

# HomeOption Users Survey

## Literal responses:

### Q1a Did you find HomeOption user guide easy to follow?

- Both - I find the bandings difficult to understand
- I had no information about it
- What is available is easy. Where can I get a complete set of rules and regulations
- It was easier to go onto the internet site
- Not good with computers
- Not familiar with PC
- But it wasn't explained at first that I had to get them EFDC said it would be sent.
- I am having your office bid for us
- Not at first but then I did

### Q2a Did you get enough information about the HomeOption scheme?

- Both
- How does it affect my situation and ability to bid if I now live in a temporary accommodation
- Some idea of how long we'd be waiting for a home.
- More information
- I research the facts
- What does not in first 20 mean etc
- I would have liked the welcome pack
- If you explained everything in more detail
- More pictures of properties
- I don't know how the coupon works. I live in a 2 bed with 4 children
- I didn't really understand it straight away
- Would be better if a picture is attached to the property being advertised in the home option magazine

### Q4a Was the website easy to use?

- Sometimes accessing the website at the local library is slow and sometimes difficult to access.
- No Information
- But it doesn't say if you've had a chance
- I don't have a computer
- No computer
- Would have liked an acknowledgement
- Not at first, instructions not very clear
- Would be easier to log in if your log in details were not in 2 formats ie date/month of birth
- Why can't you get the PDF file why logged in?
- My granddaughter used it for me.
- My mother did it for me as I don't have a computer
- The properties were sometimes hard to find
- On occasion appears may not be any properties available but no explanations to indicate if this is the case. 'Cycle' dates unclear and appear random.
- Had to scroll down at length, other authorities before I got to Epping Council;
- No not on website
- Slow to lead up.
- No confirmation that my expression had gone through.
- Could not bring up information
- I could not quite understand this system
- But I can't download free sheet, I think it is my computer
- My grandchildren did it for me.

**Q5a Did the website give enough feedback on properties that had been let previously**

- I am in Band 5 and I don't understand why no-one is offered homes in this band.
- Its not too bad but I would like to see exactly where I came in the banding.
- More general information
- If a flat or maiaonette please say whether upstairs or down.
- I could not find my place in the bid
- If you are not in the first 20 it would be good to know whether you are 21 or 40 to see whether you ever move up the list.
- More info on available properties and banding
- Most of properties don't get updated quick, sometimes up to 5 weeks after closing
- Not bandings
- Knowing exactly where I came on the list for a property after bidding.
- Telling us how long that person's been on the waiting list for.
- How may get to view?
- View of the property and the inside.
- I would like to be informed sooner instead of having to wait for next freesheet.
- It shows how many people not their bandings. It shows banding the property is aimed at.
- Feedback is taking too long
- Status of application would be useful
- It's very frustrating as often I am in the top 11 or top 5 and don't know how long more I have to wait
- How far down the viewing list you are
- But why does the number of people expressing an interest differ to home option magazine?
- Specified the length
- Conflicts with feedback in free sheet
- Not really sure how it all works, but think this is down to my lack of PC experience
- Actual number you were on the list and date let
- It should give more detail on where you came on bids
- Exact number I had been ranked at.
- Date they registered and why I have not been successful
- When I could get information up
- But it does take a bit of time to give updates on let properties
- Where you are in the queue of people making expression
- But not specific enough about your bid or your position
- Need to show family size and whether they are originally from Epping and work here
- The results are not showing up very quick
- Some properties do not update for 4 or more weeks which leaves you waiting and hoping
- Size of bed rooms i.e. 3 bed- are they double or single
- I don't understand the banding etc and ranking
- But takes month + to find out who got the property
- No indication of bandings
- letting me know the band they let the property to
- Takes to long to show feedback and doesn't always have right amount showed interest
- Did not always say how many or the bandings

**Q7a Was it easy to express your interest by telephone?**

- No Info
- Website computer use only
- I done it wrong.
- The system could not recognise my password. I tried several times and gave up.
- Would like to know position in queue by telephone bidding
- Its easier and quicker to text
- Very confusing

- I only use the web site
- Website
- Its better on line
- It often says to call back it takes a long time to get through and didn't recognise my request
- Not always working
- Don't know not tried

**Q9a Was it easy to text your expression of interest?**

- No Info
- I don't know how to text property.
- Did not know about it
- Each time I have sent a text it has not been accepted. I appreciate the text sent back informing me of this.
- It is confusing by text because you don't get the feedback.
- It kept saying you have put wrong number in and text not successful

**Q11a Was it easy to express your interest by coupon?**

- No Coupon
- I phoned for more coupons and by post and got nothing.
- It's easier for me by phone.
- Took too long to get more coupons
- Coupon got lost
- Should be in every local library to make it easy to access website
- I haven't used it yet I use the website
- Not know how to use it

**Q14a Where else do you think we should display the freesheets?**

- We ordered ours
- Tysea Hill Shop please
- My home address is: Flat 9 Stag Heights, Buckhurst Hill
- Roydon
- N/A I have not tried
- At the front desk
- I could only get them from Debden or Loughton and I do not drive.
- More supermarkets in the area
- We have them delivered
- As I have severe back disability I found it very hard
- Loughton Library didn't know when the next freesheet would be delivered
- I live too far from the Town Hall due to arthritis. Have to rely on other people, too late to bid.
- I was hoping to get them posted to me
- Borough facilities eg leisure centres
- Libraries (including mobile ones). Post Offices and rural shops.
- Don't know as I don't live in the area
- No where available in E17
- Don't get freesheets. I just look on the website
- Paid £10 to have it sent to me
- Didn't know there was one
- In Waltham Forest Libraries
- Local newsagents
- None left
- Did not know
- Tesco's
- Paid to have them sent to me
- I haven't seen a free sheet yet maybe Debden Council Office would be helpful
- Have not used

- Library at reception desk EFDC
- Local newsagents
- Free sheet available on website
- EFDC at housing have to wait I get mine at Debden great service
- I don't know what freshet is?
- Never used it
- Due to May Bank Holiday the free sheet could not be collected when it was issued.
- Sometimes run out in Library
- Its easy to get but never has any free sheets
- I have them delivered by post
- Did not know about the free sheets, until now
- Post Office

**Q16a Did you find the freesheet easy to use?**

- No Info
- Not many pictures of said properties
- Often a long wait to obtain one
- Picture of property would be good on all adverts

**Q17a Did the freesheet give enough feedback on properties let previously?**

- Not sure
- maybe why people in lower bandings get places could be explained.
- It was the first issue
- As previously stated number always differ to website.
- Confusing
- Date of letting
- not enough information on properties let and to whom
- It would help to know that the property that you have expressed in was still on offer to someone else
- Please see attached sheet
- Was difficult to understand which each number represented

**Q21 Comments on HomeOption or suggestions for improvement:**

- I would like more information on my position of where I am on the list and maybe a timescale of how long in years/months band or rank. When it says not in first 20 its not a lot of information - people don't know where they stand.
- Tenants in Ongar should get first priority of properties in Ongar - not people elsewhere. I have been waiting nearly 2 years with 2 children in an extremely overcrowded environment and I think it is disgraceful.
- I don't seem to be able to get a chance for a property as the chances are so high I think there are so many in a higher banding. Women's Aid wrote to you on my behalf but it seems I have a long wait. I am under the doctor for bad nerves.
- Would be good to know where you come on the home option scheme.
- If only the website could show more details on the houses flats (photographs). Otherwise the scheme is fantastic.
- I think Home Option is a good way to get to see the properties and gives you more choice on the right properties.
- I think you need to look at how long people have been waiting then just what band they are.
- Obtained Freesheet by post
- So far this hasn't affected me in any way. I would like to have clear t&c explaining why I am not allowed to bid while in Norway House; how long for etc.
- The decision for some properties to be let can take quite a while considering newer properties have been let.
- Not enough properties advertised e.g. bungalows and properties for pets.
- How do you know if you are in with a chance of being offered that property.
- It is not a fair scheme. My life is at risk and I am trying to move out of my borough. I

am in band 5 that's all I will ever be despite my circumstances. There will never be a chance for me as the go to B1 and B3. It needs to be more fair.

- Properties which appear as shortlisting on the site for longer periods of time should be withdrawn.
- To send us who got the homes you had chosen but we did not get this time
- Not sure what properties I qualify for. Too many 60+
- People who have been on the list for years dont always get properties.
- It is a shame that people living out of the area always remain in band 5 even though they may be over 60 or have medical problems.
- Satisfied generally although have realised that anyone below Band 3 like myself has virtually no chance of being housed. Dissatisfied with the level of customer service.
- I think the point system should replace banding as it was fairer to applicants.
- Don't like the banding system as it seems unfair. Prefer points.
- Homes should be based on how long you have been on the list rather than bands.
- I work full time and only use Internet when I visit my daughter. Don't know where to get the fact sheet other than council offices.
- I ordered more coupons three times, twice by phone and once by post and got nothing. Please can you send me some more.
- We have found your staff very helpful and considerate. The forms are very good. We don't have a computer but my son does. The information is very good on the website.
- It would be useful to know what position you are in when bidding and how far up the list you are.
- More 2-bed properties
- Home Options letting scheme is very informative
- Would like to know what number in the queue I am when I ring for Home Option.
- Worried about coupons. Ticked the box requesting more and phones but they never come. Have tried getting the council/home option team on the phone to no avail. I have no computer
- HomeOption is fine for straightforward cases but cannot cater for people with higher needs such as dementia where early interview and assessment was needed (applied for Part 2 for mother-in-law, subsequently determined she required Part 3).
- Is it possible to sort lettings a bit quicker. Looking for ground floor accommodation.
- More Housing! Being told exactly where my application ranked. The likelihood of ever receiving a housing offer would be nice.
- It should say where you actually come in a bid or on the phone it should say your number so you would know if you had a chance or not.
- I would like information about where I stand within the context of getting housed with other people
- Very long waiting list for people with disability.
- Disagree with banding (D) and feels that disability has not been taken into account
- I think all bands should be given the chance to view a property not just bands 1 to 3 all the time.
- Banding is unfair I have a property that you will get back I think that people like me should be in a more priority band.
- I am in prison and can't give comments. Wife made expression of interest from outside (staying with family temporarily).
- Would like photos of all the properties to see what they look like from the outside.
- Show more photos of the homes which are available
- I know that I can never have the chance to live in one of these properties as I do not have enough points. This is why I do not bid any more.
- Find it helpful to see how far on the list I am when I have expressed an interest, but it only says between 11th and 20th place. It would be helpful to see exactly how far we are so we can roughly expect how long we can wait.
- Need to see sizes of rooms shown on the web, such as large or single, so far I am happy.
- Have been on the housing list for almost 3 years, my daughter will be 18 soon and we still don't have a home

- More info on feedback on the ranking position eg first 5 6th to 10th
- Just shocked that nobody from band 5 gets any housing!
- In band 4 with 2 children above ground level with no bath. No way of moving band as with the old scheme after each year you gained a point.
- Placing us in a band other than the one we are in (band 6) to acknowledge the fact we have been waiting for nearly 7 years.
- It would be good to occasionally allow only people on certain bands to apply to give people without priority a chance to be successful.
- We should be given an estimated waiting time for when we will get a property. Also as time goes by we should get higher priority. With this system I will never get a property/
- More info on the property, photo of property, not all ads have a photo
- Let us have a house! Please
- Home Option Scheme is very good but I feel disappointed that being in Band 4 I have no chance and therefore think I am wasting my time bidding. Other than that it is an excellent thing.
- I think since Home Option started properties are let more quickly and we are kept up to date of what is happening with our banding.
- Very good
- I am in band 4 and need a 3-4 bed property. There is not a lot of these to choose from. I did not know what time the bidding started which I found not easy to start bidding straight away.
- Giver better view of the property and a quicker answer to if you have it or not.
- We could not fault EFDC on Home Option. They are very efficient with speedy response to enquiries.
- I think Home Option is very useful and well laid out. I only wish I could qualify and will keep trying.
- I would like to know how close. 5 away or 15 away.
- How long do you have to wait on the list to get a property? I think it should be weekly.
- A photo of the property would be nice and more info on the houses/flats.
- The timescale given to allow a tenant to move from property to property or for a new tenant to take up their property could be extended.
- I don't think Home Options gives you enough choices and they only come out every 2-weeks.
- More magazines in the council offices. I always get there very early as they seem to have very little amounts
- I am living with my mother and sharing a bunk bed with my sister and a baby. I was told this system would be quicker but I have been bidding and I am getting no where near to getting a property of my own. I do not understand the point of the scheme.
- Home Option is a good idea but I feel I have gone backwards on the list for property
- I find it convenient that I can look on internet at properties because I don't live near any pick up point. Very pleased.
- The only thing I don't think is fair is that people who are entitled to 2 bedroom properties are allowed to bid on one bedrooms as it takes properties away from the likes of us.
- See Q7
- Would like inclusion of home swapping scheme
- The scheme overall is ok but i still find it unfair. That a new homeless person gets priority over those who are already housed so someone who has a flat and wants a house would not be considered as they are adequately housed as I have been a tenant 20 years.
- It would be an advantage to know how far up the list a person is to know if they are getting closer to the top. Also it would be nice to know how many points you have.
- I think the Home Option is very helpful for the people
- Make the website more easy to use and more photographs of properties available
- Think you should consider all bands feel band one will always have priority and is a waste of time if you are not on band one. What happens to those who are not on

- band one at least whether it was 5 or 10 year years you still stood a chance
- Very poor quality of print on website. Font was so fuzzy it was difficult to read. Would like info on maps/schools on advert rather than opening different window (website). Didn't know if when made expression of interest was it done correctly i.e. logged. Texts to alert me if properties suitable for me are available that week.
- Not sure if text were all considered not on bidding history as I am in band G think it is a waste of time never considered for any properties system unfair.
- Let properties to either bands its always band 1. We don't get a chance.
- It would be helpful if there was a small street map to see where exactly in the area the property is situated. The Up my street info not very useful
- More information on who and how the decisions to offer a property are made.
- I would like to know how long will it take for a person to get a place. How many points does a person need to get a flat.
- Not much option for band 4
- Needs to be a grid of the bands/length of time the person is expected to wait.
- The properties listed for me are not helpful i.e. 1,2,3, floor flats maisonettes with no lifts. I thought I'd be able to express an interest on properties I liked not ones that have been chosen for me. This needs to be improved very misleading. There are too many people bidding for same property which means it will take longer to house people.
- I feel that times when I have visited the website and go to express an interest on a property, some properties can not be viewed as there are no pictures on property.
- I am in band 3 and always express interest but am told I'm not in the top 20, but it does not specify where I am, am I close or in top 100, 200 etc, is quite annoying not having any idea.
- Quite disheartening to see most 3 bed properties let to Band 1. We are band 4 so have no chance of being re-housed. Get old single people out into 1 to 2 bed properties and free up larger homes. This would ease your housing problems.
- Because I have a high band and not that I will be hard for you to place me into a property but my situation with mental health issues, and the need for security about not being pushed here and there before I am placed into a suitable property for me. I feel that I am being left to rot in the private letting side, and my DLA money is just paying for the short comings.
- I do not feel it is fair for new residents to area to be on list. It may be easy to bid but highly unfair for people who have wasted years and lived here for years.
- Homeoption is very good but it seems like all properties go to people in Band 1. Makes me feel like I have no chance. Is it worthy my effort. I'm in Band 6
- To find out where I am in my band
- Would be nice to be able to go for more options with maybe the chance to say 1st choice and 2nd choice etc.
- I think the scheme is ok, but its a bit misleading to those in a higher band.
- Too early to comment only made one bid so far
- If you are in my band it seems that you will never be housed. Only bands 1 and 2 are catered for.
- Access to scheme is difficult, transport and computer, missed 7 chances to bid.
- I was not contacted when the house was on my band. After I made an interest in properties
- A little more information who got properties. Pictures of properties for letting would help make decision to apply
- How long does it normally take to house people. How long do you have to be on list before you get housed?
- I use the web site and find it very easy to navigate around. I can't think of anything that would improve the system.
- It would be useful to know how many are in front of you when bidding
- Its a very good scheme but it needs to be better because its take a long time to get a place.
- But would like to be moved a bit sooner with a garden for my child

- When you call for help or advice the person on one phone needs to be more helpful. I feel that we are getting less. Information than before nothing is specific to your application, you don't know where you stand.
- Pictures of properties were far too small on the web site or there were none at all, which I feel is very important to have
- With so few properties I feel it will be many years before I acquire a property maybe more information on where you are in the queue because it differs so much
- I feel I am not being considered. Length of time needs more consideration, one parent families need more consideration People who have strong connections with Epping not outsiders to be put first
- For the properties to be sent through the post free of charge
- It would help if there would be more pictures of properties more houses
- I do feel it should have stayed with the old way. I feel like I don't know what's happening or when I am going to be able to move.
- I noticed on the website that Chelmsford Council have days to view property. Perhaps this could be considered for housing tenants who are considered suitable for a property
- I have been on the register for six years now, and didn't get anywhere. I have bid on several properties and haven't even made it in to the top 20 each time. I can't see this system helping me I am in rented accommodation
- Is there a way that could improve on missing out whilst on holiday:
- I would be nice to know if my position is ever going to change i.e. will I move up a band the longer I am waiting.
- I do think the results should be shown a bit quicker seems to be taking quiet a long time
- More pictures of properties. Faster feedback on line
- Would like to know in feedback how many people are in a higher band than me or in same band, not just a number
- Being notified I was on a short list for consideration of a house I was delighted. However, having been told that the short list was 60/70 people I feel that a lot of people will be very disappointed with such a long short list.
- Need more lettings
- I have been on the transfer list for almost 2 years. I am fortunate that I have internet access to make expression of interest. I feel this would be my only chance to be successful as yet this has not happened phoning and coupons etc causes delay to bed.
- I think proposal that have been allocated should be listed. I use the PL for showing interest but all it says after is the number of people interest not if the place has been accepted
- Link to update info on line -check file on line. notify of any change
- Would like to see more photographs of properties
- Could the short listing process be a bit speedier sometimes this goes on for 12 to 13 weeks until outcome is issued on the website
- Have not been offered somewhere to live.
- A very user friendly and easy to use system
- I think you should only bid when it is your time to be re-housed because you are bidding on houses you haven't got a hope of being offered.
- You say we need 2 bed but I would prefer 3 bed as I have two daughters 21 yrs and 19yrs and on moving from a 4 bed house.
- A waste of time. I am in B4 and will never get a chance. Band 1 get all the time.
- Never get a chance in B4 a waste of time
- Satisfied for the moment
- I do not see point of this scheme as nothing seems to happen. It seems that there is always going to be someone in front of me with more points and I do not seem to get anywhere. I don't have any chance at all
- As I am aged 57 there are so many sheltered vacancies perhaps if the age was



lowered not on warden controlled, People of my age could bid for them and free up 1 bed accommodation for younger single people

- You are doing a fine job
- I need more information about the house or flat that I am bidding on. Please let me know if I am successful by letter.
- More pictures of properties would be helpful
- How long do you think it will be before accommodation will be allocated to me
- It seems to be a system that works quite well. Satisfied with it's easy access
- You should put the band which you let the property to each week so that I know what my chances are
- Would like to hear why not been chosen for a house or flat now and then when I nearly homeless
- Maybe the free sheet could be collected from the local shop Budgens Limes Farm as the housing once seems to be closed quite a bit
- People outside thee areas trying to move in a transfer have absolutely no chance
- It would be nice to know a rough time scale on how long it will take to be housed
- More properties to be shown on website to people out of bands not just in magazine i.e. bands for 2 beds also shown 3 beds
- A very fair system
- I need to move from Harlow as I am a victim of harassment and suffer with mental health. But I am still not classed as in need of homing in Epping
- In my seventh year on list. I do feel that not enough consideration is given to people who are born and bred within the district I am still in band 4
- Let people know were they can pick up more free sheet from P/O etc
- Nothing now I know how to use it. I find it easy and user friendly
- No
- Refer to Q2 and Q16

**Q23A Is English your first language? Other:**

- Thai
- Russian
- Polish
- Italian
- Turkish
- French
- Arabic
- Creole
- Polish
- Turkish
- Polish,
- Swahili
- Persian Farsi
- Polish

**Q25a Other impairment or disability**

- I have a phobia of closed in spaces
- I have chronic fatigue syndrome/ME
- Address: Miss J Abbott, 52 River Way, Loughton
- Address: 4 Holy Acre, Roydon, Essex CM19 5ER
- Treated for depression
- Back issues
- Heart problems
- Back leg and breathing problems.
- Chronic fatigue
- Multiple sclerosis.
- Airways disease
- Severe disabilities

- Kidney disability, MSK
- COPD
- Suffer with depression
- Distress of living in temporary accommodation
- Epilepsy
- Rely on crutches
- Please refer to my doctor's note High blood pressure, arthritis
- Asthma / Eczema