

Wigan H.O.L.D scheme (Home Ownership for Long Term Disability) **POLICY**

Introduction

Thankyou for expressing an interest in shared home ownership through the HOLD scheme.

Shared ownership is where the ownership of your house is shared, at an agreed proportion, between you and a Housing Association. Rent is charged by the Housing Association on their share.

This is a Wigan Council policy that tells you about the criteria on which a decision will be made about applications for the HOLD scheme.

Each HOLD scheme has a Housing Association partner. A Housing Association may have additional criteria that applicants have to satisfy. This policy relates to referrals for the HOLD scheme that the council will make to Housing Association partners.

Wigan Council does not provide funds for shared ownership.

The criteria

Applicants to the HOLD scheme must:

1. Be in need of housing which will better meet their needs. Shared ownership is not an option if someone wants to stay in the house they already live in.
2. Be in receipt of a qualifying benefit. At present these are Incapacity benefit, Income Support or JSA and you must have been receiving the benefit for a minimum of 13 weeks. People who are employed, or who intend to get paid employment, will need to continue to be in receipt of Income Support.
3. Have the capacity to sign, or make their mark on, legal financial documents relating to a mortgage OR have a court appointed deputy, in which case it must be agreed by the deputy and other key people (e.g Adult Services Social Worker), **prior** to applying for HOLD, that home ownership is in the best interests of the potential home owner.
4. Be aware that the financial commitment required is a long term one, in the same way as for anyone who enters into a financial arrangement such as

mortgage or lease. For this reason where the HOLD applicant is leaving home for the first time careful consideration needs to be given to whether home ownership is the right housing option. Where two or more people wish to live together this must be on the basis of a sound mutual relationship and not based on people being considered 'compatible' because they share similar labels or similar needs.

5. Have sufficient savings to pay the legal costs of buying your own home (approx £3,000) plus initial moving costs, redecoration, minor repairs, which can be up to £1,000

6. Have a sufficient support package in place, or agreed by Adult Services, so that he/she can then live in the property in which they own a share.

7. Know that the property they can purchase a share of, will be limited to the number of bedrooms they are deemed to NEED. For example one person living alone who needs overnight support, is limited to buying a property with a maximum of 2 bedrooms; one for themselves, one for a support worker. DWP and Housing Benefit will not cover mortgage interest payments for more bedrooms than the claimant is deemed to need.

Priority for the HOLD scheme will be given to:

- People at risk of homelessness
- People living with family at risk of breaking down
- People for whom it is otherwise difficult to find housing due to the lack of accessible social housing, for example ground floor level access property,
- People who can reduce their care and support package through having better housing.