

Cornwall Council Housing Options

Nos Da Kernow

Nos Da Kernow specialises in targeted early interventions with clients to prevent homelessness. We provide brief and intensive outreach support to those who are experiencing housing difficulties, which if not addressed, may lead to them becoming homeless. The service is funded in partnership by Cornwall Council and The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. It is a nationally recognised model of best practice for the successful early intervention and prevention of homelessness.

Our referral criteria –

- At risk of homelessness but not within 56 days
- Not be currently sleeping rough or owed a duty under Part VII Housing Act 1996 (as amended).
- Client must have a local connection with Cornwall
- Client must have recourse to public funds
- Client must have given consent for a referral to Nos da Kernow
- Be aged over 18

Nos Da Kernow will work with those who have been identified as being at early risk of future homelessness, are in insecure living arrangements or are facing difficulties which not addressed may affect their housing security in the future. Examples of circumstances leading to a Nos Da Kernow referral could be:

- Struggling to meet aspects of their tenancy agreement (private or social housing tenants) which may put their tenancy at risk e.g. Overcrowding; Under occupancy; Antisocial behaviour; Financial concerns which may impact on ability to pay rent; Rent arrears
- Staying with friends or relatives and have been asked to leave at the earliest opportunity but no date or timescale has been given and/or they can remain there for more than 56 days
- Sofa surfers
- Have not yet been served notice but they are at risk of being issued one in the near future
- Where an invalid notice has been served
- The property no longer meets the person's needs e.g. due to illness/disability; family composition has changed or due to change; relationship breakdown; disrepair issues

Referral process –

We welcome self-referrals and referrals from organisations and partner agencies; our contact form can be found here:

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/housing/homeless-or-at-risk/nos-da-kernow/>

For further information about the Nos Da Kernow Service criteria, referral process or the service in general please contact us on

Tel: 01872 322028 or

Email: nosdakernow@cornwall.gov.uk

Housing Assessment Hub

Homeless tonight or within 2 weeks -

The Housing Assessment Hub will deal with anyone who is homeless within the next 2 weeks. The ranges of approaches are from those who have been given notice by landlord (with an expiry date is less than 2 weeks), asked to leave by family, relationship breakdowns and fleeing domestic abuse and other violence. The Prevention first team will pick up any approaches with more than 2 weeks until homeless date. If an officer can negotiate with landlords/excluders for more time, then the cases will either be passed over to Prevention First or Nos Da to support further. When a case is created, contact will be made with the client and a full housing assessment will be carried out where they will receive housing advice and assistance of what options are available to them.

If a duty is owed to them then they will be passed over to casework who can work with them for up to 56 days prevention duty and/or 56 days relief duty depending on the housing circumstances.

During the housing assessment the client states that they do not have any family/friends that they can stay with we will look at whether the person is owed an accommodation duty and help them go into temporary accommodation, this is based on the individual circumstances of the household.

If a person has nowhere safe to sleep tonight, please advise them to call 0300 1234161

If they are at risk of becoming homeless then they can self-refer via the website <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/housing/homeless-or-at-risk/>

You can refer someone via our jigsaw system as an agency referrer <https://live.housingjigsaw.co.uk/> this can take approximately 10 minutes and will go direct to the prevention & engagement team, once the referral is accepted you will receive an email notification.

If you see anyone who is Rough Sleeping - Alert the local authority and outreach services by contacting Streetlink online or on 0300 500 0914 alternatively please call housing options 0300 1234 161 (this number is manned 24 hours of the day 7 days a week including bank holidays).

Homechoice Housing Register

About Homechoice

Homechoice is the choice-based system for letting council and housing association homes to rent in Cornwall.

The Homechoice team are responsible for:

- the administration of the social housing register on behalf of Cornwall Council in partnership with 8 social housing landlords.
- Coordinate the advertising of Cornwall Housing stock and some of the partner landlords' vacant properties.
- Allocate Cornwall Housing permanent vacancies (we do not allocate emergency or temporary accommodation)
- Partner Landlords although advertise their vacancies through Homechoice, they allocate their properties (so any queries in relation to one of their properties would need to be directed at the relevant landlord)

Homechoice is not a waiting list & there are no guarantees of rehousing! It is a register of housing need. Applicants in the most urgent need for housing have the best chance of bidding successfully.

- currently over 22,000 households on the housing register
- currently averaging around 180 new applications each week
- currently averaging 15 properties advertised each week
- in excess of 1000 enquiries each week

Homechoice applications are assessed, and properties allocated, in line with the Homechoice Common Assessment Framework and Cornwall Council Allocations Policy. These documents can be found online: <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/housing/housing-strategy/council-allocation-scheme/>

How to apply to Homechoice -

Applications to join Homechoice can be made online:

<https://secure.cornwall.gov.uk/cornwallhousing/openaccess.l/ibxmlpr.p?docid=home>

The screenshot shows the Cornwall Homechoice website. The navigation bar at the top includes 'Cornwall Homechoice', 'Home', 'Property', 'Applications', 'Contact us', and 'Login'. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column features a large graphic with a smartphone, tablet, and laptop, and the text 'Cornwall Homechoice' and 'Welcome to Cornwall Homechoice'. The right column contains the following text:

Welcome to Cornwall Homechoice

[Existing applicants login](#)
View your application details, make changes, place bids, upload documents.

[New applicants](#)
Complete an application to join the Homechoice housing register.
Please read the short [Easy Guide](#) for step-by-step help in setting up a new user account and logging in for the first time.

[More information](#)
Visit our web site for more [information on Homechoice](#) or other [housing options](#) available to you.

[Your privacy](#)
Cornwall Housing Ltd respects your privacy and is committed to protecting your personal data. This privacy notice will inform you as to how we look after this information. View the [Homechoice privacy statement](#).

Useful information when completing an application -

- Important to complete all relevant questions (some are mandatory and won't be able to proceed until complete)
- Include all household occupants whether being rehoused or not
- Important to include Email address & contact telephone number – may need to contact when assessing and if come up for a property will initially contact by phone in the first instance.
- Include details of any PTD on application i.e. support workers, family etc if relevant
- Pets – some properties have a no pets policy.
- Address history particularly important as determines whether meet Cornwall connection and any parish connections. This can affect the number of properties eligible to bid on (Cornwall) & position in a shortlist (parish).
- Family – include names, full addresses, date moved into property AND details if give or receives any support from that family member and the nature of that support

- Applications are assessed on applicant's current housing situation/address. Any change in address will need to complete a new application form so that it can be re-assessed. Contact Homechoice if change address.
- Any change in circumstance also contact Homechoice team to let know i.e. pregnant, people move in or out etc.
- Applications are assessed in date order to be fair to all applicants and we aim to assess new applications within 28 working days.

Useful information on bidding

- Applicants have 1 bid each week – need to use 1 bid wisely. Check advert details make sure meet criteria etc.
- When an applicant places a bid, it will give them an initial bidding position at the time their bid is placed.
- This position may change during the bidding cycle as other applicants place or withdraw bids on the same property. An applicant's position may go up or down as other people place bids on the same property if they are in a higher banding or have been in the same band longer.
- Once the bidding cycle closes the system will shortlist all those applicants who have bid on that property into order of band and length of time in band. That is simply an exercise in printing off a list of everyone who has bid for a particular property.
- The queue position does not necessarily indicate whether or not someone is likely to be offered the property as there may be other criteria we have to consider, such as, if the advert has a preference label or a Section 106 planning restriction. Some properties will not have a preference label or Section 106.
- Each advert will detail how it will be allocated.
- If a property does have a preference label or Section 106 the shortlist has to be manually checked to find the top applicant who meets the property criteria, for example if an applicant finished in position 1 on a shortlist but they didn't meet the preference label on an advert, they would be skipped for that property.
- Homechoice shortlist all CHL properties and partner landlords shortlist their own properties.
- Applicants may be taken off the register if no bids have been placed in a 12mth period.
- Applicant may be taken off the register if they refuse 2 reasonable offers in a 12mth period
- Homechoice provides feedback on all lettings made. This feedback is included on the Homechoice website here:
<https://secure.cornwall.gov.uk/cornwallhousing/openaccess.l/ibxmlpr.p?docid=results>
 The properties are sorted into the week they were advertised. The property is only updated once the new tenancy has started.

How to contact Homechoice -

- Online contact form: <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/housing/register-with-homechoice-and-contact-us/>
- Send us an email homechoice.duty@cornwall.gov.uk
- Call us on 0300 1234 161