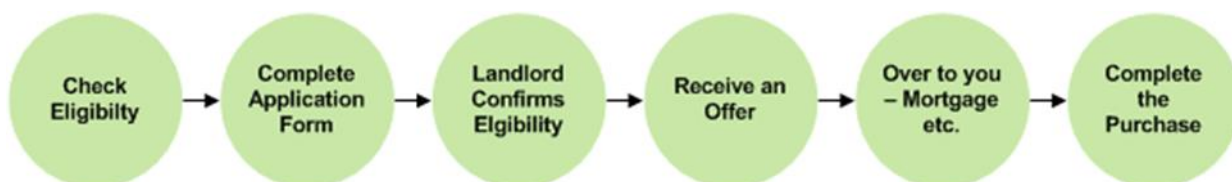


# Right to Buy Information Pack – **Please read this information before completing your application**

The Right to Buy scheme was introduced in 1980 and is designed to help council and housing association tenants to buy their home at a discount. Once you have completed an application form, you will need to return it, in person, to the Council Offices, at Watling House, along with original photo ID (acceptable forms of ID are; current passport, current driving licence or ID card) for all applicants, proof of previous tenancies and proof you are living at the property. We may request further documentary evidence and you may be invited to attend an interview at the Council Offices.

## The Process



## Property Exemptions

Certain types of property are exempt from Right to Buy:

- Elderly persons dwelling
- Dwelling houses for persons of pensionable age
- Dwellings for disabled persons
- Dwellings for people suffering from a mental disorder
- Property scheduled for demolition

## Eligibility of Tenants

Your current tenancy status must be secure in order to be eligible for the Right to Buy. Certain types of tenancies are not considered as secure for the purposes of Right to Buy, see Section 79 (2) and Schedule 1 amended of the Housing Act 1985 for a full list. Where a tenancy is in joint names, both tenants must be named

and sign the Right to Buy application form regardless of whether they wish to join in the purchase or not.

Any tenant who is subject to one of the following orders will not be allowed to join in the Right to Buy:

- Possession order with a fixed date - including Suspended Possession Order
- Ground 2 criminal nuisance order
- Right to Buy suspension order
- Bankruptcy order
- Demotion order

## Eligibility of Family Members

Certain family members have the right to join in a Right to Buy application, even if they are not tenants. In order for a family member to exercise their right to join in the Right to Buy they must satisfy all 3 of the following requirements:

- They must be; the spouse or civil partner of the tenant; or the tenant and that person live together as if they were husband and wife or civil partners, or the tenant's parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew or niece.
- They must live at the property as their only or principal home.
- They need to have been living at the property for 12 months immediately preceding the date of application.

**Family members are automatically excluded from the Right to Buy if they are subject to any of the Court Orders detailed in the 'Eligibility of Tenants' section.**

## The Qualifying Period

The tenant will need to have been a public sector tenant for a minimum of 3 years (doesn't have to be 3 years in a row).

## The Discount

The longer you have been a tenant, the bigger the discount you get off the market value of the property, up to a **maximum discount of £82,800.00**. Discount levels for houses and flats start at 3 years of eligible tenancy increasing after 5 years from the starting point of 35% for houses and 50% for a flat, up to the maximum of 70% for both.

### Examples of Discounts:

#### BUYING A HOUSE

**Discounts start at 35% for 3 to 5 years, at year 6 add 1% for each extra year of tenancy up to 70% or the cash maximum of £82,800**

Current house value	£120,000
Years as a tenant	10 years
Eligible discount	40%
Discount value	£48,000
Price you pay for house	£72,000

#### BUYING A FLAT

**Discounts start at 50% for 3 to 5 years, at year 6 add 2% for each extra year of tenancy up to 70% or the cash maximum of £82,800**

Current house value	£100,000
Years as a tenant	10 years
Eligible discount	60%
Discount value	£60,000
Price you pay for flat	£40,000



## Valuation of the Property

CBC will instruct an independent external valuer to value the property.

Only improvements made by you to the property will be disregarded in the valuation.

### Example of Valuations

Type of Property	Dunstable	Leighton Buzzard	Villages
1 Bed Flat	*£125,000	No Valuation Available	No Valuation Available
2 Bed House	*£180,000	*£210,000	*£240,000
3 Bed House	*£210,000	*£250,000	*£300,000

\* Valuations of Council Housing stock carried out between April 2016 and July 2016.

### Things to Consider

Once we have received your RTB application the Council will only carry out essential repairs and the property will be excluded from any planned maintenance projects, such as bathroom & kitchen replacements. Once the sale of the property is complete, you will be responsible for all repairs and maintenance.

You might find the following checklists useful in comparing costs as a homeowner and a tenant:

One off Costs	Homeowner	Tenant
Legal Fees	Yes	No
Stamp Duty	Yes	No
Mortgage Fees	Yes	No
Other Costs	Yes	No

Ongoing Costs	Homeowner	Tenant
Mortgage	Yes	No
Rent	No	Yes
Utility Bills	Yes	Yes
Insurance	Yes	Yes
Life Insurance	Yes	Yes
Major Repairs	Yes	No
Service Charge	If applicable	If applicable
Other Living Cost	Yes	Yes

Buying a home can be a long process and can take several months. Central Bedfordshire Council must process your application within certain timescales:

- Confirmation of Eligibility – up to 4 weeks to reply (8 weeks if you have been with CBC for less than 5 years)
- Send out an Offer Letter – 8 weeks for a house and 12 weeks for a flat

If CBC do not meet these timescales, or delay without reason, you could get a reduction in the sale price.

### Applying for a Reduction

- Fill in an 'Initial notice of delay' form (RTB6) and send it to CBC. We must either move the sale along within 1 month or send you a 'counter notice'. The counter notice will say that we

- have already replied or explained why they can't speed things up.
- If you don't get a response to your first notice within 1 month, you should complete an 'Operative notice of delay' form (RTB8) and send it to CBC. Once you have sent that, CBC may have to refund rent monies paid during the delay period – **you must continue to pay rent**. Any amount relevant to the delay period(s) will be deducted when the sale is completed.

To find out more about delay notices go to:

[www.righttobuy.communities.gov.uk/howtoapply/delays/](http://www.righttobuy.communities.gov.uk/howtoapply/delays/)

## Risks

Do not forget that if you fail to make repayments towards your mortgage there is a risk that your property will be repossessed.

## Useful Contacts

The government's '**Right to Buy Agent**' offers free and impartial advice. If you visit the website you can download an application form –

0300 123 0913

[www.communities.gov.uk/righttobuy](http://www.communities.gov.uk/righttobuy)

To speak to someone at Central Bedfordshire Council regarding Right to Buy or to request an application form please contact –

**Kim Perry – Housing Rents Officer**

0300 300 5541

[housingrentsteam@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:housingrentsteam@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

This is the link to the Right to Buy page on the CBC website

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/housing/right-to-buy/overview.aspx>