

Non-Sheltered Housing



Guide for Applicants

BCHA is committed to providing individual and high quality support, care and homes for our residents

Q What is BCHA?

A Bedford Citizens Housing Association was formed in 1957, and is a non-profit making charitable organisation, providing sheltered and non-sheltered accommodation for Bedford Citizens. This leaflet is for people seeking non-sheltered accommodation i.e. people who do not require support from a scheme manager/warden.

Q What type of housing does BCHA offer?

A BCHA does not have any family sized accommodation. Our properties are mostly one bedroom flats and bedsits. All properties are unfurnished. This normally means without carpets and curtains unless they are left by the previous occupier.

Q Where is BCHA Housing?

A They are all located within close proximity to Bedford town centre. A list of our properties and their location is contained within the Housing Application Form. You are able to choose where you would like to live. The more options you provide, the quicker we will be able to help meet your housing needs.

Q What is the rent?

A Current rent and service charge information can be obtained from our Housing and Maintenance Manager at Head Office.

Q What does the service charge include?

A The service charge includes such things as communal heating and lighting, TV aerial maintenance, boiler servicing, external window cleaning, communal gardening and fire alarm maintenance. Service charges are based on actual costs of service provided. Service

charges are reviewed annually and tenants are consulted on what is included in the charges.

Q Can I get help with the rent?

A You may be entitled to housing benefit. Further advice can be obtained by contacting a Benefits advisor at Bedford Borough Council, who may also arrange for assistance with form filling.

Q Are decorating grants available?

A BCHA does not normally re-decorate properties when they become vacant. Instead, where decorations are poor, we offer a grant for you to decorate as you wish.

Q How do I apply?

A You will need to complete and return an application form. Please contact us to request a housing application pack.
Telephone: 01234 321400
(between 8.30am to 5.30pm)
Fax: 01234 352004
Email: housingandmaintenancemanager@bchal.org
Website: www.bchal.org
You can download an application form directly from our website.

Q How are my details kept confidential?

A We recognise that your housing application form contains questions of a sensitive nature. We endeavour only to ask questions that are relevant and enable us to assess your housing need. We treat all applications in the strictest confidence and comply, as appropriate, with the requirements of the Data Protection Act. Details of our policy are available on request.

Q How is my application assessed?

A Your application will be assessed in accordance with our Allocations Policy depending on your housing need. If you have a medical condition you may be asked to supply us with a letter from your doctor to support your application.

Q What happens if I am successful?

A You will receive a letter advising you that you will be placed onto the waiting list for your chosen schemes. When a vacancy occurs we look at the applicant with the highest need in the first instance. Prior to being considered for a tenancy you will receive a home visit to verify your application. You will then have the opportunity to view the vacancy. In accordance with our allocations policy you are allowed to refuse three offers of tenancy before you may be removed from our waiting list.

Q What happens if I am unsuccessful?

A If you are not successful you will receive a letter explaining why you do not meet our criteria. If you wish to appeal against the decision you should use our complaints procedure which is available on request.

If you need assistance to complete the application form or if you require this leaflet in a different format or language please contact BCHA, using the details overleaf, and we will be pleased to help you.

Once completed please return your application form to the Housing & Maintenance Manager (contact details are on the back page of this leaflet).



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