



**Key Workers and other priority first time buyers are given a helping hand on to the property ladder**

12 March 2008

**MyChoiceHomeBuy** backed by the government and announced in today's Budget is being launched today by the Housing Corporation to help key workers and other priority first time buyers buy their own home.

**MyChoiceHomeBuy**, part of the government's Open Market HomeBuy initiative, offers key workers and other first time buyers access to an equity loan of up to 50% of the property's value.

**MyChoiceHomeBuy** enables applicants to apply for a mortgage with any lender they choose. The scheme would provide them with up to 50% of the value of the property as an equity loan. The remainder would be funded through a conventional mortgage with a Financial Services Authority regulated lender. They would pay a low rate of 1.75% per annum on the equity loan funded by Lea Valley Homes, part of the Aldwyck Housing Group, who are acting as equity loan providers. The rate the applicants pay on the standard mortgage would depend on the deal selected through the mortgage providers.

**MyChoiceHomeBuy** requires no deposit, but deposits are allowed. When the property is sold the equity loan provider will be entitled to a share of any increase in the value of the property.

Although mortgage rates are still low, rising house prices and the decline of first time buyer-specific mortgages has put pressure on people buying their first home – particularly key workers.

This means a household with an income of £32,000 could afford a house of £200,000, paying £760 each month – as opposed to £1,350 without the scheme.

Rose Crossman, Sales & Marketing Manager of Lea Valley Homes said:  
“Lea Valley Homes has much experience in delivering affordable home ownership to key workers and other priority first time buyers, and **MyChoiceHomeBuy** is a result of this.

"We are pleased to be bringing a product to the market, to enable first-time buyers to purchase a home of their choice, with a mortgage lender of their choice, at an affordable price and in a location that suits their family and working needs."

**MyChoiceHomeBuy** allows the buyer to choose any property on the open market within their price range. It is available to key public sector workers, social tenants or those on a council waiting list and other priority first time buyers.

Applicants will need to contact Lea Valley Homes on:

T 01582 869440

F 01582 869159

E [leavalleyhomes@aldwyck.co.uk](mailto:leavalleyhomes@aldwyck.co.uk)

**[www.leavalleyhomes.co.uk](http://www.leavalleyhomes.co.uk)**

### **Notes to Editors**

- Lea Valley Homes, part of the Aldwyck Housing Group, is the HomeBuy Agent for Hertfordshire providing a 'one-stop-shop' and point of contact for affordable housing options in Hertfordshire and handling the entire application process for the HomeBuy products.

- **MyChoiceHomeBuy** is an equity loan product developed by the CHASE Consortium which is made up of eight housing associations who are Aldwyck Housing Association Ltd, Bedfordshire Pilgrim Housing Association Ltd, Catalyst Housing Group, Metropolitan Housing Trust Ltd, Moat Homes Ltd, Swaythling Housing Society Ltd, Thames Valley Housing Association Ltd and Tower Homes Ltd.

- The following groups are eligible for **MyChoiceHomeBuy**:

***Social tenants and those on the housing register:*** tenants of councils and housing associations, and those who are on the housing register, waiting for a council or housing association home to rent.

***Key workers:*** those working in the public sector in health, education or community safety - such as teachers, nurses and police officers - in areas where high house prices are affecting recruitment and retention. If participants leave qualifying employment, they will have to repay the Government's assistance and remortgage to a standard mortgage.

***Priority first time buyers:*** households who can't afford to buy their own home, who have been identified as eligible for assistance by the Regional Housing Boards.

- Aldwyck Housing Group has over 8,500 properties across Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Cambridgeshire, and provides general needs rented property, affordable homes to buy, key worker housing, supported housing for the young, elderly and care for people with specific needs.

