



Affordable Home Ownership Update

February 2023

Summary

We are changing the services we provide for Affordable Home Ownership.

This update includes information about:

- key dates
- work completed since our last update

Key dates

1st March 2023	It is no longer mandatory for applicants to be registered with a Help to Buy Agent. Providers no longer need to list homes for sale with a Help to Buy Agent.
1st March 2023	Capital Funding Guide updated with the above changes.
3 rd March 2023	Last date for manual demand data requests from a Help to Buy Agent. The self-service portals will remain open.
Mid March TBC	URLs for the new services will be shared with Providers and stakeholders.
20 th March 2023	New customers will no longer be able to register with a Help to Buy Agent.
24 th March 2023	New properties can no longer be listed with a Help to Buy Agent.
30 th March 2023	Last date for accessing demand data via self-service portals.
31 st March 2023	Customers and Providers will no longer be able to access the Help to Buy Agent Portals.
01 st April 2023	Customer databases will be deleted.



01st April 2023

New services go live and Help to Buy Agent websites redirected. GOV.UK content & CFG updated.

Progress

We have held 4 rounds of testing with customers for the Provider Search and Eligibility checker. Following feedback from users we have made changes.

We have held workshops with providers and Local Authorities to discuss the changes. Frequently asked questions from these have been added to the Q&A document.

Customer updates

Help to Buy Agent websites have messaging about the new services.

Customers registered with a Help to Buy Agent were informed in January that the existing services are closing and the new services will be in place from 1 April 2023. Reminder emails will be sent across in February and early March.

Customers who register after these emails will find out from the messaging already on the Agent websites, and will also be informed when their application is approved.

Audit updates

There will be a minor update to the current audit question on eligibility. This will not change what evidence is collected or checked at audit. The current question can be found on the [Compliance Audit checklist](#) (question 24 for CME or 22 for Strategic Partners).

We will remove the words "Following an initial eligibility assessment by a Help to Buy Agent" from the question. The remainder will stay as is. The Compliance Audit checklist will be updated in April.

Following Provider workshops, we recognise that Providers would like more detailed information about how to evidence affordability and eligibility for audit. Whilst these checks aren't changing as part of this work, we will update the Capital Funding Guide with more information on these areas in April 2023.



Provider search directory updates

We will be contacting Providers shortly to gather your information for the Provider Search database. We will send an initial email to the contacts the Help to Buy Agents hold. Providers should respond to confirm the most appropriate contact to complete the provider details form.

We will then contact this person to collect these details:

- Organisation name (this is the grant recipient as per the contract)
- Company name (this is the brand name you wish to show on the Provider Search)
- URL for where you want users to land on your website
- Telephone number (optional)
- Email
- Which schemes you offer (Shared Ownership, OPSO, HOLD, Rent to Buy)
- The local authority areas where you develop AHO homes.

Once we have the initial information, we will contact you quarterly to check if you want to make any changes (starting August 2023).

If you want to make changes between these updates, you can contact us to request this. We will confirm the email address for this shortly.

Contact

If you have any queries or would like to book time to discuss how your organisation can implement these changes, please email AHO.transformation@homesengland.gov.uk