

From: David Gibbens (EHN) [mailto:david@ehnetwork.org.uk]
Sent: 27 April 2011 19:08
To: 'AHPFAQ'
Cc: 'Gera Drymer'; 'Darryl Lawrence'
Subject: RE: Affordable Homes Programme question

Dear Pacian

Thanks for your reply. In addition to the quotation embedded in my original email, you have produced further documentation that suggests that further bidding round would be held: *We then intend to seek offers for the remaining funding available (after any allocations made for early delivery) for empty homes based on that further guidance.*"

Returning to the sentence I quoted: it says there will be further opportunities for empty homes proposals to be considered given that the identified funding is mainly available from 2012/13

The only thing that can be considered to be "a proposal" in the current context is the Expressions of Interest. But if the current EoI's are "proposals" then the reference to "further proposals" can only be construed as meaning an opportunity to put in further EoI's down the line, or something akin to them.

The HCA could easily have made it clear if an EoI by May 3rd was a prerequisite for participation in a subsequent bidding round or to qualify for submitting "further proposals" but it has not done so. Many providers will be familiar with the previous annual bidding rounds and continuous market engagement and would have had no reason to assume—given what has been quoted above—that it would be necessary to produce a single sheet EOI for a programme for which there is no guidance and which is flagged in various ways as separate from the main programme to which the 3rd May deadline applies.

I will alert our members to this criterion but I expect we will pursue this and seek a rethink (as there is no impediment that I can see to opening up any subsequent bidding round to all-comers).

Regards

David Gibbens
(Policy and Support)
Empty Homes Network
(previously the National Association of Empty Property Practitioners)
PO Box 703, Exeter, EX1 9PX
Tel.: 0844 736 5 736
Web: www.ehnetwork.org.uk

From: AHPFAQ [mailto:AHPFAQ@hca.gsx.gov.uk]
Sent: 27 April 2011 17:39
To: David Gibbens (EHN)
Cc: Gera Drymer; Darryl Lawrence
Subject: RE: Affordable Homes Programme question

Dear David,

Thanks for your email. We discussed via telephone. The deadline for expressions of interest is the 3rd of May. You asked if there would be further opportunities for organisations to submit a EOI / bids. I said not and that it would be helpful if you would circulate that message to your members. I did say that we've already had a number of EOIs from various organisations, including LAs and others for EH in advance of our deadline. I also said that we'd sought to clarify for the benefit of EH providers that our requirement for EOIs was for these to have been submitted by 3rd of May via our FAQs and also through responses which our lead on EH, Gera Drymer had circulated separately via various umbrella / representative organisations.

For ease of reference I've abstracted below the EH FAQ which we published 11 March 2011.

Regards
Pacian

Empty Homes

Can you please provide more detail about how we can submit an offer for Empty Homes and how the programme will work in practice?

As part of the offer template we are asking providers to indicate how many empty homes they are able to bring back into use before April 2012 and what funding they would require. Proposals should be to bring empty homes back into use either as permanent or temporary affordable housing, using the options outlined in the rest of the Framework. As with other HCA funding, we will expect providers to bring in other resources wherever possible – this might include borrowing capacity or revenue through the New Homes Bonus. The HCA has no revenue funding available for bringing empty homes back into use. Offers will be assessed and where those provide good value for money and meet local priorities, we will consider agreeing an allocation for early delivery of agreed schemes. However, we do not anticipate that all of the funding for Empty Homes will be allocated following initial offers.

There is an invitation to register an “expression of interest” in the “Scheme” in the Empty Property table on the “Other Products” page, but there seems to be no space/box in which to actually register such an interest. How should a provider, that simply wants to register an interest in the “Scheme”, proceed in doing so? .The Framework refers to expressions of interest being “subject to further information being available”. When is this information likely to appear?

We are inviting all organisations, including community and self-help groups, interested in bringing empty homes back into use to send us Expressions of Interest by 3rd May 2011 in the form of an outline of potential proposals (1 A4 page) or, if part of a larger programme offer, by filling in the standard offer template available at [Standard offer template \(excel, 363kb\)](#). Guidance on how to complete the standard offer template is available at [Guidance on completing the standard offer template \(PDF, 110kb\)](#) .

We will issue further guidance following the analysis of Expressions of Interest, which we will use to inform our views on how the full Empty Homes programme might best be delivered. We then intend to seek offers for the remaining funding available (after any allocations made for early delivery) for empty homes based on that further guidance.

We are clear that community and self-help groups may not necessarily have cross-subsidy or borrowing capacity. We would like to hear from these groups on how they could bring empty homes back into use with the HCA funding and we are interested in hearing about the potential for housing associations, local authorities and other groups to work together in partnership, even where these have yet to be fully formed.

Providers who have empty homes schemes ready to deliver before April 2012 should submit their offers via the standard offer template above.

From: David Gibbens (EHN) [mailto:david@ehnetwork.org.uk]
Sent: 27 April 2011 17:16
To: AHPFAQ
Cc: Gera Drymer; Darryl Lawrence
Subject: RE: Affordable Homes Programme question
Importance: High

Sorry but with all due respect that doesn't fully address the question asked. It has been made clear that Expressions of Interest would be used to shape a programme for Empty Homes. This can reasonably be interpreted as meaning that the **kinds of opportunities** that the Empty Homes programme would contain would be shaped by the proposals contained in the Expressions of Interest. It would also be reasonable to assume that once the **kinds of opportunities** have been established, with suitable criteria etc attached, then a further opportunity would be given to potential providers to bid for funding now that the framework for Empty Homes programme was clear. For example the Framework document says "there will be further opportunities for empty homes proposals to be considered given that the identified funding is mainly available from 2012/13."

We want to know, specifically, whether organisations that have not submitted expressions of interest prior to May 3rd 2011 will be given an opportunity to bid for money from the £100million once the Empty Homes Programme has been properly shaped.

Please let me know immediately.

Thank you.

David Gibbens
(Policy and Support)
Empty Homes Network
(previously the National Association of Empty Property Practitioners)
PO Box 703, Exeter, EX1 9PX
Tel.: 0844 736 5 736
Web: www.ehnetwork.org.uk

From: AHPFAQ [mailto:AHPFAQ@hca.gsx.gov.uk]
Sent: 27 April 2011 15:56
To: David Gibbens (EHN)
Cc: Gera Drymer
Subject: RE: Affordable Homes Programme question

Dear David,

Thanks for your query. We've asked all providers to submit an EOI to deliver EH for 2012-15 to AHPOffers@hca.gsx.gov.uk by 5pm 3 May 2011. We'll then follow up these EOIs once the main bid round has been assessed.

Regards
AHPFAQ Team

From: David Gibbens (EHN) [mailto:david@ehnetwork.org.uk]
Sent: 27 April 2011 09:48
To: AHPFAQ
Cc: Gera Drymer
Subject: Affordable Homes Programme question
Importance: High

One of our members recently asked whether an organisation needed to have submitted an Expression of Interest in order to be eligible to bid for funding once the Empty Homes Programme has been shaped. Could you clarify this please, late in the day though it is.
Thank you.

David Gibbens
(Policy and Support)
Empty Homes Network
(previously the National Association of Empty Property Practitioners)
PO Box 703, Exeter, EX1 9PX
Tel.: 0844 736 5 736
Web: www.ehnetwork.org.uk