

## **Introduction**

All Children Looked After (CLA) should be supported to join their 'Local Connection' Housing Needs Register (HNR) by the age of 16 and 3 months, or within 3 months of becoming looked after, if this occurs after their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. East Herts join at age 17.

The child's 'Local Connection' area is the district/borough council area within which they lived when they (last) became looked after.

All CLA should join their 'Local Connections' HNR and if they have been placed outside of their 'Local Connection' area, they should also join their 'Host Connection' area (if possible – not all areas will grant a connection as a 'Host' area). With the exception of Stevenage, all HNR applications (9 areas) in Hertfordshire require electronic applications. Where a CLA is joining a second ('Host') HNR, this may require a paper submission and should only be undertaken following liaison with the Senior Placements Officer in Brokerage Accommodation Team ([DutyBrokerage.Accommodation@Hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:DutyBrokerage.Accommodation@Hertfordshire.gov.uk)).

## **Process**

In principle all CLA should have access to the following documents and information before applying to join the HNR.

- Two forms of identification; this could include: a) care order documentation, b) a birth certificate, c) passport, d) proof of age card, e) National Insurance (NI) Number, f) immigration/asylum status documentation.
- Two proofs of residence in the area – a) HCC headed letter from social worker, b) bank/savings account and/or an c) official letter / student card with address details.
- A supporting letter from the Senior Placements Officer (Brokerage Accommodation) must accompany the application or be sent immediately following the HNR application.

If the CLA does not have all of these forms of documentation, they should still submit an HNR application. If the CLA does not have a NI number a hypothetical number should be used 'AA 01 01 01 A'. Within the 'Additional Information' box they should explain that they are a CLA and that a hypothetical NI number has been used and also that supporting documentation will be sent shortly and a timescale given for the submission of the actual NI number and documents. The application details and the identity/proof of address Information should be sent to the Senior Placements Officer (Brokerage Accommodation: [DutyBrokerage.Accommodation@Hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:DutyBrokerage.Accommodation@Hertfordshire.gov.uk)) who can note the HNR application and submit the CLA status supporting letter.

All original documents should be submitted to the Senior Placements Officer (Brokerage Accommodation) who can verify their validity and authorise copies which can be sent to housing. Once the application is lodged, all information should be added to the child's case record via the LCS identification section housing application tab.

Within the 'Additional Information' box the applicant should request that all correspondence is also sent to the social worker/personal adviser/foster carer/residential worker and copied to [HousingNeedsRegister@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:HousingNeedsRegister@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

Some authorities will send a HNR renewal to the applicant each year, the complexity of the re-registration process varies across the different housing authorities, but must be completed otherwise the applicant will be removed from the HNR.

Where a case is to be made that the CLA has developed a 'Local Connection' in their 'host' area, the discussion with the 'host' area should be directed through the Senior Placements Officer (Brokerage Accommodation) and must commence immediately following the CLA's 16<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Housing Needs Register – Application Process**

