

## 16 HN (CBL) 05 Inactive Users on DHC

### Description

The Service Lead – Housing Allocations and Temporary Accommodation should continue their plan to identify and resolve the inactive users on DHC.

Devon Home Choice (Housing Register) applicants are considered 'inactive' if they are not placing bids for advertised social housing vacancies. The aim of this action is for us to objectively consider whether the Devon Home Choice system is truly accessible for our community. This will require research with inactive applicants to understand their reasons for inactivity.

Intended Start date 13.10.16

Original Due Date 31.3.17

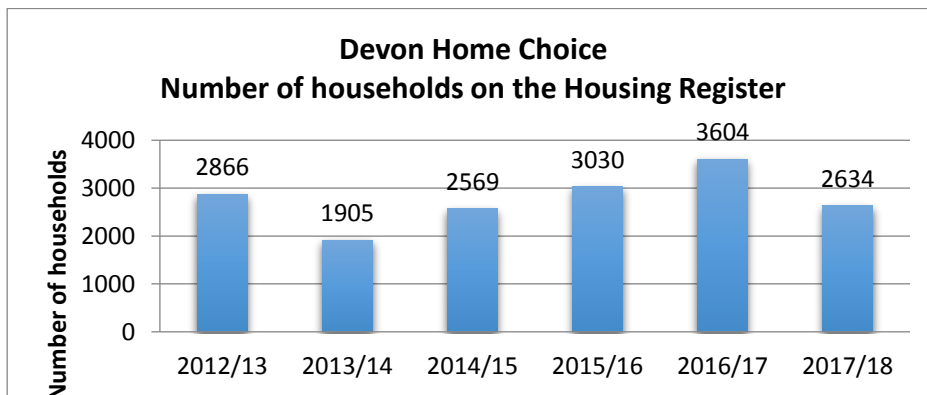
Current Due Date 30.6.18

**Anticipated timeline to completion - 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019.**

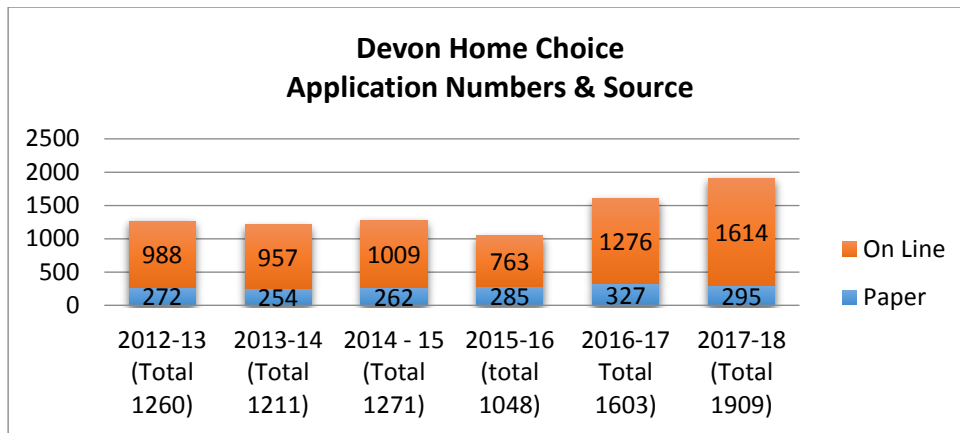
The Housing Register team do already address inactivity on a regular case by case basis. Automatic generated System reports identifies inactive users. The housing register team contact applicants to attempt resolution of inactivity. Assistance can include setting 'auto bidding', password resetting, explaining processes and any other circumstantial updates.

The intention was to complete a 'renewal' process of the whole housing register prior to consideration of inactive users. A separate action exists to monitor completion of the renewal process (15 HN (CBL) 01). The renewal process includes contact with the customer to ensure they wish to remain on the register and to ensure their application details are up to date. Completion of the renewal process would allow the review of inactive users to be undertaken with an up to date list of housing register applicants.

The Housing Register currently has 2080 registered applications (as at 30.6.18). The table below shows the number on the Housing Register over the last few years. The number on the register dropped significantly last year because the renewal process was being completed in a staged manner.



Last year 1909 new applications were registered. The number applying is on the increase, as can be seen from the table below.



On a daily basis, the Housing Register team process new applications, update customers change of circumstance notifications, update banding decisions, complete application reviews/renewals processes, monitors vacancies, adverts and letting decisions.

The service consists of 2 Housing Register Officers and a Service Lead for the Housing Register. The same Service Lead also has responsibility for the provision of Temporary Accommodation for homeless households.

### Update

Both the renewal process and the inactive review process have been delayed due to the following reasons:

- New IT system provider
  - The Devon Home Choice IT software provider was re-commissioned in 2015/16.
  - There were system issues which prevented a renewals process
  - System issues were resolved February 2017
  - NDC renewals process was completed during 2017/18
- Staff resources
 

There have been continuous changes to the Housing Register team resources. This has impacted on the team's ability to provide any service outside of daily service delivery priorities. Changes include:

  - Housing Register Officer 1:
    - The Housing Officer resigned August 2015
    - The post was filled with an Apprenticeship position
    - The Apprentice post holder was not appointed to a permanent position due to capability issues
    - A second Apprentice post holder was appointed and became a permanent post holder upon study completion.
    - This Officer then left the post having successfully secured another internal Housing post.
    - The post reverted to a non-Apprenticeship post
    - The Housing Register post holder commenced April 2018
  - Housing Register Officer 2:
    - September 2014 - The post holder reduced their hours by one day a week
    - November 2017 - The post holder left
    - Awaiting funding approval for a full time
    - New post holder commenced July 2018
  - Both Housing Register Officers are still in a period of training and learning.
  - Service Lead Priorities
 

The Service Lead has had to ensure the delivery of a Homelessness Temporary Accommodation service. There have been events and occasions that have required the Lead to prioritise Temporary Accommodation over Devon Home Choice, including:

    - Staff turnover and vacancies (similar to Housing Register turnover above).
    - The current position is that one of the two Temporary Accommodation Officers has secured another internal Housing post and we are about to request authority to fill the post.
    - an increase in the number of households requiring temporary accommodation (a 300% increase at one stage)
    - the need to procure more cost effective temporary accommodation property supply to counteract the detrimental financial impact of increased numbers needing temporary accommodation.

The need to address the cost effectiveness of NDC's Temporary Accommodation provision remains a high corporate priority.

This action point therefore remains a lower priority until we are able to dedicate time to the task.

A request to extend the completion of this action point has therefore been submitted.

**Members are asked to authorise extension of completion until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019.**