will be notified of what action needs to be taken.

NB: current Dudley Council tenants will need their Housing Manager's approval to transfer their home. The Housing Options Team will obtain this and if there are any problems you will be advised.

Applications to transfer to an alternative property will not normally be considered from a Dudley Council tenant within 2 years of the tenancy start date.

Any person(s) submitting an application, including current Dudley Council tenants, will be required to provide the following valid, current and original documents - photo copies will not be accepted:

You will need to provide identification for yourself and all members of your moving household. You will be required to provide one document from Section 1 for each person as well as one from Section 2 for all adults in the moving household.

Section 1

- valid UK or overseas Passport (if non EEA you will also require visa documents confirming status)
- UK Driving Licence full or provisional
- original birth certificate issued within 12 months of birth. If birth certificate is in previous name will also need marriage certificate, decree absolute, civil partnership dissolution certificate or name change document or deed poll
- valid photo ID (EEA countries)
- HM Forces ID card (UK)
- adoption certificate (UK)

Section 2 - for all adults in the moving household

- marriage certificate or civil partnership certificate
- UK birth certificate (issued after 12 months of date of birth)
- name change document or deed poll
- Divorce/Civil Partnership dissolution (Decree Absolute/Civil Partner dissolution certificate)
- P45 dated within last 12 months
- P60 dated within last 12 months
- utility bill - electric, gas, water, phone (landline) dated within past 3 months
- Council Tax statement/bill dated within last 12 months
- valid TV licence
- credit card/store card statement dated with the last 3 months
- mortgage statement dated within the last 12 months
- valid insurance certificate
- certificate of British nationality
- British work permit/visa issued within the last 12 months

- asylum registration card
- personal correspondence or a document from a government department dated within the last 3 months - e.g. from DWP, employment services, Revenue and Customs, Home Office or Job Centre Plus
- bank or building society document dated within the last 12 months (where Internet banking you would need to be able to validate any printed statement with a valid bank card)
- financial statement e.g. pension, endowment or ISA issued within last 12 months
- valid vehicle registration document
- mail order catalogue statement within last 3 months
- documentation issued by court or probation services
- valid NHS medical card (not prepayment/exemption certificate)
- addressed payslip - must be less than 3 months old
- National Insurance number card

If you are unable to provide proof from Section 1 you will be required to provide three proofs from section 2.

You will also be required to provide proof of residence for all adults in the moving household from the list below (dated within the last 3 months). Where there is duplication with the documentation above it can be used for both purposes.

- addressed payslip
- mail order catalogue statement
- documentation issued by court or probation services
- financial statement e.g. pension, endowment or ISA.
- Bank or Building Society Document (where internet banking you will also be required to show a current supporting bank card)
- Personal correspondence or a document from a government department or NHS e.g. from DWP, Employment Services, Customs and Revenue, Home Office or Job Centre.
- Credit Card/Store Card statement
- Utility Bill (electric, gas, water, phone-land line)
- Child Benefit for a resident child.

Other evidence required:

- for non UK applicants you will be required to provide - relevant documentation to demonstrate your eligibility..
- All applicants, excluding tenants of Dudley Council, housing association or other local authorities, are required to provide two written references per applicant/joint applicant - one for conduct and one financial. The reference documents are on the Dudley website at: www.dudley.gov.uk/residen/housing - you will need to print and return these completed. If you are unsure what to provide or encounter any problems please contact Dudley Council Plus on 0300 555 2345.
- proof of pregnancy where applicable - maternity pack or letter from GP confirming expected date of delivery
- proof of Child Benefit or Child Tax Credits if you have a child included in your moving household (original award statement and up-to-date proof, within last three months)
- confirmation of intent to move from adult children
- statements relating to relationship breakdowns and access arrangements for children.

If you do not provide the requested information, or where an interview is arranged bring the required information with you, we will be unable to proceed with your application.

You must also supply any of the following information relevant to your circumstances:

Requests for medical priority

- any documents relating to recent assessments you have received from a health or social care professional - e.g. social worker or occupational therapist.

Private tenants

- tenancy agreement, rent book and reference from your landlord - a form is provided for landlord's use and is available on the Dudley website at www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/housing or from the offices listed on page 6.

A reference from your landlord is counted as one of your two mandatory references.

Housing association tenants and tenants of other local authorities

- tenancy agreement, rent book and a reference from your landlord - a form is provided for landlord's use and is available on the Dudley website at www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/housing or from the offices listed on page 6.

Owner occupiers or applicants who have owned a property within the last 5 years

- an official estate agent's market valuation and proof of any outstanding mortgage and proof of any loans secured against the property or proof that you no longer own the property and how much equity you received from the sale - e.g. solicitors completion statement.

Owner occupiers who have sold their property between 5 and 10 years ago

- proof that you no longer own the property - e.g. solicitor's completion statement.

Former owners who have at any time transferred ownership of a property

- official confirmation of transfer of ownership to include date of transfer and details of any equity if the transfer was completed within the last five years.

Other property ownership

- you will need to provide details of any holiday homes, mobile homes, static caravans, inherited or gifted properties and any home that you have owned or part owned as a rental property..

Prison applicants

- a letter from the prison or probation services confirming your date of birth and release date.

Tied tenants

- letter from employer confirming date employment ends and reason for employment ending.

Leaving care and supported accommodation

- Reference from your supported worker to confirm you are ready to move from supported housing.

Forces applicants

- letter confirming discharge date from commanding officer.

Applicants not living in the Dudley borough who work in the borough

- proof of employment in borough - contract of employment and most recent payslip.

If you require any assistance with regards to this document or would like to request an interpreter, large print or audio version, please contact the communications team on 01384 811561



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Updated 0416