A survey was undertaken of households who had updated their application using the new Change of Circumstances (CoC) form.

687 households responded to the survey.

The main findings, and what will be done as a result, are set out below.

Survey feedback
Most people (82%) felt that it was either very easy, easy or fine to update their application. However, nearly 1 in 5 people reported that they found it either difficult (10%) or very difficult (8%) to do this.

People were asked what would make this easier for them. The feedback included:

- The time it took for applications to be reviewed and re-activated
- Not being able to bid whilst their application was being reviewed
- Having to update their application and be suspended from bidding for what was considered to be a minor change (e.g. to surname)
- The lack of information about how long it would take for applications to be assessed

Response
We are aware of the issues that the backlog of applications waiting to be assessed has caused. It is recognised that this is not satisfactory and reducing the backlog has been identified as a priority. From a backlog of 3,400 applications and 16 weeks to assess applications in April, this work has reduced the backlog to 1,100 applications and 5 weeks to assess applications as of 19 September.

A notice has been added to the Homefinder Somerset website to make applicants aware of the backlog and the date of applications that are currently being worked. This notice is updated at least once a week.

It would not be appropriate to enable households to bid whilst changes to their application are being reviewed as these could affect the size of home they need and/ or their priority.

There are questions that applicants can change without staff having to review the changes. However, we will review the application form to assess whether there are any other questions that could be amended without the need to staff to assess the changes.