



## Policy and Resources Committee – 17 January 2011

### Housing Contract

#### Purpose of report

This report sets out the latest position in relation to the new housing contract and seeks Member agreement in a number of areas to enable the project to move forward.

#### Attachment(s)

Appendix 1: Service Principles

Appendix 2: Key Information on Sub-Regional Choice Based Lettings

#### 1.0 Background

1.1 The current housing contract is due to expire on 31 December 2011, and therefore work needs to commence on putting in place provision for housing services beyond that point.

1.2 The Council has a statutory obligation to deliver a number of housing services. These are predominantly:-

- 1) Housing advice
- 2) Housing register (waiting list), applications, and allocations (choice based lettings)
- 3) Homelessness advice and applications

1.3 All of these services are currently provided by Spire Homes under one contract, which commenced in January 2007. It is due to expire on the 31 December 2011, and there is no further provision for extension. Therefore a new contract is required, and work has commenced on taking this forward.

1.4 Members will recall that a report was brought before this committee on 8 November and that the following was agreed (minute 261 refers):

- (1) That the formation of a Housing Contract Working Party be approved.
- (2) That the Housing Contract Working Party be delegated powers in respect of the tendering process, excluding any final decisions on the service specification or the successful contractor.
- (3) That the Terms of Reference for the Housing Contract Working Party as attached at Appendix 1 be approved (*appendix 1 to previous report*).
- (4) That the Leader notifies the Chief Executive of the membership of the Housing Contract Working Party.

#### 2.0 Project Progress

2.1 The working party met on the 8 December 2010, and discussed the first key tasks that need to be undertaken. The main areas looked at so far are:

- The competitive dialogue / tender process
- The key principles for the service specification

### **3.0 Competitive Dialogue / Tender Process**

- 3.1 The working party has identified two possible routes to having a new contract in place. These are 1) a straightforward tendering process, and 2) a competitive dialogue process.
- 3.2 The working party is of the view that following a competitive dialogue process is the more favourable option; as this will allow the market to bring forward creative and innovative solutions within our financial restrictions.
- 3.3 Competitive dialogue is the preferred procurement process for complex contracts; where it is not possible to define the technical means of delivering the service at the outset.
- 3.4 Support will be required to deliver the project; particularly in areas such as project support, financial, legal, and specialist procurement advice. Advice is currently being sought from the Welland Procurement Unit regarding the appropriate way of taking the process forward.
- 3.5 Members are asked to approve the publication of the appropriate notice within the next few weeks, as advised by the unit and legal bodies.

### **4.0 Key Principles**

- 4.1 The Welland Procurement Unit has advised officers that to enable an effective competitive dialogue, it is advantageous to be as un-prescriptive as possible regarding the required service. This will enable interested parties to put forward their ideas of what a service should look like, and what the cost for that would be. This would be shaped by the establishment of some key service principles.
- 4.2 The Working Party has established some key principles on which the service specification should be based. These are attached at Appendix 1.
- 4.3 Over the course of the next few months, the Working Party will put together a more detailed 'Descriptive Document' based upon the key principles.

### **5.0 Sub Regional Choice Based Lettings**

- 5.1 The Working Party has identified one key overarching principle that requires determination before any competitive dialogue notices can be placed; and which sits slightly outside of the principles set out in Appendix 1. This is the issue of whether we want to join the existing sub-regional choice based lettings (CBL) scheme.
- 5.2 The local authorities of Kettering, Corby and Wellingborough currently advertise and allocate all vacant social housing properties on a sub-regional basis. This means that applicants from anywhere within the three areas can apply for properties anywhere within the three areas.
- 5.3 It would be beneficial to the competitive dialogue process to determine whether the council has any interest in, or is against, joining the scheme. This will help to avoid potential wasted time and resources in exploring the option, only for it to be ruled out at a later stage.
- 5.4 Information on the sub-regional CBL scheme is attached at Appendix 2 to help with consideration of this issue.

### **6.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment will need to be carried out once the project has progressed further; for both the service specification and the Housing Allocation

Policy.

## 7.0 Legal Implications

7.1 As set out in paragraph 1.2 above, the Council has a statutory duty under the Housing Act 2002 to deliver the services covered by the housing contract.

7.2 The procurement process falls under Public Contract Regulations 2006.

## 8.0 Risk Management

8.1 As with any procurement process, there will be a number of risks associated with the project. Officers are currently in the process of establishing these, and an entry will be set up in the Risk Register.

## 9.0 Financial Implications

9.1 There are financial implications to this project in the longer term, in that Members will ultimately be asked to make decisions relating to a new contract which will have a cost attached – such as the final decision on preferred delivery partner.

9.2 The key principles set out in Appendix 1 attached have been framed around what we are statutorily required to deliver, rather than seeking to introduce an ‘enhanced’ service.

9.3 There will be a requirement for legal advice and project support which will inevitably have financial implications. This will be addressed in a future report.

## 10.0 Corporate Outcomes

10.1 The delivery of an effective housing service relates to the following Corporate Outcomes:

- Good Quality of Life
- Good Value for Money
- High Quality Service Delivery
- Knowledge of Customers and Communities

## 11.0 Recommendation

11.1 The Committee is recommended to:

- (1) Approve the publication of the appropriate procurement notice.
- (2) Approve the key principles set out in Appendix 1 attached.
- (3) Indicate its position on joining the Sub-Regional Choice Based Lettings scheme.

*(Reason - to enable work to continue on the new housing contract.)*

<b>Legal</b>	Power: Housing Act 2002 Public Contracts Regulations 2006
	Other considerations:
<b>Background Papers:</b>	Policy and Resources Committee Minutes 8 November 2010
<b>Person Originating Report:</b>	Cat Hartley, Housing Strategy Manager <a href="mailto:chartley@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk">chartley@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk</a> , 01832 742078
<b>Date:</b>	20 December 2010

<b>CFO</b>		<b>MO</b>		<b>CX</b>	
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(Committee Report Normal Rev. 22)

## **Housing Contract – Key Principles for Competitive Dialogue**

### **Homelessness**

- Provision of free and accessible advice on homelessness and prevention of homelessness within the District boundary.
- Receipt and processing of homelessness applications.
- Provision of arrangements to meet the statutory duty – such as co-ordination of temporary accommodation.
- Provision of emergency out of hours homelessness response service.

### **Advice, Allocations and Choice Based Lettings:**

- Provision of advice on applications for Housing Register (and level of priority), tenant transfers and exchanges and general housing advice within the District boundary.
- Processing of applications and tenant transfer /exchange requests to join the Housing Register.
- Ensure operation of, or access to, a Choice Based Lettings system covering the District.

07/01/2011

## **North Northamptonshire Sub-Regional Choice Based Lettings Scheme**

### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This report provides information on the sub-regional choice based lettings (CBL) scheme currently in operation in North Northamptonshire.
- 1.2 It has been prepared as general information and also to enable Members to reach a decision on whether they wish to retain participation in the scheme as an option, throughout the forthcoming housing contract procurement process .

### **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 East Northamptonshire Council has operated its own CBL system, Nene Valley Homechoice, for 4 years as part of a wider housing service under contract with Spire Homes. This enables applicants on the housing register (waiting list) to bid (apply) for housing in East Northamptonshire.
- 2.2 Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough now operate one CBL system across the three local authority areas. This has only been running for the last 3 months.
- 2.3 Only the CBL element of the range of housing services is delivered on a sub-regional basis. The housing advice and homelessness elements are still delivered at a local authority level.

### **3.0 How the scheme works**

- 3.1 The sub-regional scheme, known as 'Keyways', works in very much the same way as our own scheme, only across a larger area.
- 3.2 Applicants apply to go onto the housing register, and once accepted can bid for vacant properties. The guide below sets out how the system works in more detail.
- 3.3 Each of the three local authorities has retained their own lettings team, and still administer the scheme themselves – ie there is no one central point or team.
- 3.4 The key difference between our own system and Keyways, is that under Keyways anyone in any of the three areas can bid for any property in the three areas – therefore enabling free movement across local authority boundaries (some local connection criteria have been imposed in certain villages).
- 3.5 This however also means that those with a priority housing need are 'competing' against a greater number of people, including those from out of their local area.
- 3.6 There are other smaller differences, such as the fact that when applying onto the Keyways housing register, the majority of checks are done at the point of offer rather than at point of application.

- 3.7 The local authorities have retained their own Housing Allocation Policies, although they are very similar.

#### **4.0 Costs**

- 4.1 The exact costs for each local authority differ, and we have not been able to obtain this information yet due to time restraints. However the message that we have been given is that operating the scheme has resulted in cost savings through achieving economies of scale. For example by working together to procure the IT system.
- 4.2 However, the cost to each authority still differs and depends upon individual circumstances such as how many staff they have decided to use (see 3.3 above).
- 4.1 If Members are not opposed to retaining participation in the scheme as an option, then the costs would be further explored as part of the competitive dialogue process.
- 4.2 One of the key features and benefits of competitive dialogue is that it would encourage the market to bring forward a range of proposals and solutions to meet our needs.
- 4.3 Therefore officers are of the view that full exploration of the feasibility of joining the scheme would be best done by the organisations engaging with us in competitive dialogue.

#### **5.0 Advantages / Disadvantages**

- 5.1 It is difficult to set out a definitive list of advantages and disadvantages of the Keyways scheme due to the fact that this would be quite subjective, and the sub-regional scheme has only been running for a few months.
- 5.2 In terms of advantages the following could be considered as such:
- Enables greater choice of property and area
  - Enables greater mobility, for example when applying for jobs
  - Potential for cost savings via economies of scale
  - Better chance of letting 'hard to let' properties
- 5.3 Clearly the opportunity given to applicants to apply for housing outside of their local area could be perceived as a disadvantage, in that it removes the importance attached to local connection.
- 5.4 One of the local authorities has informed officers that they have already noticed a significant number of people moving into the area from another local authority. This is not necessarily a problem if similar patterns are observed in the opposite direction; however it could become problematic if there is increased demand for just one area – particularly during a time when we are set to see the supply of affordable housing reduce significantly.

- 5.5 The local authorities operating Keyways are already considering imposing some local connection criteria, which would possibly provide some safeguards against this.
- 5.6 We cannot rule out the possibility that other local authority areas may join the Keyways scheme at a point in the future. Northampton Borough Council has already indicated an interest in looking at a County-wide scheme.



# Your guide to using Keyways



*Under the Keyways scheme, finding a home is easier. It gives you greater opportunity to find a home of your choice and it does not limit you to certain areas*

# Welcome to Keyways

## About Keyways

**Keyways is a new way of looking for council and housing association properties to rent in the boroughs of Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough. Rather than us deciding which housing to offer you, you can now choose which properties interest you.**

All available properties are advertised each week on the internet at [www.keyways.org.uk](http://www.keyways.org.uk) and in customer service centres throughout the three boroughs where you can also pick up a weekly property advert newsletter.

You can now tell us which properties you would like to be considered for. This process is known as bidding. The bidding process does not mean that you will part with any money. You may only bid for a property if your housing application has been accepted onto the Keyways register.

You can bid for properties in a number of ways:

- Online using the website [www.keyways.org.uk](http://www.keyways.org.uk)
- Using our automated 24 hour telephone hotline on 0845 270 2523
- By visiting our Customer Service Centres
- By telephoning Corby, Kettering or Wellingborough councils (see page 15 for contact details)

You can see what position you are in the queue for a property, both on the website and on the telephone hotline. Each week you can see the successful bidders from the previous cycles to help give you an idea of how long you may have to wait to be offered a property. This information is available both in the newsletter and on the website.

If, after reading this guide, you have any further questions on how Keyways works, you may be able to find the answer by visiting the Frequently Asked Questions section of the Keyways website.

### Need more help?

If you need more assistance please contact the Keyways council where you currently live. If you don't live in the Keyways area please contact the council where you would like to live. Our contact details are on page 15.

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### How to use this guide

On pages 2-4 you will find a quick guide describing how to use the scheme. Pages 6 and 7 describe which properties you will be able to bid for, and how bidders will be prioritised. On pages 9-14 you will find more details on how to place your bids. The adverts use symbols to describe the properties and these are explained on page 5.

visit: [www.keyways.org.uk](http://www.keyways.org.uk)

or call: 0845 270 2523

# How to use Keyways

## 1 Register

### How to register

To apply to join the Keyways Housing Register you must be 16 years of age or over. If you are under 18 years of age you must provide details of a suitable guarantor. If you do not do this you will not be considered for accommodation before your 18th birthday.

You will need to complete an application form, which can be completed online at [www.keyways.org.uk](http://www.keyways.org.uk) or in customer service centres throughout the three boroughs. The application form enables you to apply for a Council or Housing Association rented home. It also enables you to see available low cost home ownership properties and accredited private rented properties.

To complete your application you will need the following:

- The national insurance number(s) for all member(s) of your household aged 16 years and over.
- If you are not a British citizen, evidence of your right to reside in the UK (e.g. passport and other relevant documents from the Home Office)
- Details of any former or current rent arrears.
- Details of any criminal convictions and/or any anti social behaviour convictions for you and any other members of your household.

If you are not a British citizen, or if you have indicated that you or a member of your household have rent arrears or criminal convictions or antisocial behaviour convictions, we will conduct further checks to decide if we can accept you onto the Keyways Housing Register. We will contact you within five working days of receiving your application if we need any extra proof to confirm your details. We will contact you to confirm that your application is active within 14 days of receiving your completed and signed application form and any further information we require.

Before you are offered a property you will be asked to provide further documents to support your application. We will tell you what documents to provide and when to provide them. All documents provided must be originals, up to date and valid.

If you do not fill in the application form properly it will be returned to you. We will not be able to register your application until we receive a properly completed form from you. The date on which your completed application is received by us is the “active date”.

### What happens once I have registered?

When you are accepted on to the housing register we will write to tell you:

- Your personal reference number
- The band your application has been placed in.
- Your active date.
- If you have rent arrears, what you need to do before we can consider you for housing.

You must tell us if there are any changes in your circumstances so that we can reassess your application and if necessary make changes to your band and active date. If you move to a new address you will need to tell us and complete a new application form.

visit: [www.keyways.org.uk](http://www.keyways.org.uk)

or call: 0845 270 2523

## 2 Choose

### How are properties advertised?

Properties are advertised each week on the website at [www.keyways.org.uk](http://www.keyways.org.uk), and in the newsletter that is available in a variety of locations.

Available properties will be advertised weekly from 0:01am on a Thursday through to 11:59pm on the following Tuesday\*. You can place up to two bids during this time on social rented properties and unlimited bids on low cost home ownership and accredited private rented properties.

### The adverts

The adverts tell you the landlord, location, size, rent and other features of the property to help you decide which properties are right for you.

The advert also tells you if there are any special requirements, such as a minimum age requirement that an applicant must meet. Adverts will also state where priority will be given to applicants who have a specific mobility/disability need.

*A key to the terms and symbols used in the adverts and on the website can be found on page 5.*

*The adverts tell you the landlord, location, size, rent and other features of the property to help you decide which properties are right for you*

\*This advertising and bidding cycle may change at certain times of the year such as Christmas.

## Expressing your interest in a property (placing a bid)

You can bid for up to two social rented properties each week. It does not matter at what time during the advertising cycle you place your bid. Being the first person to bid does not necessarily mean you will be offered the property. Please be advised that your position in the queue can change during the advertising cycle as more people place and withdraw their bids. You can express your interest in any of the following ways:

### ■ On the website

Visit [www.keyways.org.uk](http://www.keyways.org.uk) and login using your personal reference number and the date of birth of the main applicant.

### ■ By telephone

Call our 24hr automated bidding line on 0845 270 2523.

### ■ In person

By visiting any of our Customer Service Centres where staff can help you to bid.

### ■ By telephone

By telephoning any of our Customer Service Centres where staff can bid for you (see page 15 for contact details).



visit: [www.keyways.org.uk](http://www.keyways.org.uk)

or call: 0845 270 2523

### 3 Offer

All bids received will be put in priority order to produce a list of eligible applicants for each property advertised. Please note that due to applicants placing bids on a daily basis and having the ability to withdraw bids during the cycle, your final position in the queue may be different from when you placed your bid. If you are the successful bidder we will contact you by telephone within three days of the bidding cycle ending. If you do not respond we will skip you and offer the property to the next bidder. Therefore you must ensure that we have the correct telephone number for you. The landlord of the property will then contact you within ten days of the bidding cycle closing. This will be to arrange to visit you to verify that your circumstances have not changed from the information we hold for you. They will also undertake further checks on matters such as your rent payments, any anti social behaviour, medical history and who lives in your household.

If you pass the verification checks you will be invited to view the property. If you fail the verification checks we will write to you to tell you the reasons why and whether this affects your banding. Examples of why you might fail the verification checks are because your circumstances are not the same as you stated on your application form or because you have rent arrears. If someone fails the verification checks we will move to the next highest bidder on the shortlist.

If after viewing you decide to refuse the property it will be offered to the next person on the list. You will not be penalised for refusing a property and will continue to be able to bid for properties advertised. If after viewing the property you decide to accept the property, the landlord will contact you when the property is ready to let to arrange to sign the tenancy agreement and collect the keys.

### 4 Feedback

We publish information about homes that have been successfully let. We tell you the number of applicants that bid for the property, the band and active date of the successful applicants.

This information is published in the newsletter and is available in the Recent Lets section of the website. This information will give you a better idea of how popular a particular property or area is and how long you would normally have to wait. You can then decide whether to look for other types of property or areas where you may not have to wait as long.



*We publish information about homes that have been successfully let. This will give you a better idea of how long you can expect to wait for a property.*

visit: [www.keyways.org.uk](http://www.keyways.org.uk)

or call: 0845 270 2523

# What do the symbols mean?

The symbols that appear on the adverts indicate any restrictions about who is able to bid for a property.



## Types of property

### Social rented property

Social rented property provided by Corby Borough Council, Kettering Borough Council, Borough Council of Wellingborough or a partner Housing Association.

### Low cost home ownership property

Please note, a shortlist of the highest bidders for these properties will be sent to the Housing Association. They will contact you with more information about purchasing a share of the property. Therefore, you should only bid for this type of property if you are able to fund the required purchase amount.














### Private sector property

An approved property available from a private landlord. Please note, private landlords can offer properties to any applicant that bids for it. They do not have to offer it to the highest bidder.

### Mutual exchange

If you are interested in a mutual exchange please visit [www.kettering.houseexchange.org.uk](http://www.kettering.houseexchange.org.uk) for Kettering Borough Council properties and/or [www.homeswapper.org.uk](http://www.homeswapper.org.uk) for Corby Borough Council properties.

## Property details

-  The number of bedrooms in this property.
  -  This property is only available to people of the minimum age shown.
  -  This property has off road parking.
  -  Pets not allowed at this property
  -  Property is sheltered accommodation.
  -  Property has its own garden.
  -  Property has a communal garden.
  -  Property shares a garden.
  -  Property does not have a garden.
  -  Property can be accessed by a lift.
  -  **A:** Property has full mobility adaptations
  -  **B:** Property has a level access shower and possibly an adaptation from C,D and E
  -  **C:** Property has a stair lift and possibly an adaptation from D and E
  - D:** Property has an external ramp and possibly an adaptation from E
  - E:** Property has minor adaptations eg grab rails, lever taps etc.
- This information is given as a guide only, please check on viewing.
-  Property has a level access floor draining shower.

visit: [www.keyways.org.uk](http://www.keyways.org.uk)

or call: 0845 270 2523

# How are applications prioritised?



All Keyways application forms will be assessed and placed in one of four bands below. Within each band applications will be placed in date order. This is the active date. The application with the oldest active date has the highest priority. The date that is used is the date your completed application was registered with us.

## Moving between bands

If your circumstances change and you move up a band the date used will normally be the date you moved into that band. If you move down a band the date used will normally be the date that you were previously in that band.

## Time limited bands

If your application is placed in band A there is a limit on the length of time you can remain in this band. This is 8 weeks. At the end of the time allowed your application will be reviewed and the time extended or your priority reduced. The 8 week time limit will only be extended in exceptional circumstances. Such as, when suitable housing has not become available within the 8 weeks.

### Band A: Emergency housing need (8 week time limit)

- The Keyways Council has accepted you are 'statutorily homeless'.
- Your property is found to contain a category 1 hazard for overcrowding and you have not intentionally caused the overcrowding. This is assessed by a Keyways Council via the Housing Health and Safety Rating System outlined in the Housing Act 2004.
- You or a member of your household cannot be discharged from hospital to your current accommodation because it has been deemed hazardous to your health and the situation cannot be rectified for you or them to continue to live there.
- You or a member of your household are at serious risk of harm or severe emotional or physical trauma resulting from violence or threats of violence or physical, emotional or sexual abuse in the current accommodation.
- The Keyways Council has decided that your current accommodation is not suitable for occupation (Prohibited under the terms of the Housing Act 2004) and it cannot be improved.
- You need to move because your home is about to be demolished or redeveloped.
- You are a social rented tenant living in the Keyways partnership area who needs to move because your accommodation needs major renovation or extensive repairs.
- You have lost your accommodation due to fire, flood or natural disaster.
- You are leaving supported accommodation and have been deemed ready for independent living.

visit: [www.keyways.org.uk](http://www.keyways.org.uk)

or call: 0845 270 2523

## Band B: Urgent housing need

- The Keyways Council has accepted you as 'non-statutorily homeless'.
- You have:-
  - children of different genders (one child must be at least 10 years old) sharing a bedroom, or
  - children of the same gender with an age difference of 10 years or more sharing a bedroom, or
  - three or more children sharing a bedroom, or
  - you are sharing a bedroom with your child and there is no other bedroom available for you to use.
- You have sole parental responsibility of a child/children who is/are unable to currently live with you because of your accommodation.
- You or a member of your household has a permanent medical condition, which is seriously adversely affected by your current accommodation.
- It is unreasonable for you to stay at your current accommodation due to travelling costs causing you financial hardship. This may include but is not limited to:-
  - a need to give or receive essential care and support, or
  - a need to access urgent specialised medical treatment, or
  - a need to take up particular, or continue current, employment.
- Your current landlord has asked you to leave your accommodation, for a reason or situation that is not caused by you or a member of your household, and the tenancy cannot be prevented from ending.
- You are 'intentionally homeless'.
- You are under occupying socially rented family accommodation (2, 3 or 4 bed houses or 2/3 bed flats with their own garden) within the Keyways partnership area by 1 bedroom or more.
- You are a 'successor' or 'non-statutory successor' of social rented accommodation, approved for an offer of suitable accommodation.
- You are a retiring social landlord employee within the Keyways partnership area living in tied accommodation and there is a contractual obligation to rehouse you.
- You meet three or more of the circumstances in band C.

## Band C: Non urgent housing need

- You are a household, with at least one dependent, sharing accommodation with another household.
- You need more bed spaces than your current accommodation can reasonably provide.
- You have had a relationship breakdown, and are living in the same property as your former partner, and a move would allow the partner and family to remain in the property.
- You or a member of your household has a non urgent medical condition which is made worse by your current accommodation.
- You need to give or receive non-essential care and support.
- You or a member of your household are suffering from low level anti social behaviour or harassment.
- Your current accommodation is suffering from some disrepair, but it is not bad enough to prevent you from continuing to live there.

## Band D: No current housing need

- You are currently adequately housed.



# What property will you be able to bid for?

You are only able to bid on properties that match your household needs. For example, if you require only two bedrooms you will not be able to bid for a three bedroom property.

## Please note:

- If a household's circumstances do not fit any of the criteria outlined in this matrix then the Housing Options/Needs Manager will decide what type of property a household is eligible to bid for.
- 'Household' includes single adult or couple.
- 'Couple' includes same sex couples.
- Sheltered accommodation will normally be offered to households over 55 (this varies depending on the scheme therefore, please check the individual property advert for the minimum age limit) with a need for a level of support. In some cases applicants may be refused sheltered accommodation if their needs are assessed as being too great for sheltered housing. For more information on the assessment process please contact the Landlord for the property.
- The number of bedrooms that a household with children can be considered for is also dependent on the age and gender of the children, not just the number. For example only certain households with 3 children will be able to bid for a 4 bedroom property.

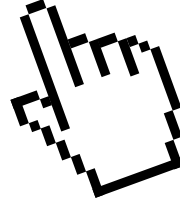
	Bedsit	1 bedroom bungalow	1 bedroom flat	1 bedroom house	2 bedroom bungalow	2 bedroom flat (without own garden)	2 bedroom flat (with own garden)	2 bedroom house	3 bedroom bungalow	3 bedroom flat or 3 bedroom maisonette	3 bedroom house	3 bedroom parlour type house	4 bedroom flat or maisonette	4 bedroom house	5 bedroom house
Single person	*	*	*	*	*	*									
Couple without children		*	*	*	*	*									
Household expecting first child						*	*	*							
Household with 1 child						*	*	*							
Household with 2 children						*	*	*	*	*	*				
Household with 3 children									*	*	*	*	*	*	
Household with 4 children									*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Household with 5 or more children												*	*	*	*

visit: [www.keyways.org.uk](http://www.keyways.org.uk)

or call: 0845 270 2523

# Bidding on the website

The website address to use when placing a bid is [www.keyways.org.uk](http://www.keyways.org.uk)



Through the website you can find full details of the Keyways scheme including everything in this document. You can search for properties that meet your needs and see the full details of those properties. You can also place a bid, withdraw a bid, find out what you are allowed to bid for and what your current queue position is for a property.

You can only bid for properties where you match the advert.

For example, if the advert states that the property has one bedroom, households needing more than one bedroom will not be able to bid.

## What you need to bid

In order to bid you will need:

- Your personal reference number
- Your memorable date (this is the date of birth of the main applicant from your housing application)
- The property reference number(s) that you want to bid for

**Don't be worried about the word 'Bid', you won't be parting with any money. All this means is that you are actively interested and wish to be considered for the property or properties you are applying for.**

- 1** Type [www.keyways.org.uk](http://www.keyways.org.uk) in the address bar of your internet browser.
- 2** Click the **Login/My Account** button and enter your personal reference number, which you have received by post. Also enter the memorable date, this should be dd/mm/yyyy and should include the forward slashes ( / ). This date is the date of birth of the main applicant from the Keyways application. On this screen you will see your personal account details (see opposite).
- 3** Click the **Property Search** option to look for current available properties (see opposite).
- 4** A list of properties matching your search request will be displayed. If you are allowed to bid for a property an **Apply Now** button will show. If you bid for a property your queue position for that property will also be shown. Please note that your queue position can change during the bidding cycle if other bids are received. If you are not allowed to bid for the property, the reason is displayed.
- 5** After clicking the **Apply Now** button you will be asked if you wish to be considered for the property. After clicking that you wish to be considered you will be told that your request has been recorded.
- 6** If you decide that you want to remove your bid you can click on the **Login/My Account** button and select the button called **My Bids**. You can withdraw a bid by following the on-screen instructions. Your withdrawn bid is then confirmed to you and you can reuse that bid for another property.

visit: [www.keyways.org.uk](http://www.keyways.org.uk)



**Login/My Account website page**  
 This is the screen you will see when you press the Login/My Account button. To login you will need to enter your personal reference number and your memorable date in the format dd/mm/yyyy and should include the forward slashes (/).



**Property Search website page**  
 This is the screen you will see when you press the Property Search button. You can use the Property Search to look for properties that you would like to bid for.

visit: [www.keyways.org.uk](http://www.keyways.org.uk)

or call: 0845 270 2523



# Bidding on the phone

The number to call when placing a bid is **0845 270 2523**. You will be charged the local rate for this call but note that this rate will vary depending on your telephone service provider.

Through the telephone system you can place a bid, withdraw a bid, find out if you are allowed to bid and what your current queue position is.

You can only bid for properties where you match what the advert asks for. For example, if the advert states that the property has one bedroom, households needing more than one bedroom will not be able to bid.

## What you need to bid

In order to bid you will need:

- Your personal reference number
- The date of birth of the main applicant from your housing application
- The property reference number(s) that you want to bid for

Bidding using the telephone system is done using the number keypad on your telephone. As well as using the numbers on the number keypad you will also need to use the # hash key.



**Start by calling the bidding line on**

**0845 270 2523**

## What you will hear

*“Welcome to Keyways, the Choice Based Lettings system for Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough borough councils.”*

*“Please enter your personal reference number followed by the hash key.”*

*“You have entered the following reference number (the reference you entered will be read back to you), press 1 to confirm your reference number is correct, or press 2 to re enter the number, thank you”*

*“Your reference number has been accepted. Please enter the day of the month of your memorable date as a number, followed by the hash key, thank you”*

*“Please enter the month of your memorable date as a number followed by the hash key, thank you”*


*“Please enter the year of your memorable date using all four numbers, for example one nine six five to represent 1965, followed by the hash key”*




visit: [www.keyways.org.uk](http://www.keyways.org.uk)



## What to do

Enter your personal reference. For example if your reference was 1245 you would enter:

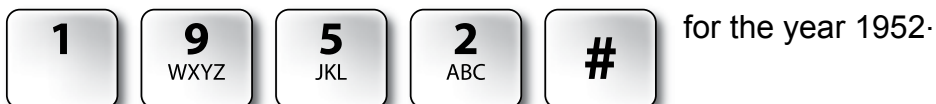


Press  on the keypad to confirm.

If your memorable date is 15th May 1952 you would enter    for the 15th.

If your memorable date is 15th May 1952 you would enter   for the month of May.

If your memorable date is 15th May 1952 you would enter:



visit: [www.keyways.org.uk](http://www.keyways.org.uk)

or call: 0845 270 2523



*Bidding using the telephone system is done using the number keypad on your telephone and the hash # key.*

## What you will hear

*“Thank you, your details match our records.”*

*“To place a bid press 1, to review your current bids press 2, or press 3 to exit.”*

### **Making a bid**

*“Please enter the reference number of the property you would like to bid for, followed by the hash key.”*

*“You have entered the following property reference number”*

(the property reference number that you entered will be read back to you. If you are not eligible you will be told why, if you are eligible you will be told your current queue position. Note that your queue position will change as other people bid)

*“Press 1 to place a bid on this property, or press 2 to bid on a different property.”*

When you place a bid you will be told *“a bid has been placed for you on this property.”*

### **Review/cancel your bids**

*“You currently have bids on the following properties (property reference numbers will be read out to you for example 1234).*

*“Press the number relating to a property if you wish to withdraw a bid for followed by the hash key.”*

The property reference number(s) will be read out to you. If you do not wish to withdraw any of your bids, press the hash key or enter the particular property reference number followed by the hash key. Press 1 to confirm you wish to withdraw your bid for property reference number eg 1234, otherwise press 2 to keep this bid. If you press 1 you will hear *“Your bid has been successfully withdrawn”*

After pressing 3 to exit the system you will hear

*“Thank you for using the system goodbye”*

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or call: 0845 270 2523

## What to do

To make a bid press

1

To review and/or cancel bids that you have already made press


2  
ABC

To exit press

3  
DEF

Enter the property reference number that you want to bid for. For example if you wanted to bid for property 9591 you would enter:


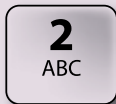


Press  on the keypad to place a bid on this property.

You can then make further bids, if allowed, review your bids or exit.

If you want to withdraw a bid for a property, enter the property reference number followed by the hash key, for example press 9591 #



Press  on the keypad to confirm you wish to withdraw that bid or press  to keep the bid.

visit: [www.keyways.org.uk](http://www.keyways.org.uk)

or call: 0845 270 2523

# Landlords participating in Keyways

The vast majority of social landlords with properties in the Keyways partnership area have agreed to advertise their properties through Keyways. A full list of participating social landlords can be found within the Housing Allocation Policies of Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough Council's. The social landlords with the largest amount of stock in the Keyways partnership are listed below. Their contact details can be found on their website.

Corby Borough Council	<a href="http://www.corby.gov.uk">www.corby.gov.uk</a>
bpha	<a href="http://www.bpha.org.uk">www.bpha.org.uk</a>
East Midlands Housing	<a href="http://www.emha.org">www.emha.org</a>
Guinness Midsummer	<a href="http://www.guinnesspartnership.com">www.guinnesspartnership.com</a>
Home	<a href="http://www.homegroup.org.uk">www.homegroup.org.uk</a>
Kettering Borough Council	<a href="http://www.kettering.gov.uk">www.kettering.gov.uk</a>
Leicester-ASRA	<a href="http://www.lha.org.uk">www.lha.org.uk</a>
Metropolitan	<a href="http://www.mhp-online.co.uk">www.mhp-online.co.uk</a>
Orbit Heart of England	<a href="http://www.orbitheartofengland.org.uk">www.orbitheartofengland.org.uk</a>
Places for People	<a href="http://www.placesforpeople.co.uk">www.placesforpeople.co.uk</a>
Riverside	<a href="http://www.riverside.org.uk">www.riverside.org.uk</a>
Spire Homes	<a href="http://www.spire-homes.org.uk">www.spire-homes.org.uk</a>
Wellingborough Homes	<a href="http://www.wellingboroughhomes.org">www.wellingboroughhomes.org</a>

This leaflet takes information from the Housing Allocation Policies of Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough Council's. To view the full policies please contact us.

## Contact details

Corby Borough Council  
One Stop Shop  
George Street  
Corby  
Northamptonshire  
NN17 1QB

**Tel:** 01536 464000

**Email:**  
[housing.options@corby.gov.uk](mailto:housing.options@corby.gov.uk)

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

Kettering Borough Council  
Municipal Offices  
Bowling Green Road  
Kettering  
Northamptonshire  
NN15 7QX

**Tel:** 01536 410333

**Email:**  
[ketteringkeyways@kettering.gov.uk](mailto:ketteringkeyways@kettering.gov.uk)

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

Borough Council of Wellingborough  
Swanspool House  
Doddington Road  
Wellingborough  
Northamptonshire  
NN8 1BP

**Tel:** 01933 229777

**Email:**  
[housingneeds@wellingborough.gov.uk](mailto:housingneeds@wellingborough.gov.uk)

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

visit: [www.keyways.org.uk](http://www.keyways.org.uk)