



Guide to applying for a home with Link Housing Association Ltd

Welcome to Homehunt – Simply a better way to provide homes.

Homehunt is a quick and easy to use service for people looking for rented housing. It puts property selection into the hands of those who will have to live in the properties while at the same time providing a straightforward system for identifying the successful applicants, and giving reasonable preference to people with significant housing need.

This guide is designed to answer any questions you may have about Homehunt or Link Housing Association Ltd.

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1 What is Homehunt and who is Link Housing Association Ltd?

Homehunt is a choice-based allocations computer system. It is used by a number of different landlords operating in different areas throughout Scotland. You can register with any of these landlords, allowing you to apply for properties in lots of different areas. The advantage of a Choice Based Lettings (CBL) system is that you, the applicant, can see what properties are available at any time, and can choose to apply for those properties that are suitable for your needs, and are in areas where you would like to live.

Link Housing Association was formed in 1962 and over the last 50 years has grown to become one of Scotland's leading providers of housing and related services, expanding the scope and range of its services to meet the changing needs of the people who use them.

The Link group of companies helps to deliver innovative regeneration projects in partnership with local communities, including health facilities, environmental initiatives, training schemes and financial inclusion projects. Link is committed to the welfare of tenants and to the principles of social justice and inclusion. Link now reaches around 10,000 people in 26 of Scotland's 32 local authority areas, mainly in Scotland's central belt.

Link Housing Association uses Homehunt to advertise all our available properties (except those in Edinburgh which we advertise through Edindex – please call 03451 400 100 for more information). Applicants who register for Link Housing Association through Homehunt can apply for properties in 19 different local authority areas, giving you a great choice of communities and property types, ensuring you get the property that is right for you.

2 Registering

You need to register with Link Housing Association before you can apply for one of our properties. If you have not already registered, you can do this online by going to www.homehunt.info and submitting your details. Alternatively, you can complete the paper Registration Form you received with this guide, and post it to us. If you need any help completing the form or any general advice about the registration process, please call our Customer Service Centre on 03451 400 100.

Once you have completed and submitted your registration form, you will be given a registration number. You need this number to log in to your registration online, apply for properties or if you need to call or write to us.

If your circumstances change at any time it is very important that you notify us immediately, as this can often affect your registration.

3 Applying for a house

Our adverts appear online weekly at www.homehunt.info and in the Daily Record newspaper every Tuesday. We also send a copy of our advert to our partner agencies, like local authorities and housing charities. Once registered you can apply for any property that we advertise, as long as it is suitable for you (for example, you would be unable to apply for a house that was too small for your family or was restricted to a different age group).

When you see an advert for a property, in the newspaper or online, that you are interested in you can apply for this property online by logging in to your registration (remember you will need your registration number). Alternatively, you can apply over the phone by calling our Customer Service Centre on 03451 400 100. Properties are advertised for a limited period of time, therefore it is important that you contact us before the closing date and time specified in the advert.

You can apply for as many advertised properties as you wish at any one time. If you qualify for more than one offer at the same time, we will assume that the property you applied for first is your first choice, and so on, in the order you chose to apply. You can only be made one offer at any one time, so the order in which you apply could be important to you.

If you do not want to apply for advertised properties each week, you do not have to. There is no requirement to apply for properties - although if you have a Priority Pass you may risk losing it (see the section on Losing Priority Passes). Every year we will send you a reminder to check whether you still wish to remain registered with Homehunt.

4 Offers of Property

Once the closing date and time has been reached, we create a shortlist of all the applicants who have applied for advertised properties during the week. The shortlist is ordered in the following way:

1. Who would make 'best use' of the property – for example, by using all the available bedrooms or by using disabled adaptations.
2. If more than one applicant is making 'best use' of a property, we will offer it to the person with the highest level of Priority Pass (see the explanation of Priority Passes in sections 5-7).
3. If more than one person has the same level of Priority Pass, the offer will go to the person who has had their Priority Pass the longest.
4. If there are no applicants with Priority Passes, the offer will go to the applicant who first registered with Link Housing.

If you are being considered for a property, you will be visited by a housing officer who will interview you to check your housing circumstances have not changed, and that the property is suitable for you. An official offer of tenancy can then be made. There are some exceptional circumstances when this may not apply. If you would like more information about this, you can download our Lettings Policy from the document downloads section of the Homehunt website or call our Customer Service Centre for details.

Please note that if you refuse three offers of property your registration will be 'suspended' for one year, during which time you will be unable to apply for any properties.

If you are being considered for a property you will be notified within one week of the closing date of the advert.

5 Reporting Allocations

After an offer of property has been accepted, we will publish details of how the allocation was made on the Homehunt website. We will say whether or not 'best use' was made of a property, whether a priority pass was used and also how long the successful applicant had been registered for.

This gives everyone some idea of the demand for different properties and can help you make reasonable choices about where you want to live. For example, is it more important to have a home sooner and go for properties that are in low demand, or can you wait for the 'perfect' property to come along elsewhere?

6 Priority Passes

To ensure we allocate our properties to the people who need them most, we offer Priority Passes to registered applicants who have a 'significant housing need'. You might be in housing need for one of the following reasons:

- You are homeless or threatened with homelessness.
- You are experiencing harassment or anti-social behaviour.
- Your health is affected by your current housing situation.
- You are overcrowded as you do not have enough bedroom space for your household.
- You are under-occupying your property and need a smaller property.
- Your property is unsuitable because of its condition or lack of amenities.
- You need to move to a particular area for work or family reasons.

If any of these situations apply to you, you can apply for a Priority Pass by filling in the relevant sections of the Priority Pass booklet which accompanies this guide. The Priority Pass booklet also has more information about what criteria you need to meet to qualify for each priority pass. The form is divided into different sections to represent the different types of priority we offer. If you think you may be eligible for more than one priority pass, please fill in all of the sections you think may apply to your situation. If you are eligible for more than one priority pass, we will issue you whichever one gives you the highest priority.

Alternatively, you can also apply for a priority pass online at www.homehunt.info. The website lists each pass separately, and you need to complete a separate online application form for each pass you think you may be eligible for. Again, it is important that you submit applications for every type of priority you think you are eligible for, so we can assess your whole situation.

In all cases, except homelessness, you should apply for the assessment of priority by filling in the relevant application form. Homeless Passes are only awarded where a homeless assessment has been carried out by your local authority, so there is no application form for this Priority Pass. If you are homeless you must contact your local authority as soon as possible. Please note that Link does not provide any temporary accommodation. The table on the following page lists the Priority Passes we offer, and the different levels of priority we award.

The application forms (both paper and online) are designed to capture the information we need to accurately assess your housing need. If you are unsure if you qualify for a pass, please call us to discuss your situation. We can advise you which priority pass best matches your situation, and can also provide assistance with filling out the form or using the website.

7 How do we assess Priority Passes?

Priority passes are awarded on four levels; Gold Plus, Gold, Silver and Bronze, as indicated in the table below. If you are eligible for a Priority Pass you will be issued one of the following Pass Types:

Priority Type	Priority Pass Level			
	Gold Plus	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Homeless	✓	✓	✓	
Harassment		✓	✓	
Medical		✓	✓	✓
Overcrowding			✓	✓
Unsatisfactory Housing			✓	✓
Need to be in a Community			✓	✓
Transfer Pass*		✓	✓	✓

*All Transfer Passes will be awarded as 'Plus' Passes.

When we receive your priority pass form, we will assess what level of priority you are entitled to based on the information you have entered in your priority pass form. Sometimes we may need additional information in order to assess your priority. For example, we may ask for a letter from your doctor to clarify your medical requirements, or a letter from your employer confirming where you work. If we need further information we will write to you or phone you to let you know.

Once we have assessed your application we will advise you in writing if you have been awarded a Priority Pass. If you are awarded a Priority Pass it will be applied to your registration as soon as we have assessed your application, and will be taken into consideration every time you bid for a property thereafter.

If your application for a Priority Pass is unsuccessful, or if you believe you have been awarded the wrong level of priority, you can appeal. Please contact us for more information on how to appeal a decision on a priority pass application.

8 How long does my Priority Pass last?

The majority of Priority Passes do not expire, but will continue for as long as it takes you to find suitable accommodation, or until your circumstances change. The exception to this is the Homeless Pass, which is reviewed every six months, and can be deleted if you have failed to apply for properties which became available in your limited areas.

There are situations where we can remove a Priority Pass from an applicant. If you refuse a property that you were offered due to having a Priority Pass, we will remove your Priority Pass from your registration. If you have a Homeless Priority Pass and refuse an offer you may also risk losing your homeless priority with the local authority. If your pass is removed due to a refusal, but you think you had good reasons to refuse the offer, you can appeal.

9 Who is not eligible for housing?

In certain circumstances, registrations can be 'suspended'. This means you will not be able to apply for any houses until the 'suspended' status is removed.

As part of the registration process, you will be asked to answer several questions and sign to confirm this information is correct. The answers you give show whether or not you meet the criteria to apply for housing with us (see also false information). If any criteria are not met, your registration will not be made 'live' until such time as you can demonstrate to us that you can now meet the criteria to apply for housing. Examples of when registrations are 'suspended' include:

- Rent arrears are outstanding, either with Link Housing Association or another landlord, and no agreement to pay them off has been maintained satisfactorily.
- History of anti-social behaviour or criminal activity (subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act) when action has been taken (or is pending) by Police, local authority, landlord etc. The registration will remain 'suspended' until we are satisfied that any such behaviour is unlikely to re-occur.
- If you supply false or misleading information – see below.

If you would like more information about whether or not you are eligible, please contact us. If you are not eligible, we will advise you what action is required before you can apply through our normal system.

10 False information

If you intentionally give false or misleading information in an attempt to secure an offer of property, we will immediately withdraw any Priority Pass you have, and your registration will be 'suspended' for three years. If a tenancy has started, we will immediately take steps to recover the property.

11 Contact us

If you need any help or advice or you have any comments you would like to make, please contact our Customer Service Centre at:

Homehunt Department
Link Housing Association
Watling House
Callendar Business Park
Falkirk FK1 1XR

Tel: 03451 400 100
Email: Homehunt@linkhaltd.co.uk

You can also go to the Homehunt website www.homehunt.info or Link's website www.linkhousing.org.uk to find out more about Link and our services.



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

ستصدر Link هذه المعلومات عند الطلب بطريقة برايل، ومن خلال شريط صوتي ونسخة بخط كبير واللغات التي يتحدث بها الأقليات. لمعرفة المزيد يُرجى الاتصال بالرقم 0330 3030 124

লিংক (Link) অনুরোধক্রমে এই তথ্যাবলীকে ব্রেইল, অডিও টেপ, বড় হরফের মুদ্রন বা কমিউনিটির ভাষাগুলিতে প্রদান করবে। আরো জানতে অনুগ্রহ করে, 0330 3030 124 নম্বরে কল করুন।

Link将根据需求以盲文、录音带、大字体和各种社区语言提供此信息。了解更多详情，请拨打：0330 3030 124

Link może dostarczyć niniejsze informacje w alfabecie Braille'a, na taśmie audio, w wersji dużym drukiem lub w językach używanych przez mieszkańców społeczeństwa. Aby uzyskać więcej informacji, prosimy zadzwonić pod numer 0330 3030 124.

ਬੇਨਤੀ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਇਹ ਲਿੰਕ ਇਸ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਬ੍ਰੇਲ, ਆਡੀਓ ਟੇਪ, ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਕਮਿਊਨਿਟੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰੇਗਾ। ਹੋਰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਲਈ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 0330 3030 124 ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

درخواست پر اس معلومات کولینک (Link) بریل، سُننے والی ٹیپ، بڑے حروف کی چھپائی اور کمیونٹی زبانوں میں فراہم کرے گی۔ مزید معلومات کے لیے برائے مہربانی نمبر 0330 3030 124 کو کال کریں۔

Link will produce this information on request in Braille, Audio Tape, Large Print and Community Languages. To find out more, telephone us on **0330 3030 124**.



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