



**Eligibility criteria  
process for  
Independent Living  
Schemes:**

# Introduction

We promote access into our Independent Living Schemes for older and vulnerable people, on a choice basis.

Before applying, applicants must have a proper understanding of what Independent Living Schemes offer and how they could meet their needs. This doesn't just include physical or medical needs, it could include other needs like:

- Companionship
- The peace of mind that help will be on hand if and when needed
- The security of living in a more supportive and safer environment
- A carer, who is often a spouse / partner, also being able to get support
- Wanting to move in ahead of a deterioration of a diagnosed health condition or be better prepared for their older age. Some applicants may wish to be considered for independent living before they have a specific or immediate support need. This approach is also supported.

To make sure the service is used appropriately, applicants need to be assessed. This is so that applicants aren't moving in purely on the basis of wanting a specific home without having any interest in the support service or other benefits that the schemes offer.

As part of this, the applicant:

- needs to understand the service so they can make an informed decision as to if they feel it'll help them retain their independence
- Should want the overall package of housing with support

The assessment arrangements are also in place to ensure that applicants can live in their own home and don't need extra support that can't be offered either directly or indirectly by the service. If extra support is needed, the assessor may recommend one of our Extra Care Schemes as a more suitable rehousing option.

## Eligibility criteria

The eligibility criteria for our Independent Living Schemes are set out below.

The associated assessment process will be fair, equitable, open and transparent. Applicants who'd like to be considered for an Independent Living Scheme must:

- be in housing need
- be considered vulnerable due to their:
  - age
  - health
  - welfare
  - support needs



- be receiving and engaging well with a package of care before any allocation being made, where such support is needed
- be able to manage within the scheme without being a risk to self or others
- not present a threat of physical violence, nuisance or anti-social behaviour to others within the scheme
- demonstrate conduct in current and previous tenancies / accommodation that doesn't conflict with the sustainability of the independent living community
- not have needs which are unsustainable for the service as it is provided at the time of application

## Allocations process

Eligibility will be established by the completion of a:

- Homesearch Application Form (housing needs)
- Independent Living Assessment (support needs)

General information about the applicant will be gathered through the Homesearch application form. Our Homesearch Team will also gather information about medical or special needs and make any necessary referrals.

## Independent Living Assessment

The Independent Living Assessment will take place with applicants who've expressed interest in an Independent Living Scheme. Support needs are dependent on the customer so some areas won't apply to everyone.

The assessment is done with the full involvement of the applicant and should be signed off by them. Carers and advocates, where appropriate, should also be involved.

Once the assessment and all relevant information has been gathered, the Senior Independent Living Officer (SILO) or Improvement and Engagement Partner (IEP) will then decide whether to or not to recommend an applicant for Independent Living accommodation based on the information provided by the applicant.

To ensure that this information is kept current, reassessments are done if six months pass before a home offer is made.

A reassessment may also be needed if an applicant's health, care or support needs change significantly before an offer is made.



# Eligibility

## Who is eligible?

- Applications are invited from people who suffer from depression and / or the effects of isolation and / or mental health problems
- Applicants for independent living who are in the early stages of dementia must still be able to establish relationships, function within a daily routine and have knowledge of their surroundings
- Applicants who have a learning disability must be able to cope within independent living without risk or disruption to others or themselves
- Couples are eligible to apply where one or both meet the criteria
- Applicants may currently live in a range of housing, including other Independent Living Schemes, rented or owner occupied accommodation. Whatever the applicant's specific needs, they must be able to cope within the setting of their 'own home', albeit with the help they need to maintain an independent life.
- Applicants must have an active Homesearch Application Form

## Who isn't eligible?

- Applicants who aren't of an age or vulnerability that demonstrates a particular need
- Applicants whose needs exceed that which can be reasonably met by the support provided by the service
- Applicants who have a level of physical or mental frailty which is likely to lead to violent or severely challenging behaviour or serious risk or disruption to others, or will require high levels of support and / or care
- Applicants who aren't interested in support or any of the other benefits that our independent living schemes can offer
- Applicants who have needs which the service can't sustainably accommodate

# Lettings Procedure

We invite applications / referrals for our Independent Living Schemes from a variety of sources including client application / enquiry, Social Services, relatives, carers, GPs and health professionals.

Our Homesearch Team co-ordinate the registration of a Homesearch application form.

Our Homesearch Team also co-ordinates any other relevant information if required, such as information from the Special Needs Panel and the Medical Assessment.



Applicants won't be considered for any vacancy until they have had an Independent Living Assessment and been recommended for independent living, as well as completing a Homesearch application form.

Our Independent Living Team will consider applications and decide if the applicant complies with the set eligibility criteria.

Our Independent Living Team will send the applicant a recommendation letter to advise if we support their application for an Independent Living accommodation. If the applicant hasn't been recommended for independent living accommodation, they'll receive a letter explaining the reasons for this decision.

## Appeals

The applicant can appeal against any decision made. Appeals will be considered by the Independent Living Manager who has been independent from the decision-making process.

If an applicant doesn't agree with the decision they must contact the Independent Living Manager within 20 days of the date of their decision letter, outlining the reason they disagree with the decision. Appeals can be made in writing to:

**Independent Living Manager, Merefield House, whistler Drive, Castleford WF10 5HX**

They can also be made by emailing [ilt@vicohomes.co.uk](mailto:ilt@vicohomes.co.uk) or calling the Independent Living Team on **01977 724449**

The Independent Living Manager will consider appeals taking into account information provided at the original assessment, any further information supplied by the applicant and any supporting information from other professionals, alongside any information available on our records.

They will respond in writing to the applicant to confirm the outcome of their appeal, within 28 working days of receipt of the appeal. This concludes the process and the decision is final.

Reassessment may be requested six months after the previous assessment, or if an applicant's health, care, or support needs change significantly.

