

**Your Ref:**

**Our Ref:**

**Please contact:** Housing Options or Neighbourhood Services

**INSERT TENANT NAME**

**INSERT ADDRESS**

Dated 10 January 2018

Dear **INSERT TENANTS**

## **Lincs Homefinder – Housing Register and Website**

I write to inform you that there are some changes proposed for Lincs Homefinder, our housing register for people accessing social housing or wanting to transfer:

### **1) The Website**

From experience, you will know that the current website [www.lincshomefinder.co.uk](http://www.lincshomefinder.co.uk) is unstable and often unavailable at the start of advertising cycles. Whilst we have taken many steps to resolve this we have seen no improvement, therefore, we have decided to change to another software provider. The new provider is the market leader with more than 200 councils working with them, and a stable website. We appreciate the patience of all our customers during this time and hope that our decision offers you some reassurance that we have taken your feedback very seriously. We anticipate the new system being in place by April 2018, in the meantime we will continue to provide information about the new system.

### **2) The Partnership**

Lincs Homefinder was launched in 2013, as a partnership between City of Lincoln Council, North Kesteven District Council, and West Lindsey District Council. As part of the move to the new system described above, West Lindsey District Council will no longer be part of Lincs Homefinder. This means that any applications registered by people living in West Lindsey or wanting to live in West Lindsey will have to apply to them direct. West Lindsey District Council will write to those applicants affected to explain what they need to do next.

Applicants registered to live in Lincoln or North Kesteven will need to set-up new accounts on the new system and will be reassessed in line with the new policy. There is no need to apply to both authorities separately. Please do not worry at this stage as we will ensure everyone is given clear details on how to do this over the next couple of months.

### **3) The Lettings Policy**

Lincs Homefinder has a Lettings Policy that sets out who can apply, how applications will be processed and prioritised, how vacancies will be advertised, how bids will be ranked and tenancies offered. We are also required to review our Allocations Policy in line with new legislation and therefore, we have considered what changes we need to make as a result of the Homelessness Reduction Act. We need to ensure that we are making best use of our limited housing stock and ensuring that we can secure accommodation for those who need it most.

We are consulting with all current applicants, tenants and key partners on our proposed changes, please let us know your views on our proposals.

- [www.lincoln.gov.uk/housing/council-tenants/applying-for-a-council-house/](http://www.lincoln.gov.uk/housing/council-tenants/applying-for-a-council-house/)
- [www.n-kesteven.gov.uk/residents/housing/looking-for-a-home/register-for-housing/](http://www.n-kesteven.gov.uk/residents/housing/looking-for-a-home/register-for-housing/)

A full version of the draft revised Policy and full details of the proposed changes can be found on each of the Council's websites. A summary of the key proposed changes is included. Printed copies of the proposed Policy will be available for viewing at both City Hall, Lincoln and District Council Offices, Sleaford. Open access computers are available at these offices for respondents to access the electronic feedback form

If you have any comments please ensure you let us know by no later than 28/02/2018, so they may be taken in to account.

Yours sincerely



Housing Services Manager

**This table shows the proposed changes to the Lincs Homefinder Lettings Policy.**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Current Policy</b>	<b>Proposed Policy</b>
Format	Throughout - general content	Removed some wording, including reference to West Lindsey and ACIS, and given additional clarification where required
Homelessness	Detailed in Banding and s2.18	New statutory duties are reflected in the bandings, and may be direct matched to vacancies
Deliberately worsened circumstances	Reduced priority by 1 band for 6 months	Reduced priority to Band 4 for 6 months
Property eligibility	Required some clarification	Separate eligibility tables for Lincoln and North Kesteven
Refusals	Allowed 3 refusals, before priority reduced	2 unreasonable refusals and priority may be reduced to Band 4
Local connection	When moving closer to family, applies to whole district area	Only applicable on bids that would bring households closer geographically
Advertising cycle	00.02 Wednesday to 12 noon Monday	00.02 Wednesday to midnight Monday (extended by 12hours)