



Video One - Introduction and what do Home Point do?

Hello, I want to talk to you today using a number of short video guides, which will tell you about all of the Home Point services.

In this first video I will quite simply give you an overview about Home Point and what we do.

Home Point is an agency that was set up in partnership between Herefordshire Council and the largest local Housing Associations in the County. Our aim is to improve the way that YOU and other people can access affordable housing in this County.

So what do Home Point Do? Home Point is quite simply an agency, which looks after the Housing Waiting List AND advertises affordable homes in the County of Herefordshire.

If you would like to register and be able to apply for affordable properties, please watch the next video – How do I register with Home Point?

Thank you.

Video Two – How do I register with Home Point?

Hello, in this section, I will advise you how to register with Home Point so that you can apply for affordable Housing in Herefordshire.

Firstly you should contact Home Point for an application form and a brochure, which is called “How to apply for a home in Herefordshire.” Our contact details are on the web site or you can call into the offices for help.

To register, you simply fill in the application form and send it back to us. We would be very grateful if you could, carefully answer all of the questions in full and provide any supporting information as required as this will help speed up how quickly we can register you. Please remember if you are sending it by mail, to have the correct postage, as Home Point cannot collect underpaid mail.

If you have ANY difficulties filling in your application form, just ask for help, the Home Point team will be happy to assist you.

So what next? Once we have received your application form, The Home Point team will check to see if you are eligible to apply.

We will then assess the level of your housing need and issue you with a banding, we will talk about this in the next video.

Once this is done, a letter will normally be sent to you within 10 working days confirming your: -

- Banding,
- Your registration date,
- A guide to how many bedrooms you can apply for
- And most importantly your reference number

With your new reference number, you can now start to apply and bid for properties in Herefordshire.

In the next Video, we will discuss how Home Point assess and band your application.

Thank you.

Video Three – How does Home Point assess and band my application?

Hello, in this video, I will let you know, why Home Point band your application.

As so many people are applying for Housing in Herefordshire. It is important for Home Point to use a FAIR system, so that housing is given to applicants that are in the most urgent housing need.

The banding system is quite easy to understand and it helps Housing Associations decide who is in the most housing need and who will need the property.

So what are the Bands? Once Home Point have considered the information that you have provided on your application form, you will be placed in a relevant band.

There are four main bands. These are called: -

- Priority Status, which is given to emergency cases such as those families that are homeless
- The next highest band is the Gold banding
- Then Silver
- And finally the Bronze band.

For more information on what Band you might be, please read the Home Point brochure called 'How to apply for a home in Herefordshire' which can be found on the web site or at the Home Point offices.

If you would like to apply and bid for properties, please watch the next video – "How do I bid for properties through Home Point?"

Thank you.

Video Four – How do I bid for properties?

Hello, in this video, I will advise how you can apply and bid for the Home Point properties.

To find out what properties are available each week, YOU can look in several places: -

- You can either look In the Hereford Admag every Wednesday for the Home Point advert
- Or you can go to the Home Point or any of the Housing Association offices around the county, where the properties are displayed in their reception areas.
- Or you can log onto the Home Point web site

If you have mobility problems or difficulties accessing the property details, please contact the Home Point team and we may be able to send you a list of the available properties each week.

So, properties are advertised for a full 7 days from a Wednesday to the following Tuesday, which gives you a full 7 days to apply for the property you would like.

So how do you Bid, you can bid for **1** property each and every week. By: -

- Calling the automated 24 hour bidding line
- By sending a text message from your mobile phone
- Or by logging onto the Home Point web site
- You can also send in a coupon from the Admag advert
- Or you can ring or visit the Home Point offices or Housing Association offices to let them know which property you would like to bid for.
- Or you can visit the Info Shops around Herefordshire.

If you would like to know what happens with your bid, please watch the next video – Has your bid been successful?

Thank you.

Video Five – Has my bid been successful?

Hello, in this section I would like to advise you on how you will know if your bid for a property has been successful.

Once the property bidding cycle has ended on a Tuesday, a shortlist of everyone interested is created. The shortlist is then ranked according to the bands and waiting time of each of the applicants i.e. – Priority applicants will be at the top of the list, followed by gold applicants, then silver and then bronze applicants.

Once the Housing Association has checked the eligibility of the first applicant on the list and all is ok, they will contact that person to arrange a viewing and potentially offer the property.

In some circumstances the applicant may reject the property, in this instance, the Housing Association will offer to the next suitable applicant on the shortlist until the property is accepted.

Unfortunately due to the sheer numbers of people bidding for every property, the Home Point team cannot personally notify the unsuccessful applicants. However the results of the successful applicant's banding and waiting time are published in the Admag and on the Home Point web site.

Just as a point of reference for you, normally if the Housing Association has not contacted you within 10 days of the end of the bidding cycle it would usually mean the property has been offered to someone else.

For information on how long you can expect to wait before you are offered a property, please take a look at the next video.

Thank you.

Video Six – How long can I expect to wait before I am re-housed?

Hello, in this section, I will advise you how long you can expect to wait before you are re-housed.

With the increasing house prices and rental charges, it is increasingly difficult to find accommodation. Herefordshire is a rural county and has a very high and growing demand for affordable housing. Therefore, the waiting list held by Home Point usually has over **6000** applications for re-housing and only a handful of properties available each and every week.

With very little housing available, only a small proportion of Home Point applicants are likely to be re-housed.

To help you judge how long it might be before you are re-housed Home Point publishes the results of successful applications in the Admag advert and on their web site every week.

By comparing similar properties that you are interested in with the bandings and waiting times of the successful applicants you should get a good indication whether you are likely to be re-housed and how long you might have to wait.

If you feel that you may not be successful through Home Point, you may need to consider the other housing options available to you. To do this, please take a look at the next video.

Thank you.

Video Seven – What other Housing Options are there for me?

Hello, in this section, I will advise you how to explore other housing options that could be available to you in the County.

With only a small proportion of applicants likely to be re-housed with Home Point, it is important to explore all of your housing options.

When looking for alternative housing solutions, other options that you should consider might be: -

- Whether you could rent privately with some financial assistance
- Or could you improve the condition of your current property with extra help or adaptations.
- Could you swap your property with another Housing Association tenant through the Mutual Exchange Register.
- Or could you widen your areas of search and consider another town, which may improve your chances of being re-housed.
- Or could you buy your own home on the open market or through a low cost home ownership scheme?

If you answer yes to any of these questions, please contact the Home Point team and we can put you in touch with someone who can provide you with further help and assistance.

In addition to this, if you need help or advice about any other housing issues including: -

Legal, benefits or debt advice, please call the Home Point team and we will be happy to signpost you to an agency that may be able to help you

For information on what to do if you are homeless or to find out about Priority Status, please take a look at the next video.

Video Eight – What do I do if I think I am going to be homeless?

Hello, in this section I will advise you what you should do if you think that you might be homeless and who can help you.

If you think that you may be homeless, you should contact the Homelessness and Housing Advice team at Herefordshire Council as soon as possible to discuss your situation and seek advice. Their contact details can be found on the Home Point web site or you can call Herefordshire Council's main switchboard and ask to speak to the Homelessness team.

The Herefordshire Council Homelessness and Housing Advice team will aim to assist you with housing advice or they may carry out a homeless interview with you depending on your circumstances.

If this team find you homeless with a legal duty, they may issue you with a Priority Status for 16 weeks.

Please note in nearly all instances Priority Status is issued by the Homelessness a Housing Advice team and NOT Home Point.

If you do not have anywhere to stay tonight and may need emergency accommodation, please contact Herefordshire Council on 01432 26 00 00, I will say that number again.... 01432 26 00 00 and ask to speak to the Homelessness team. They will advise you if they are able to help you with accommodation.

Good luck and thank you for watching.