

Policy

Property Services
Home Ownership Team

First come, first served Shared Ownership Policy

Updated: May 2026
Review date: May 2031

1. Purpose

- 1.1. Both Eastbourne Borough Council and Lewes District Council (“the Council”) aim in their capacity as a landlord, to promote Shared Ownership through development of new properties and to operate according to good practice, reduce fiduciary risk and comply with all with all legislative directives and protocols.
- 1.2. The purpose of this policy is to ensure all prospective customers are aware of our policy when purchasing a Shared Ownership home. Also to provide guidance and clarity for the allocation of properties in line with Homes England Capital Funding Guide, where the demand for Shared Ownership homes exceeds supply, in such cases, the Council are required to consider applicants on a first come, first served basis.
- 1.3. Applicants will be prioritised on a first come first serve basis, in date order once completing the affordability assessment as outlined below.

2. Staff responsible for reviewing this, Policy.

Home Ownership Manager (HOM) and Senior Home Ownership Officer (SHOO)

3. Staff responsible for delivering this Policy.

Home Ownership Officer (HOO)

4. Scope

- 4.1. This Policy applies to the sale of new Shared Ownership homes and is relevant to all homes regardless of delivery routes.
- 4.2. This policy applies to all purchasers who apply to the Council who are eligible to purchase a home, in conjunction with our Shared Ownership schemes.

5. Policy

5.1 The Council will:

- Where demand exceeds supply, consider applicants, bases on first come, first served, prioritised in date order, providing that they meet the relevant eligibility and affordability criteria.
- There are specific exceptions to the above in relation to qualifying Military of Defence personnel and protected sites or areas where priority is able to be given to applicants with some form of local connection. (Further information on this section is available via Homes England “Applicant Priority” or on request).
- All applicants that are assessed as affordable for the minimum share available will be considered as determined by the first come, first served as referred to below.
- Prioritisation of applicants will not be influenced by the share that an applicant is able to afford.
- For clarity, applicants who are only able to afford lower shares will not be excluded or moved to a lower priority because of this – the Councils will adhere to the first come, first served basis.
- Ensure homes are sold at values based on a valid independent RICS valuation.
- Ensure the Councils comply with Homes England guidance as the basis for assessing applicants who can afford and sustain a home.

5.2 Affordability criteria

5.2.1 A person can buy a home through shared ownership if both of the following are true:-

- Their household income is £80,000 a year or less (£90,000 a year or less in London).
- They cannot afford all of the deposit and mortgage payments for a home that meets their needs.
- One of the following must also be true:
 - The person is a first-time buyer.
 - The person used to own a home but cannot afford to buy one now.
 - They are forming a new household - for example, after a relationship breakdown.
 - They are an existing shared owner, and they want to move.
 - They own a home and want to move but cannot afford a new home that meets their needs.

5.2.2 The person must:-

- Be resident within the LDC or EBC area for at least 6 months prior to applying for a shared ownership property. And / or
- Work at least 15 hours per week within the LDC or EBC area and have done so for at least 6 months prior to applying for a shared ownership property. And / or
- Have a close family connection within the LDC or EBC area.
A close family connection is one of the following:

- Children including stepchildren.
- Parents including stepparents.
- Siblings including stepsiblings.
- Grandparents.
- Grandchildren.

5.2.3 Exemptions to the local connection criteria requirement are:

- Members of the armed forces.
- Veterans who have left the armed forces within the last 5 years.
- Widows, widowers and surviving civil partners of service personnel, whose deaths were a consequence of their service.
- Keyworkers.

A keyworker is one of the following:

- Healthcare: doctors, nurses, social workers, care workers, and paramedics.
- Education: nursery and teaching staff.
- Emergency services: police officers, fire firefighters, ambulance staff, and coastguards.

6. Process

6.1 Allocation of properties will be based on applicants who pass the initial affordability assessment by the Homeownership Team, providing the application form has been completed in full and information has been completed correctly.

6.2 Where demand exceeds supply, the Council will allocate in date order from when the Council receive the initial approved affordability assessment by the Homeownership Team, providing the application form has been completed in full and information has been completed correctly

6.3 Properties will not be allocated until the application form, and affordability assessment has been completed.

6.4 The Council aims to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged in their interpretation and application. The ultimate responsibility for a decision on whether to accept an application sits with the Council's Homeownership Team.

7. Further information and support

- Shared Ownership Policy
- Leasehold Management Policy
- Governments guide: [Affordable Homes Programme \(AHP\) 2021 to 2026](#)
- Governments guide: [Social and Affordable Homes Programme \(SAHP\) 2026 to 2036](#).

8. Equality and Diversity Statement

- When implementing and promoting this policy, we will ensure all customers can access information in a format suitable to their needs.
- We will take into account our customers disabilities, including physical and mental disabilities, sensory impairments and learning difficulties, literacy issues, caring and work responsibilities, sexual orientation, gender, race and cultural and religious beliefs.
- We will monitor take up and satisfaction of the policy by equality groups to ensure that no groups are affected adversely by its contents or implementation. Monitoring data will be held securely on our system and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and Freedom of Information Act 2000.