



Information for housing applicants and Optima tenants wishing to transfer

معلومات برای درخواست دهندگان برای خانه و برای کرایه نشین های اپتیما که آرزوی نقل مکان را دارند
Information pour les demandeurs de logement et les locataires d'optima qui désirent un transfert

হাউজিং বা আবাসনের জন্য আবেদনকারীদের ও স্থানান্তর বা বদলাতে ইচ্ছুক অসটিমা বাসিন্দাদের জন্য তথ্য
معلومات لطالبي السكن و المُستأجرین لدى أوبتيما الراغبين في التنقل
提供給住房申請人和有意轉讓之最佳承租人的資訊

ਅਮਰ ਸਾਰੇ ਮਕਾਨ ਨਾ ਆਪਣੀਕੰਸ਼ਨ ਅਨੇ ਆਪਟੀਮਾ ਨਾ ਰੇਵਾਸੀ ਭੀਨੇ ਗਰ ਅਫ਼ਲਵਾਨੁ ਭੀਯ
زانیاری یو داواکارانی خانوویره و کریجیکاتی نوپتیما (optima tenants) که دهخوازن بگویند
نقل مکان کرنے کی خواہش رکھنے والے ہاؤسینگ کے درخواستیوں اور آپتیما کے کرایہ داروں
کیلئے معلومات

Thông tin dành cho những người nộp đơn xin trợ giúp về nhà ở và những người thuê nhà của OPTIMA muốn chuyển nhượng quyền thuê

Macluumaadka codsiga guryaha iyo dadka deggan "optima" ee raba inay wareejistaan
ਹਾਉਸਿੰਗ (ਰਹਾਇਸ਼) ਲਈ ਅਰਜ਼ੀ ਦੇਣ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਮਕਾਨ ਬਦਲਣ ਦੇ ਚਾਹਵਾਨ ਆਪਟੀਮਾ ਦੇ
ਕਿਰਾਏਦਾਰਾਂ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ।

Informacje dla osób ubiegających się o mieszkanie lub chcących się przenieść
najemców spółdzielni optima.

Where our homes are



Applying for a home with Optima

This leaflet describes the range of housing options available with Optima, the area in which we operate and how we allocate homes.

About us

Optima is a social housing landlord and registered charity. We have just under 2,000 homes in Birmingham for rent and shared ownership. The majority of our homes are apartments, with some houses and maisonettes, located mainly in central Birmingham. The main locations are:

- Benmore
- Cleveland and Clydesdale Towers
- Cotteridge and surrounding areas
- Five Ways
- Hollies Croft and surrounding areas
- Lee Bank
- Woodview

All our properties have been refurbished and we have a number of newly built houses and apartments, all of which are in neighbourhoods with a mix of owner occupiers and social housing.

More than just a landlord

We have a reputation for delivering high quality services and our work to regenerate our estates and support the local community has been recognised by the government.

Living in central Birmingham, you will have access to a wide range of services and activities in and around the area from nurseries, shops, schools and medical centres to credit union, youth clubs, resident associations and so on.



We have a reputation for delivering high quality services.

Your housing options with Optima

General needs homes for rent

Applying direct to Optima

Demand for our homes is very high and as a result, our waiting list is often closed to new applicants. We review the waiting list every three months in January, April, July and October. Please call us during these times, ask at reception or check our website to see if our list is open. If you are an existing Optima tenant, you may apply for a transfer at any time.

Applying through Birmingham City Council

To increase your chances of finding a place to live we advise you to apply to Birmingham City Council for housing. Visit your local housing office, call the Council on 0121 303 4125 or visit their website www.birmingham.gov.uk to find out more.

If you are accepted onto their waiting list, you will not only qualify for council homes, but also for homes with ourselves and other housing associations operating in the areas that you are interested in living in, even when waiting lists are closed. Housing associations have an agreement with the Council to let half of their available properties to people on the council waiting list, as and when they become available.

Domestic violence

Optima will accept direct referrals from other local housing associations who are members of the Domestic Violence Protocol, in order to re-house victims of domestic violence.



Demand
for our homes is
high

Sheltered housing apartments for rent for people aged 55 and over

We have two schemes, one in Edgbaston, just off the Bristol Road, and the second in Lee Bank, close to the area's new parks. Both have friendly scheme managers for extra peace of mind, encourage independent living, and have access to good public transport links and local shops.

You can apply if you or your partner is aged 60 or over. The age limit drops to 55 if you have a disability or extra support needs. If you are interested in applying for one of our apartments please contact us on 0121 687 3133. We often have homes available.

Low-cost home ownership schemes

HomeBuy

Getting on the housing ladder may be more affordable than you think. You can buy a share in a home through Homebuy, a government-funded scheme that helps people who would not otherwise be able to buy a home of their own.

Our shared ownership properties are available through Attwood Homes, a company owned and managed by Optima. Attwood Homes operates a different process for applications to that used for our rented homes. For more information please contact Attwood Homes on 0121 687 3120, email homebuy@attwoodhomes.co.uk or visit the website www.attwoodhomes.co.uk.

Flexibuy

Flexibuy gives you the option to rent for as long as you like, with the opportunity to buy your own home in your own time. To make things even easier, you'll get up to £4,000 for every year you rent with us to use as your deposit. It's a secure way to save, and gives you the freedom to experience your home before deciding to buy.

For more information about the home ownership schemes that are available, please contact us on 0121 687 3120.

How we allocate homes

We aim to let our rented homes to people in the most need and have an allocation system designed to be

- fair
- simple to understand and
- open to all members of our community.

You must be aged 18 or over, but we will consider applications from people aged between 16 and 18 years in exceptional circumstances.

All applications are treated strictly in date order and placed into one of three bands in order of priority based on the information that you supply us.

Band 1

- Victims of domestic violence.
- Harassment and/or violence or threat of violence.
- Health condition that requires alternative accommodation.
- Required by Optima to leave your home (transfer cases only).

Band 2

- Overcrowding, under-occupation or families with children living in unsuitable flats.
- Lacking or sharing facilities.
- Needing to move closer to work or schools.
- To receive or give support to family / friends.
- Victim of serious anti-social behaviour.

Band 3

- Those wishing to move from their existing accommodation for any other reason.



Applicants we will not accept onto our waiting list

We will not normally accept you onto our waiting list if:

- you are a home owner with capital to allow you to meet your housing need.
- you are in debt to Optima and have not maintained a clear rent account for at least 3 months (except where the arrears are due to delays in Housing Benefit being paid).
- you are in debt to another social landlord and there is no agreement in place to pay the debt which has been maintained for a reasonable time.
- you have a history of serious anti-social behaviour during the past 2 years which would have been likely to have warranted legal proceedings.
- you have unspent convictions for relevant offences such as drug dealing, prostitution etc.
- you have had reasonable opportunity to secure suitable accommodation by other means.
- you have been evicted because of harassment during the last 2 years.
- you are a former tenant who has been evicted and as a consequence, you will be considered as having made yourself intentionally homeless.

We will consider applications which breach these conditions in exceptional circumstances and there is a right of appeal to the Allocations Panel for any person excluded from the waiting list.

How to apply - new applicants

You will need to complete a housing application form, which is available upon request from our office, and is available to download from our website.

Completed forms should be returned to the housing office. Waiting list applicants will need to provide certain pieces of information with your application form. We will ask you for:

- Photo identification (passport, driving licence).
- Proof of identification for each person who will be living with you. If you have dependent children, then we will ask you for a copy of your child benefit documentation.

- Two items of proof of your current address (for example bank statements, utility bills, rent statements).
- Two items of proof for each address that you have lived at during the past two years (as above). If you have been at your current address for the last two years, then we will ask you to provide proof dating back over this period.
- Proof of income in the form of wage slips or benefit books dating back over two months.

We will also seek references from any previous tenancy that you have held.

Before accepting you on to our waiting list, you will be asked to attend an interview at the housing office to discuss your application form in more detail and to ensure that all necessary proofs have been provided.

How to apply – existing tenants who wish to transfer

You will need to complete a transfer form. You will be asked to provide proof of identification for each person who lives with you.

You will not normally be made an offer of alternative accommodation if you owe any debt to Optima, or if you have breached your current tenancy in some other way (for example, causing nuisance).

Annual Review

Every year we will send you an annual review form. You will need to confirm that you are still interested in remaining on the waiting list, confirm your details, and return the form to us.

We do ask that you keep us informed of any changes that may affect your application. For example, you must let us know if you change your address or contact details, or if your housing circumstances alter in any way.



How we support you if you do not qualify

If you do not qualify for housing we will be able to give you advice and support to find a home or a temporary place to stay. With your permission, we will contact outside agencies that may be able to help.

If we feel that there is cause for concern for you or your family's health or welfare, we may, without your permission, contact an outside agency to seek advice.

Matching properties to people

We will allocate homes that are the best match for your household's needs in terms of the size of the property, enhancements if you are disabled or elderly and so on. As far as possible, children of different sexes over the age of 11 will not have to share a room.

Larger properties than those that would normally be given may be provided if there is a medical need and one is available.

Carers of disabled people will be considered as a member of the family or household if they are registered as carers with the Council's social services, and they need to live in. In such cases, the carers will be given a single room.

Receiving an offer of a home

We are unable to tell you exactly how long you may be waiting for an Optima home. It depends on a number of factors, such as the type and size of property that you have requested, and the areas that you have chosen.

When we are able to make you an offer of a property, we will contact you either by telephone or in writing. Once the property has had all necessary repairs carried out, we will arrange an escorted viewing. If you accept a property after viewing, then your tenancy will commence immediately.

For new tenants who are responsible for paying their own rent, you will be asked to bring with you a week's rent when you collect your keys. If you are entitled to receive housing benefit, then we will advise you about how to make your claim.

Service standards – our promises to you

Applying for a home

- If our waiting lists are open, we will send out an application form within 2 working days of your request.
- We will carry out an application interview with you.
- We will notify you in writing of the banding that you have been placed in.
- We will offer the right of appeal against any decisions made regarding your application (appeals must be made within 14 days of the decision letter being sent).
- We will contact you every year to ask you to confirm your details and reregister your interest.

Offering you a home

- Empty properties will be offered to applicants in line with Optima's allocation policy
- We will contact you by telephone or letter when we are able to make you an offer. We will provide you with the following details:
 - * The property address and a description of the property
 - * If the property is being repaired, an estimated completion date for the work.
 - * The proofs you will need to bring when you come to view the property.
 - * Details about the rent

Fair,
simple
and open



Viewings

- We will take you to view the property within 2 working days of the repair work being completed
- All viewings will be escorted by an Optima officer.
- If the property is accepted, the sign-up process will take place the same day and you will be issued with the keys to your new home
- When signing for an Optima property, an officer will spend time going through the following details with you:
 - * We will explain the Tenancy Agreement and Tenancy Condition
 - * We will explain the documentation in the Tenants Handbook
 - * We will Inform you of your tenancy start date and when the first rent payment is due
 - * You will see a rent officer who will explain the rent payments
 - * A 'Post allocation visit' will be booked for your Housing officer to visit you within 30 working days from when you receive your keys

This is a brief overview of how we allocate homes to households. Please contact us for full details of our allocations policy.

Confidentiality

All information provided to Optima in connection with an application or transfer will remain confidential between the applicant / transferee and Optima, as regulated by the Data Protection Act. Our leaflet 'Data Protection, Privacy and Confidentiality' is available from reception and our website.

About Optima


The majority of our homes are in five Birmingham city centre estates, known collectively as Attwood Green. We are determined to create a vibrant community where residents have a real say in what happens.

We are a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee in England and Wales (number 3681553). We are also registered with the Charity Commission (number 1074648). We are regulated and monitored as a registered social landlord by the Housing Corporation (number L4228).

If you would like this document in another language or format, or if you require the services of an interpreter, please contact us.

- Arabic** إذا أردت هذه الوثيقة بلغة أخرى أو بطريقة أخرى، أو إذا كنت بحاجة إلى خدمات مترجم، فنرجو أن تقوم بالاتصال بنا.
- Bengali** যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান অথবা যদি আপনার একজন ইন্টারপ্রেটারের প্রয়োজন হয়, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।
- Cantonese** 本文件可以翻譯為另一語文版本，或製作成另一格式，如有此需要，或需要傳譯員的協助，請與我們聯絡。
- Farsi** اگر این مدرک را به زبانی دیگر یا در فورمتی دیگر میخواستید و یا اگر احتیاج به سرویس مترجم دارید، لطفاً با ما تماس بگیرید
- French** Si vous souhaitez obtenir ce document dans une autre langue ou sous un autre format ou si vous avez besoin des services d'un interprète, veuillez nous contacter.
- Gujarati** જો તમને આ દસ્તાવેજ બીજી ભાષા અથવા રચનામાં જોઈતો હોય, અથવા જો તમને ઈન્ટરપ્રિટરની સેવાઓ જોઈતી હોય તો, કૃપા કરી અમારો સંપર્ક સાધો.
- Kurdish** ئەگەر دەتەوی ئەم بەلگەیهات بە زمانیکی که یا بە فۆرمیکی که هەبی، یا بیویستت بە موتهرجیم هەیه، تکایه په یوه ندیمان پیوه بکه
- Polish** Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać ten dokument w innym języku lub w innym formacie albo jeżeli potrzebna jest pomoc tłumacza, to prosimy o kontakt z nami.
- Punjabi** ਜੇ ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਾਂ ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਸਮਝਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਕਿਸੇ ਇੰਟਰਪ੍ਰੈਟਰ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।
- Somali** Haddii aad ku rabsid dokumentigaan luqado kale ama daabacaad kale, ama haddii aad u baahan tahay turjibaan, fadlan nala soo xiriir.
- Urdu** یہ دستاویز اگر آپ کو کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہو، یا اگر آپ کو ترجمان کی خدمات چاہئیں تو براۓ مہربانی ہم سے رابطہ کیجئے۔
- Vietnamese** Nếu quý vị muốn có tài liệu này ấn hành bằng ngôn ngữ hoặc khuôn khổ khác, hoặc nếu quý vị cần một thông dịch viên giúp đỡ, xin liên lạc với chúng tôi.

Optima Community Association

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www.optima.org.uk