

Home Owners Guide



In July 2015, Torfaen's Housing Service contacted home owners who were on the Common Housing Register, **Homeseeker**, to establish why they had chosen to apply for social housing.

The research was conducted in response to the growing number of home owners who were joining Homeseeker, to identify the main reasons for their application and to determine whether these needs could be met through alternative housing options.

The response to the consultation was extremely positive and provided greater clarity around the issues that are currently being faced by home owners looking for alternative / social housing.

From the consultation responses it was clear that most applicants have applied to join Homeseeker to access sheltered/retirement housing as they grow older and find their own accommodation more challenging. However, other applicants provided a number of different reasons as to why they need to move.

In response to this feedback, the following guide has been produced to offer some additional advice and information to applicants who may be struggling in their own homes. It is hoped that this information will enable home owners to explore some of the alternative options that are currently available and to better assist them to meet your housing needs.

Torfaen Council Services



I am at risk of losing my home

If you are worried about losing your home and want to know more about your housing options, you can contact the Torfaen Housing Solutions Service for **free** impartial advice.

To speak to a member of the **Housing Solutions Team**, please call: **01495 762200**



I can't afford repayments on my home

Torfaen Housing Solutions Service offers a dedicated financial inclusion service to support people who are experiencing financial hardship. This is a **free** service provided by skilled officers who are IMA (Institute of Money Advisors) accredited.

To speak to a member of the **Financial Inclusion Team**, please call: **01495 762200**



I need help to live independently

If you require help to carry out day to day activities or support to live independently, then you may want to consider applying for housing support. Torfaen's Supporting People Team commission a number of support services to assist people to maintain their independence.

To speak to someone about receiving support, please call: **01495 742420**



I need an adapted property

If you require an adapted property, you may want to consider applying for a **Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)**. A DFG is a means-tested grant to help towards the cost of adapting your existing home to enable you to continue to live there. A DFG is paid when the Council considers that changes are necessary to meet your needs, and that the work is reasonable and practical.

To speak to someone about DFGs please call: **01495 762200**



My home is in a poor condition, I can't maintain my home, or my home is affecting my health

If your property is in a poor condition or you are struggling to maintain it, you may be interested in speaking to our Housing Renewal team. Depending on where you live and the condition of your property you may qualify for a grant or a Homes Improvement Loan (HIL).

To speak to someone in the Housing Renewal Team please call: **01495 742638**



I feel isolated where I live now

If you are looking for opportunities to meet new people then call **Be Independent**, who can provide information about services in Torfaen including social activities, handyperson services, care, health and money advice.

To see if Be Independent can help you call: **01495 742700**



Additional services

In addition to the services listed above, you may want to consider the following:



Care & Repair are a local charitable body that works to ensure that all older people have homes that are safe, secure and appropriate to their needs. They can help older homeowners and private tenants to repair, adapt and maintain their homes. They will visit you at home to discuss any repairs or adaptations you require, the possible solutions, likely costs and sources of funding.

To speak to someone about their services please call: **01495 745948** or visit their website at www.melinhomes.co.uk/care-repair



NEST

Nest is a Welsh Government scheme working to make Welsh homes warmer and more energy-efficient. If you're worried about the cost of heating your home, you can call **0808 808 2244** free and speak to an advisor.

You may be eligible for home improvements at no cost. More information is available at www.nestwales.org.uk



Citizens Advice Torfaen are specialists in debt, benefits, housing and employment issues, as well as providing advice on a wide range of subjects including family law and consumer issues. They can help you with official letters, complaints and redress. In addition, they have a dedicated officer who can provide assistance with energy

efficiency. You can drop in 10am - 3.30am weekdays in Cwmbran, Pontypool, and Blaenavon. More details at www.torfaencab.org.uk or www.citizensadvice.org.uk



Age Connects – *“We aim to reduce poverty, loneliness and isolation by providing information, activities and increasing independence of the service user.”*

To speak to someone about the services available call: **01495 769264**



What type of property do you want to live in?

70% of the people who responded to the consultation indicated that they would like to live in a bungalow. However, less than **6.5%** of the social housing properties in Torfaen are bungalows.

The following table provides a breakdown of where these bungalows are currently located and how many have been let to applicants in the last 5 years.

Ward	Number of Bungalow	Lets since 2010	Total properties
Abersychan	80	29	924
Blaenavon	25	5	737
Brynwern	11	4	235
Coed Eva	17	3	193
Croesyceiliog North	32	6	286
Croesyceiliog South	13	10	164
Cwmynischoy	0	0	140
Fairwater	40	20	562
Greenmeadow	52	22	456
Llantarnam	37	4	598
Llanyrafon North	11	7	154
Llanyrafon South	0	0	58
New Inn	39	3	352
Panteg	60	7	406
Pontnewydd	52	5	953
Pontnewynydd	0	0	77
Pontypool	2	0	198
Snatchwood	4	2	332
St. Cadocs and Penygarn	0	0	226
St. Dials	15	3	740
Trevethin	43	10	725
Two Locks	44	7	576
Upper Cwmbran	54	12	854
Wainfelin	12	0	112
Total	643	159	10058

This table highlights that the likelihood of acquiring a bungalow in Torfaen is very low, so if you require a move more quickly, you may need to consider alternative housing types.



Waiting Time Calculator

If you are interested in finding out how long it may take to access a property in Torfaen, you can also use the Waiting Time Calculator on the **Torfaen Homes** website.

The calculator provides an approximate timescale for accessing housing, depending on your band, registration date, the area you wish to live and the property size you require.



Torfaen Council are currently working with its partners to explore options for further assisting homeowners who wish to access social housing.

If you are interested in receiving updates about any potential schemes please ring **01495 742403** and speak to a housing officer.

In addition to the information provided in this booklet, you will also find a range of services on our dedicated housing website **Torfaen Homes**.

www.torfaenhomes.co.uk



Torfaen Homes