BOROUGH COUNCIL OF WELLINGBOROUGH

TITHE BARN ROAD, WELLINGBOROUGH, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE NN8 1BN

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If you would like any Borough Council of Wellingborough documents translated please contact the Council Offices.

Urdu
وزیر اعظم سے بارہ کارلیسکوہا کرتھا نہیں دھانتی کے قانونیہ سپارہ کرتھا نہیں کارلیسکوہا کرتھا نہ
تو پھردو نہیں کرتھا کارلیسکوہا کرتھا نہیں

Gujarati
આપની ગુજરાતી ઉપેલિંગબો બારો કારની લેટા કરી દલીલપત્રની અનુભવ આપની નજ
ાણાની પ્રાર્થના અનુસાર કરી કારની લેટા અફિસ મોટો કરી.

Bengali
Or if you would like any Borough Council of Wellingborough documents in large type or on audio tape please contact the Council Offices.

www.wellingborough.gov.uk

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF WELLINGBOROUGH

APPLYING FOR HOUSING

INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE
FOR THOSE SEEKING ACCOMMODATION

May 2004.
There are many companies who now can supply either, or both, gas and electricity to you. You must inform the supplier of your choice, and arrange for them to start your supply. The Council will ensure there is a heating system in place and a meter, the supply may have been disconnected by the supplier, the tenant must arrange for the supply to start.

There are no public subsidies (Benefits), available for the payment of fuel or water bills. However, all suppliers have customer service teams who will help you identify a suitable payment method.
HOUSING CHOICE

A summary of availability and allocation of Social Rented Housing, provided or enabled by the Borough Council of Wellingborough, as a guide to our allocation policy. The Council Allocation policy is designed to give applicants CHOICE in where they want to live and in what type of property they want to live.

The Council currently (as at 1/4/04) owns 4,813 residential properties within the Borough. 313 of these are supported housing within nine Sheltered schemes. The remaining 4,500 are spread across the four areas of the main town, four small towns and twelve rural villages.

Who can apply?

The Council will accept applications for housing from anyone over the age of 16, unless:

- You are subject to Immigration Control and the Government says you cannot apply for Council Housing.
- Anyone who has deliberately worsened Your need for housing.
- Anyone whose behaviour would not be acceptable as a Council Tenant.

Who may be excluded?

- After you have been a tenant for a year you can apply for re-housing by transfer. Your application will be treated exactly the same as all other on the list
- If you are a Secure Tenant you can exchange your tenancy with any other secure (or assured) tenant of a Council or Registered Social Landlord in England and Wales. There are special rules to follow, so please ask your Housing Officer or pick up a leaflet.

What if I am already a Council Tenant?

- If you need to relocate for a new job or, to give or receive care, the Council will nominate you to the nearest local authority or Social Landlord to your required location. It is however, their decision whether they will house you.

What if I need to relocate?

- Tenants in Sheltered Housing schemes will have a Support Charge added to their rent, this will show in total rent.
- Costs of furnishing and decorating the interior
- Costs of Television equipment and licence
- Cost of telephone
- If you have a garden you will be responsible for maintaining it in a tidy condition.

Rent and Council Tax

Council rents are structured to a formula set by Central Government, they are set to rise and converge with Housing Association rents by 2012 to set a single standard for the Social Rented sector. Although individual confirmation will be necessary Council owned homes are all within bands A and B.

- If you are entitled to Housing Benefit to pay your rent you will also have benefit for your Council Tax. Recent case law, has reinforced the fact, that it is the Tenant’s responsibility to ensure that Benefit is paid to the landlord, not the landlords.

Wellingborough rents are paid weekly over 48 weeks, there are currently nine methods of payment (see tenancy start pack) the average rents are currently:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Average Weekly rent(*)</th>
<th>User Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bedsits</td>
<td>£34.40p</td>
<td>36 Sheltered, 3 general need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Bed Flat &amp; Maisonette</td>
<td>£44.31p</td>
<td>102 Sheltered, 637 general need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Bed House &amp; Bungalow</td>
<td>£46.07p</td>
<td>69 Sheltered, 240 general need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Bed Flat &amp; Maisonette</td>
<td>£52.99p</td>
<td>397 for general need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Bed House &amp; Bungalow</td>
<td>£53.84p</td>
<td>6 Sheltered, 786 general need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Bed Flat &amp; Maisonette</td>
<td>£54.95p</td>
<td>7 for general need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Bed House &amp; Bungalow (1)</td>
<td>£57.44p</td>
<td>2330 for general need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Bed &amp; 5 Bed Houses (4)</td>
<td>£62.15p</td>
<td>93 for general need.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(*) Weekly rent does not include Support costs for sheltered schemes.

(1) & (4) There only one 3 bed bungalow and four 5 bed houses left in Council ownership.

Water and Fuel Charges

All water supply within the Borough is done by Anglian Water, you must register with them once you have signed for your tenancy. Their customer service team will help you set up a payment method.
What if I need to relocate to Wellingborough?

Can I choose where I live?

Can I choose the Type of property?

How will my application be assessed?

What happens then?

Your application will be treated the same as everyone else on the list.

Wellingborough Town is split into four application areas, four small towns and twelve rural villages each is listed separately (see application form). You may choose as many of these areas as you wish. You cannot however specify particular areas smaller than these within the town or individual village.

Council policy has changed the eligibility criteria for house types to broaden choice for applicants. Smaller households can now apply for larger properties, however, you must remember that your points determine the priority in which you will be offered a home.

All applications will be awarded points and placed in a priority band.

A points and band scheme awards points for areas of need and places each application in a need band.

If you have a specific medical need, this will be assessed by the Council's Medical advisor, independent of Council staff.

You will also be given points for local connection to the town and a specific small town or village, if you qualify.

Your application is vetted by a Housing Officer to calculate your points and Check completion. If you have indicated any need, for which you have not given sufficient information or proof, we will contact you requesting the missing information. If you do not provide the evidence, you will not receive the points. Your application will be added to the system, for property type and each area of your choice. If there is evidence required to prove if you are eligible or not, you will have 14 days to provide it. If you do not your application will be cancelled. You may re-apply when you have proof of eligibility.
How are homes allocated?

When a property is empty the Housing Officer matches applicants from the Housing Register for that area by priority need band, Urgent first, if no applicants then Need, and then Want.

In villages priority is given, in each band to applicants with a local connection. In small towns priority will be given to applicants with a local connection in each band.

Within each band the property will be offered first to the applicant with the most points. However, the Council operates a Sensitive lettings policy which identifies small groups of properties where residents suffer from specific problems. Within this policy the Council reserves the right to bypass applications from applicants whose history suggests they may add to the problems.

What if I refuse an offer?

All applicants on the Housing Register will be made up to two separate offers of accommodation in the areas of their choice. If you refuse both offers your application will be cancelled, you may make a new application after six months.

What if I disagree?

If you disagree with any of the decisions made there is an appeals process, all appeals are reviewed by a Senior Officer not directly involved in the original decision. Appeals must be in writing, addressed to:
The Housing Manager
Borough Council of Wellingborough
Tithe Barn Road Offices
Wellingborough
NN8 1BN

Asylum and Immigration Details  This section is mandatory

If you are subject to any restrictions by the Home Office you must give details and produce a copy of one of the named documents.

If you are a British subject, or European national or other with right of residency, the Council must be aware of your status.

Declaration  This section is mandatory

You must allow the Council your consent to check the information you have put in the application form.

Ethnic Monitoring

The Council is looking to expand the quality of services and address the Housing Needs of the Black and Ethnic minority communities within the Borough. Completion of this section is voluntary, but assists the Council in being aware of the breadth of cultural backgrounds and languages it may be required to amend or extend its services to.

Why do you need Housing  This section is mandatory

The reason you need housing could gain you priority points, please tick only one box indicating the main reason. If there is any documentation related to your need please enclose copies and note to the effect.

Present Accommodation  This section is mandatory

The current accommodation you occupy could gain you priority points and is material to your application. Please ensure to indicate which facilities you have access to, including garden if you have children.

Details of your family  This section is mandatory

This section is split into two parts, the top for details of all of those who will be occupying your new home on a permanent basis, and the lower for those currently living with you who will not be living at your new home. This information will be used to gauge under or over occupation and your eligibility for a new home type.

Access arrangements for children

If you have dependant children who do not live with you, but who you have an agreement for access, and this affects your need for housing please enter details. A full name and address of the person (carer) who has custody of the child is essential for the Council to verify the facts.

Medical Details-  This section is mandatory

It is essential your enter whether or not any member of your application has an illness or disability which is either, affected by the current accommodation you have, or would affect the type of property they could occupy. All medical referrals are assessed by an independent professional, this assessment considers only a) if your current housing is worsening your condition and b) what type of accommodation would lessen this situation.

OTHER ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE

Housing Advice:
The Council employs a Housing Advisor, who works in the Tithe Barn Rd offices. The Advisor will give you up to date information on other types of accommodation available within the Borough. This will include, a rent guarantee scheme, and independent advice from the
WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

This is a legal process, once the homelessness officer has taken the application, all the information contained in it must be checked and investigated in order to assess whether you fulfil the 5 legal criteria to be owed a duty under the terms of homelessness legislation, these are:-

1. Eligible for assistance
2. Homeless or threatened with homelessness within 28 days
3. Priority need
4. Not intentionally homeless
5. Have a local connection with Wellingborough

Once it has been determined which criteria are met, a decision will be given to you in a letter which will explain the decisions reached and reasons for those decisions. If you disagree with the decision made and the reasons why, you have right to request a review of your case; this will be carried out by a senior officer not involved in the initial decision.

If you are owed a full housing duty, additional points will be added to your housing register application and you will be allocated accommodation via the register. However, as you are being housed due to an emergency i.e. because you are homeless, you are unable to choose where you live. The Council does have a duty, however, to make you a suitable offer of accommodation, again, if you disagree with the offer made you have a right to request a review of the suitability of the offer.

In certain circumstances, the Council's legal duty towards you may be discharged by securing accommodation in the private sector or with a registered social landlord such as a housing association. This will be discussed with you should these circumstances arise.

If it is decided that you are not eligible to be dealt with under the provisions of homelessness legislation, you will be offered advice and assistance as mentioned previously.

COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION

This section will assist you in completing the application for the Housing Register (waiting list) for the Borough Council. If you have any difficulty in completing or understanding the questions on the application form staff in Customer Services or the Duty Housing Officer will assist you.

The basic information common to all applicants is highlighted as mandatory, you must complete all these sections as mandatory, even if the answer is a simple no, or not applicable. If you do not complete all of the mandatory sections the Council may not accept the application, if that happens they will send it back to the address given on the form. They will then require you to complete missing parts or new form within 14 days. If you do not return it within the time stated, your application will be cancelled and you will need to make a new application.

About you and your family This section is mandatory

If you have a partner you wish to be a joint tenant and have the same standing and security as yourself, their details must be completed as well as yours.

Local Connection

If you have lived or worked in the Borough for more than 12 months you will be entitled to points for this. If you lived/worked here previously you will need to provide evidence.

“Bridge” project at the local C.A.B. Advice on local housing and wider issues is available at the “drop-in” run by the Daylight Centre in the town.

Housing Associations:

The Council works in partnership with Housing Associations to increase the number of social housing properties in the Borough. Under this partnership the Council has rights of nomination when the Associations properties become vacant. You can register with the Council as being interested in Housing Association properties, and the Council can nominate you to them by this process.

The Council cannot register you with the Association, if you wish to go directly on their list you must register personally with them. Housing Associations ask the Council to nominate applicants for rented and shared ownership properties. Association rented tenancies are similar to Council tenancies. Rents will be the same by 2012.

Shared ownership properties allow tenants to get a foot on the property ownership ladder. You buy a percentage (normally 50%) of the property and rent the remainder. You can increase the percentage you own, if you wish some properties have a top percentage others allow total ownership, this will be a condition stated in the contract.

Housing Association Contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Properties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anchor Housing</td>
<td>Flats 1 30 Bengeworth Court, Flats 1 45 Box Gardens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Granary</td>
<td>all elderly accommodation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park End Barns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulbeck</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS 0NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedfordshire Pilgrims HA</td>
<td>Only 1 property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilgrims House</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horne Lane</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedford</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MK40 1NY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Midlands HA</td>
<td>Leighton Hse, 2a High St, w/b 5 flats general needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seymour Hse</td>
<td>Star Hse, 2 York Rd, w/b 15 flats general needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen Eleanor Office Park,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berrymoor Rd/Buckingham</td>
<td>Cl flats, houses &amp; bungalows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newport Pagnell Road West</td>
<td>(inc 4 x disabled bungalows)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northampton</td>
<td>Paradise House, 19 Jacksons Lane 6 flats</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHAT IF I AM HOMELESS?

HOMELESS OR THREATENED WITH HOMELESSNESS?

If you are homeless or threatened with homelessness within the next 28 days, the Council has a legal duty to carry out an assessment of your situation and housing need. As a result of this initial assessment there will be two options available to you. The Council will either have a duty to take and investigate a homeless application or to provide you with appropriate housing advice and assistance depending on your circumstances.

WHICH OPTION WILL I BE OFFERED?

If after the initial assessment, the interviewing Officer has reason to believe that:
1. you are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 28 days and
2. that you fall into one of the priority need categories below
you will be offered the option to make a homeless application, otherwise, you will be offered an appointment with our housing advisor who will give you advice and assistance in your efforts to find suitable accommodation. The priority need categories are as follows:-

- 16 or 17 years of age.
- Former care leaver.
- Pregnant.
- Dependent and resident children.
- Vulnerable due to:- old age, a physical or mental illness, the effects of violence, the effects of being an ex-offender or ex-service person

WHAT CAN I EXPECT FROM MAKING A HOMELESS APPLICATION?

Making a homeless application involves an in depth and comprehensive interview with our homelessness officer, the interview usually lasts for about an hour depending on the complexity of your situation. During the interview you will be asked for your and those to be included in your application personal details such as National Insurance number, proof of income etc, you will also be required to give details of where you have lived for the past 5 years. An important part of the application is your statement, this is an account of the events that have led to your homelessness and can often involve your discussing information of a quite personal nature.

It is important that you provide all the information requested as soon as possible as failure to do so will result in your case being delayed.

WILL I BE OFFERED TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION?

If the Council has reason to believe you are eligible for assistance, homeless and in priority need, you will be offered temporary accommodation while your application is assessed and a decision is made. The duration of your stay in temporary accommodation will vary depending on your circumstances and the decision made on the level of duty owed to you. The provision of temporary accommodation will also vary according to your circumstances. Where there is no alternative accommodation available you may be placed in hotel accommodation, however, if you are pregnant or have resident and dependent children, this will be for a maximum of 6 weeks at which time you will be provided with self contained accommodation.