



in the Vale of Glamorgan



About Homes4U and what we do...

Q & A with Jenny Lewington, Housing Strategy Officer at the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

What is the Homes4U scheme?

Homes4u is the way that the Vale of Glamorgan Council advertises and allocates **social housing** available in the Vale. Homes4U is a 'common housing waiting list' run in partnership with the four Housing Associations operating in the area.

The aim of Homes4U is to provide affordable housing for rent to households and individuals in 'housing need'. People who are unable to access housing which is **suitable** and that they can **afford** on the open market, e.g. by renting privately or buying a home may need affordable housing. Tenants already living in social housing can also be members of Homes4U if they need to transfer to another property.

Homes4U is a choice-based lettings system, meaning that people are able to choose the property they apply to live in.

What do you mean by choice-based lettings?

Choice -based lettings allow tenants and prospective tenants to bid for the properties they are interested in, rather than simply being allocated a property.

The system gives applicants **greater control** over the lettings process by giving them a **choice** of housing accommodation and the opportunity to express a preference of where it is they want to live. This is good for communities, as applicants will only bid for homes in the areas they wish to live in, which is often where they have a connection, e.g. where they currently live, work or have family.

What is a common housing register?

A common housing waiting list is **one waiting list** for everyone waiting for accommodation in the Vale. The Council manages Homes4U on behalf of the Housing Associations, so social rented properties, whether they are owned by the Council or a Housing Association are advertised and allocated in the same way.

Members of Homes4U can bid on homes available from the Council, Hafod, Newydd, United Welsh and Wales and West Housing Associations. There is only one form to fill in and no need to register with each organisation separately.

Who is eligible for Homes4U?

Membership of Homes4U is open to anyone, aged 16 or over, who is seeking rented accommodation in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Homes4U uses a system of priority bands; those in the greatest need of housing will be awarded a Gold priority, with this reducing to Silver and Bronze priority bands for those with less urgent housing need.

Households with the highest level of priority are those who are homeless, have a medical priority, are overcrowded, under-occupying or living in a home where there are significant hazards to health.

What about people living in rural communities?

The Council recognises there are specific difficulties associated with accessing housing in the rural Vale, for example; the cost of private renting, being able to find a suitable adapted property or leaving tied accommodation.

Housing issues in the rural Vale are often hidden, as people find their own solutions or may not be aware that they can join Homes4U.

In response to this, **Local Lettings Policies** are applied to new rural housing developments. This means that people with a local connection to a rural town or village are prioritised, whichever band they are in.

The Council also has a **Rural Housing Enabler** who is able to provide housing advice to people in rural communities.

How are properties advertised?

All available properties are advertised every fortnight. The adverts open on a Thursday and closes the following Wednesday.

Adverts are placed in local newspapers (Barry and District, Penarth Times and The Gem), in the Civic Office in Barry and on the Councils website. You can also sign up for the Councils e-news to receive the advert.

Following the closure of the advert a shortlist of bidders will be drawn up and the applicant in the highest priority will be offered the property. If they do not want to accept the property it will be offered to the next highest bidder and so on.

Contact homes4u

Phone... Homes4U Hotline (01446) 709840

Online... www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/homes4u

Email... homes4u@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Letter... Vale of Glamorgan Council
Civic Offices
Holton Road
Barry
CF63 4RU



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Hwylusydd Tai Gwledig
Rural Housing Enabler

Rural Housing Enabler
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How does a Homes4U member express an interest in a property?

Individuals who have applied to Homes4U will have a membership card and number. When the advert opens, Homes4U members bid for the homes they are interested in. Bidding can be done through various methods such as phone, fax, via the web-site and by text.

How do I become a Homes4U member?

You will need to register with Homes4U by filling in an application form, either a paper copy or online. A Homes4U Officer is also available to help you complete the form if you need some assistance.

