

How to bid



www.bedfordshirehomefinder.co.uk

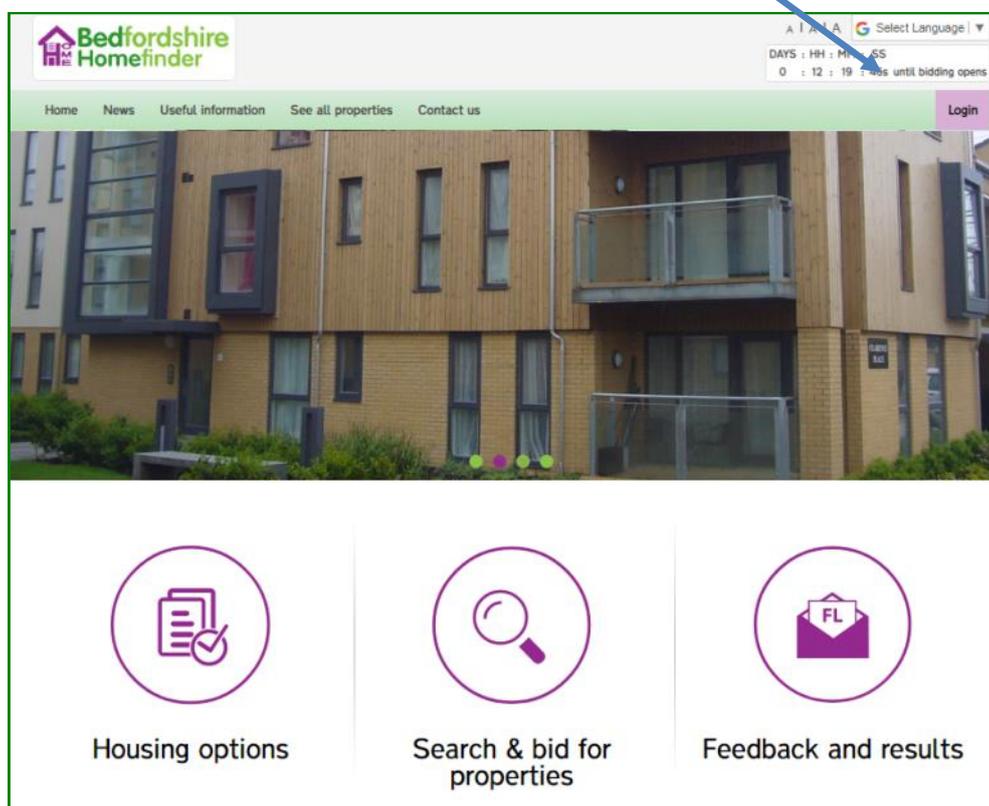
How to bid – guide to successful bidding

This guide gives you step by step instructions on how to place a bid. You will also find advice on how to increase your chances of bidding successfully.

Open up internet explorer and type www.bedfordshirehomefinder.co.uk into the address bar or simply enter Bedfordshire Homefinder into the Google search bar..

The **Home** page will look like this:

Click **Login**.



When the login box appears, enter your User ID and password (PIN).

Registered users login here

User ID

PIN

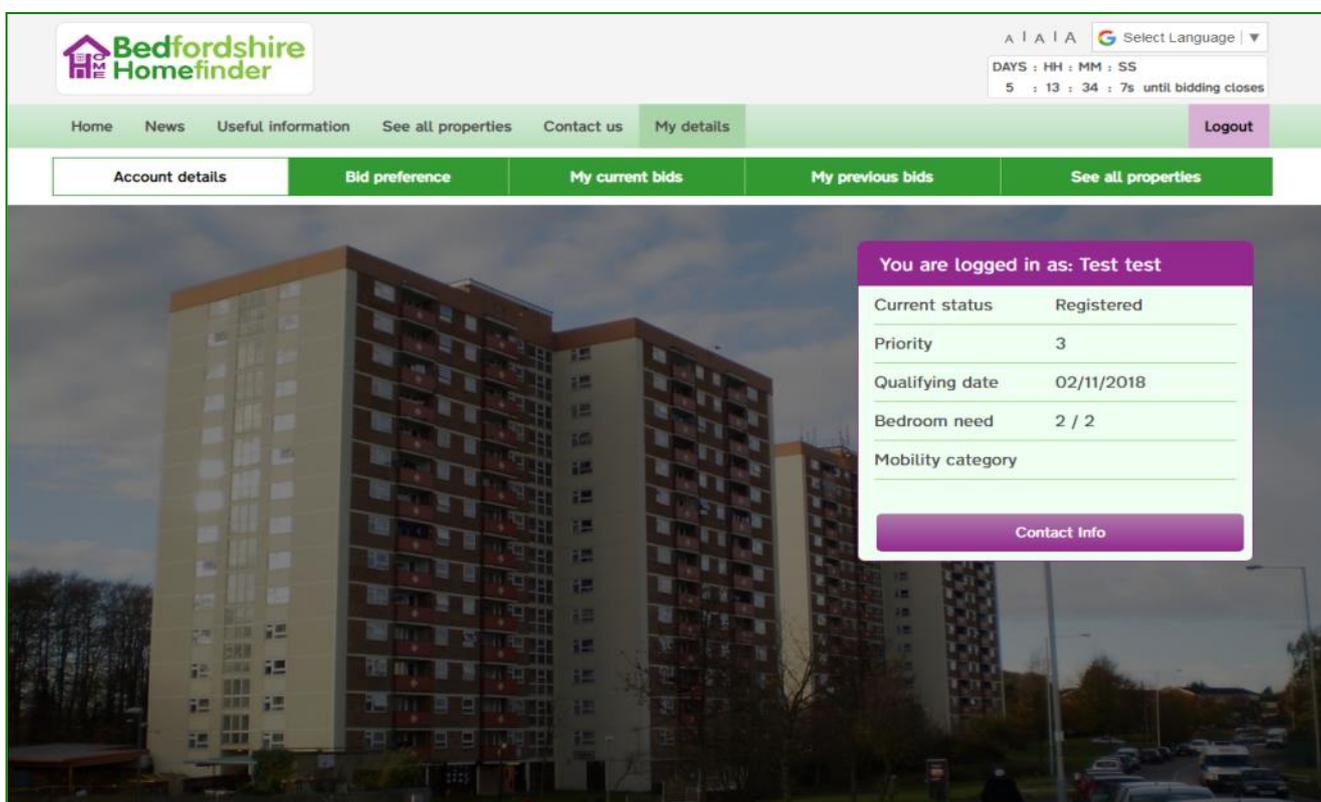
Sign In

The first screen you see will be a Message of the Day, giving you any important Information which could affect your bidding.

Click **Continue**

Your details will be displayed, including your priority on the housing register, your qualifying date and your bedroom entitlement. Click on **Contact Info** to check we have the right phone numbers and email if we need to contact you about a bid.

From this page you can **See all properties** being advertised, review your current and previous bids and put your current bids in order of preference:



When you choose **See all properties** tab you will see properties advertised in your council's area and which you are entitled to bid on. You can choose to see properties you don't qualify for as well by clicking on the button



You can refine your search by choosing the type of property you are looking for or the number of bedrooms you need, for example. See below for how this works:

Account details Bid preference My current bids My previous bids See all properties

Bedford editable content for property search page

Basic search

Bedrooms: 1 Area: Select area Property type: Bungalow

Tenure housing options: Accessible housing category: Search By advert: [Search]

Advanced search

Search Reset

Please note the system is only displaying the properties you can bid on. See all properties

There are 7 properties matching your criteria.

Central Bedfordshire
Advert No: 620747 | Beds: 1 | Type: Bungalow | Total Bids: 2 | My Bid Position
Cantilupe Close, Eaton Bray, LU6 2EA
Central Bedfordshire
More details

If you are looking for specific types of property such as Sheltered housing for older people, or a property with a garden for example, you can use **Advanced Search**.

Basic search

Bedrooms: All selected (10) Area: Select area Property type: Select property type (all)

Tenure housing options: Accessible housing category: Search By advert: [Search]

Advanced search

Available
 Ground floor
 Sheltered accommodation
 Parking
 Garden
 Accommodation Accessibility

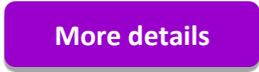
Search Reset

Please note the system is only displaying the properties you can bid on. See all properties

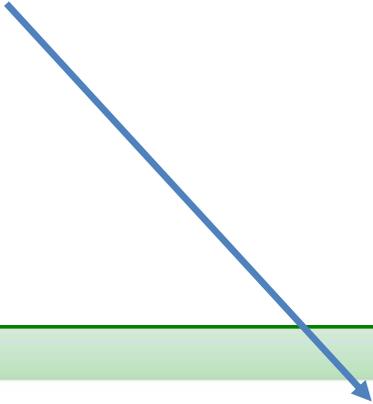
No matching properties.

Simply tick the boxes most relevant to you (but remember there may not always be available properties which match your criteria).

Once you have seen a property you are interested in, click on



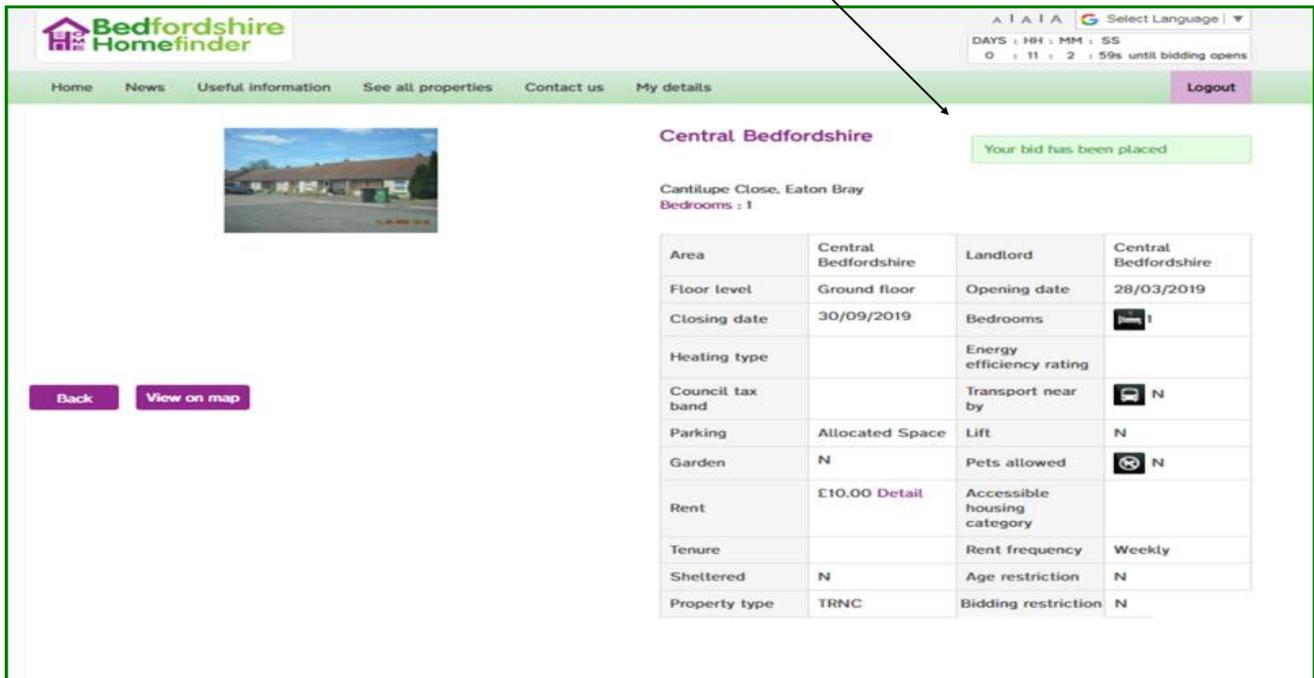
You will see the screen below giving you more information, including an option to view a map of the location. You should read the details carefully. Use **View on map** to check where the property is located. Whenever possible, you should go and visit the area to make sure you are happy with it. When you have looked at all the information, if you want to go ahead, click on



The screenshot shows a property listing page for "Central Bedfordshire". At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: Home, News, Useful information, See all properties, Contact us, My details, and a Logout button. Below the navigation bar, on the left, is a photograph of a row of houses. Below the photo are two buttons: "Back" and "View on map". To the right of the photo, the property name "Central Bedfordshire" is displayed in purple, followed by the address "Cantilupe Close, Eaton Bray" and "Bedrooms : 1". A purple "Place a bid" button is located in the top right corner of the property details section. Below this information is a table with property details.

Area	Central Bedfordshire	Landlord	Central Bedfordshire
Floor level	Ground floor	Opening date	28/03/2019
Closing date	30/09/2019	Bedrooms	1
Heating type		Energy efficiency rating	
Council tax band		Transport near by	N
Parking	N	Lift	N
Garden	N	Pets allowed	N
Accessible housing category		Tenure	
Rent frequency	Weekly	Sheltered	N
Age restriction	N	Bidding restriction	N ;

You will see a message that your bid has been placed:



If your bid has not been placed you will see a different message. If you have already used all your bids you will see 'BID LIMIT REACHED'. If you are trying to bid on a property that does not match your assessed needs you will see the message 'DOES NOT MATCH BEDROOM NEEDS'.

When you have finished placing your bids, go to **My current bids** (in the **See all properties** tab). This will show your bids, how many bids have been placed in total and your position on the bid list.

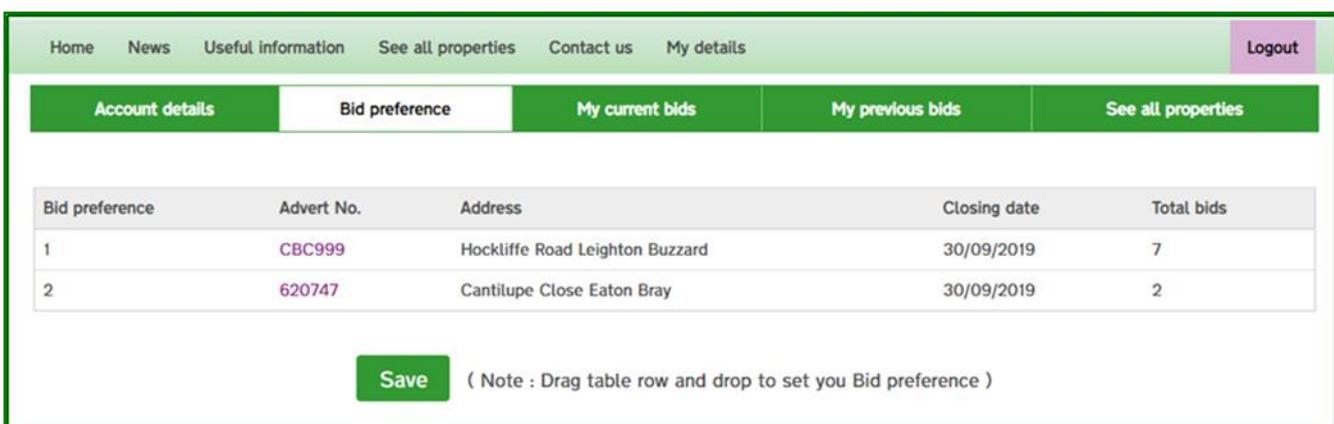
If you change your mind you can go back to **More details** and click on

Withdraw bid

Remember – you can place up to three bids. If you have placed more than one bid, go to **Bid preference** and drag and drop your bids into your preferred order.

Then click

Save



Bidding success – Top Tips!!

The most important advice to remember is that you should only bid on properties in areas you really want to live in! Sometimes properties are turned down by successful bidders because they are not in the right location for schools or transport, or because there is no parking nearby, or even because the customer just doesn't know or like the area. This is a waste of time for customers and for staff, and is a wasted bid.

Also, remember that if you refuse a property which the council has assessed as suitable for you, you could lose your priority on the housing register. If you have been accepted for rehousing because you are homeless, you will be expected to accept any offer of housing which is suitable and you may not get a second offer if you refuse a home. The Council may also advise you to use all your bids to increase your chances of rehousing and you should be sure to follow any advice they give you.

To make sure you bid for the right properties, ask yourself the following questions about any property you are thinking of bidding on:

Is it in the right area? Have I visited the area? Is it far from family and friends?

Are there local services which I really need nearby – schools, shops, a doctor's surgery? If not, **are there public transport services** I can use to get to the places I need if I don't drive?

Am I in the priority group for this property? Check the property information to see whether the advert gives preference to homeless applicants, transferring tenants or general housing register applicants. If you are not in the right group you will almost certainly not be high priority for the property.

Are there age restrictions on the property? Some flats and most bungalows have an age restriction on them (although younger people with an assessed medical need for ground floor accommodation may be considered for bungalows). If you don't meet the criteria for the property it will not be offered to you.

Have I checked all the property information? Does it have a garden, nearby parking, access for someone with a disability? What is the heating type? Can you have pets? If it's an upper floor flat, is there a lift?

Can I afford the rent? The rents can vary, depending on the area, the landlord and whether they are traditional 'social' rents or the newer 'affordable' rents (built under the government's new funding rules since 2011). Also, most landlords will expect you to pay up to four week's rent in advance. **If you are not able to pay this, you may lose the property even after it has been offered to you.**

Use your bids wisely

- ◆ **Don't waste bids** on properties you wouldn't accept if they were offered to you! Or that you don't qualify for.
- ◆ **Take your time** deciding what to bid on – the scheme is not 'first come, first served' so you can place your bids at anytime while bidding is open up to one minute to midnight on the closing date. The order of the bidders list is set by priority on the register and time waiting so you won't lose out if you bid at the last minute.
- ◆ **Track your bids.** The website will tell you how many people have bid and where you are on the list (go to **My current bids**). If you are low on the list you can remove your bid and place it on something else you may be higher placed for. Remember that the property won't always go to the top bidder (perhaps they haven't placed their bids correctly, or they may refuse an offer) so if you are in the top five or six bidders it may be worth keeping your bid on, especially if it is somewhere you really want to live.
- ◆ **Be flexible.** Some areas and property types are very popular. If you can be flexible in your area and property choices you may improve your chances of successful rehousing.

After bidding closes

If you are successful, we aim to contact you within five days of the advert closing. You can go to the website to see whether the property has been offered to someone else. (Go to **My current bids** – properties offered to other applicants will be listed under the **On offer to others** tab). **Please don't contact us to find out if you have been successful** as we can't give you this information on request. We will contact you only if we are able to consider you for an offer.