

Contents

| | | |
|----|---|----|
| 1 | Introduction | 2 |
| 2 | How To Apply? | 2 |
| 3 | Who Can Join The Housing Register? | 3 |
| 4 | Who Will Not Be Allowed To Join The Housing Register? | 4 |
| 5 | Who Can Be Included On An Application? | 9 |
| 6 | Who Gets Priority? | 11 |
| 7 | Priority Awards For All Tenures | 15 |
| 8 | Priority Awards For Existing Social Tenants | 19 |
| 9 | Priority Awards For Individuals Left In A Council Home After A Tenancy Has Ended. | 21 |
| 10 | Priority Awards For Applicants Applying As Homeless. | 21 |
| 11 | Priority Awards For Applicants Living In Supported Housing | 22 |
| 12 | Priority Awards For Other Applicants | 24 |
| 13 | Reasons Why Someone May Have Their Priority Lowered | 28 |
| 14 | What Size Property Will Be Offered? | 30 |
| 15 | Property Access Categories | 33 |
| 16 | Types Of Tenancies Offered | 34 |
| 17 | Finding A Home | 35 |
| 19 | Reasons Properties May Not Be Offered By Choice Based Lettings | 47 |
| 20 | Local Lettings Policies & Sensitive Lettings | 48 |
| 21 | The Annual Lettings Plan | 49 |
| 22 | Reviews, Appeals And Complaints | 50 |
| 23 | Discretionary Powers | 51 |
| 24 | Reviewing And Monitoring | 51 |
| 25 | Appendices | 53 |
| | Appendix 1: Definitions | 53 |
| | Appendix 2: Applications From Councillors, Council Employees & Their Families | 53 |
| | Appendix 3: Neighbourhood Moves Scheme | 55 |
| | Appendix 4: Income Threshold Calculations | 60 |

This policy does not set out the allocation rules for Sheltered Housing which will continue to be governed by 9.1 to 9.9 of the previous policy though references to the main allocation body will relate to the wording in this policy.

Throughout this document, we refer to people applying for social housing for rent as “applicants”.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 Social housing is scarce and giving a home to one family or individual today will mean others have to wait longer. There therefore needs to be a fair way to decide who gets offered a home which everyone understands.
- 1.1.2 The law requires every Council to publish the rules it uses to decide on who gets Council and Housing Association homes. This is called a Housing Allocations Policy.

2 HOW TO APPLY?

2.1 Applicants’ Responsibilities, Data Sharing and Consent

- 2.1.1 When applying for housing, it is the applicant’s responsibility to:
 - Provide full and accurate details on all forms or correspondence.
 - Tell the Council immediately if their circumstances change in any way, for example, changes in their address, family details, medical conditions.
 - Respond promptly to all requests for information and attend verification appointments.
 - Make a decision on viewed properties within the timescale agreed with the landlord.
- 2.1.2 By making an application, applicants understand that information will be shared with partner Registered Providers together with other relevant organisations in order to complete or verify information or to prevent fraud or protect public funds in other ways.
- 2.1.3 Applicants also consent to the Council making enquiries of any relevant persons (including credit checking / referencing companies) to confirm that the information on the application form is correct or to add to the information given where this is necessary to complete an assessment of need or to consider suitability for housing.

2.2 Misrepresentation, fraud and false statements.

- 2.2.1 Haringey Council and its Partners are committed to prosecuting any applicant who deliberately misrepresents their circumstances or attempts to deceive or defraud the Council in order to secure the tenancy of a council or Registered Provider property to which they are not entitled.
- 2.2.2 The law imposes severe penalties (including substantial fines or imprisonment) where an offence is proved. If the applicant has gained a tenancy through misrepresentation or fraud, legal action will be taken to recover possession of the property and evict them.

2.3 False statements

- 2.3.1 Section 171(1) of the Housing Act 1996 makes it an offence for anyone, seeking an allocation of accommodation to:

- Knowingly or recklessly make a materially false statement or
- Knowingly withhold information which the authority has reasonably required them to give in connection with the exercise of those functions.

2.3.2 The circumstances in which an offence is committed could include:

- Any false information given on an application form for housing.
- Any false information given in response to subsequent review letters.
- Any false information given or submitted as part of a review.

2.3.3 Ground 5 in schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1985 (as amended by section 146 of the 1996 Housing Act) enables the Council to seek possession of a tenancy granted as a result of a false statement made by an applicant or a person acting on the instigation of the applicant.

2.4 Applying for a Council or Housing Association Secure/Assured tenancy

2.4.1 The Housing Register is frequently called the 'waiting list'.

2.4.2 The applicant will need to complete an Application Form to join the Housing Register which will ask about the applicant's household members, their housing need and current accommodation situation. This will help work out what size property and type of property needed and what level of priority they will be awarded.

2.4.3 The applicant will need to make sure that everything they put on the application is true and that that they let the Council know if there are any changes to their circumstances.

2.5 Verification of housing applications

2.5.1 Before offering an applicant the tenancy of social housing, the Council will need to verify what the applicant has said in their housing application. This may be taken at the time of the application or later but will be required before any offer of social housing if made even if documentation has already been provided previously.

2.5.2 Details of the verification process are set out in section 17.3.

3 **WHO CAN JOIN THE HOUSING REGISTER?**

3.1.1 Not everyone can join the Housing Register and applicants and members of their household may only be on one live application.

3.1.2 To join the Housing Register the applicant will usually need to meet **all** of the conditions below but there are exceptions:

- The applicant must be over 16 years old.
- The applicant must have a genuine need to move which meets the criteria for one of the Priorities set out in this policy – this is called a 'Housing Need'.
- The applicant must be free from any immigration controls.
- The applicant must not have caused any problems which would lead to the applicant being evicted if they were already a tenant. This includes things like having caused anti-social behaviour, damaged their home or if the applicant has not paid their rent.

3.1.3 In most cases the applicant will also need to have lived in Haringey for three years or be an existing Haringey Council Secure tenant – this is called a “local connection”.

3.1.4 If the applicant doesn’t meet some of these conditions, they may still be eligible so the applicant should read the “Who can join the Housing Register?” section at 3 below.

3.2 Joint applications

3.2.1 Joint applications can be made by couples who are married or in a civil partnership, or who are living as if they were.

3.2.2 For a joint application,

- The applicants need to be married, be civil partners or who have been living as such for 12 months.
- Both applicants have to qualify and meet the conditions on eligibility.
- Both applicants need to agree to being a joint tenant if an offer is made.

4 **WHO WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO JOIN THE HOUSING REGISTER?**

4.1.1 The Council has decided the following people do NOT qualify to join the Housing Register in their own name though this does not prevent them from being included on another person’s application:

- Applicants who have not lived in the Borough for a continuous period of 3 years before their application unless they are fleeing violence, moving for welfare reasons (see section 4.4.2).
- Applicants who are tenants, or joint tenants, of any other Local Authority/Council in the UK regardless of the type of tenure including those placed in temporary accommodation (but see 4.4.2 below).
- Applicants who have given false information to obtain or try to obtain a tenancy.
- Applicants who make (or offer) a payment to obtain or try to obtain a social housing tenancy.

Applicants who do not have a high need for housing:

- People who have no genuine need for alternative housing as set out in this policy.
- Owner-occupiers (unless exemptions apply as set out in section 12.3.)
- Applicants residing in tied accommodation unless they are 6 months away from retirement or have received a legally binding notice asking them to leave their home (see section 4.7).
- Applicants with an income or savings higher than the limits set out in 4.1.7-4.1.11.

Applicants whose behaviour would lead to eviction proceedings if they were a tenant:

- People whose unacceptable behaviour would, in the Council’s view, prevent them from being considered as a suitable tenant at the time of application.

Unacceptable behaviour may include:

- Failing to pay rent.
- Violence, crime or anti-social behaviour.
- Being convicted of an offence, in or in the vicinity of their home
- Being the perpetrator of violent, coercive or controlling behaviour towards a resident of the borough.
- Causing a nuisance to neighbours
- Being convicted of using their home for illegal purposes
- Subletting any Council or housing association tenancy,
- Causing the condition of the home to deteriorate by a deliberate act.
- Deliberately damaging or allowing someone else to deliberately damage your home,
- Breaching a condition of the tenancy agreement
- Squatting or undertaking an unauthorised occupation

If you are squatting, or are knowingly in unauthorised occupation of social housing, you will not be included on the Housing Register unless a Court Order requires the Council to do so, or it is decided, under this policy, to make a discretionary offer to you as an unauthorised occupant.

Applicants with Income and Savings above the following Limits

Maximum Savings

- 4.1.2 To be eligible for inclusion on the housing register a household must not have savings of more than the level at which they would no longer be eligible to receive social security benefits or pension credits unless they met one of the exceptions cited below. That figure is currently set for most households by the DWP at £16,000.
- 4.1.3 Households with savings of more than £16,000 can in some cases still receive pension credits, so where the lead applicants are in receipt of any pension credits a savings threshold does not apply for housing register eligibility purposes.
- 4.1.4 Where savings have reduced below the above level as a result of being used or gifted without good cause, the Council may still treat the applicant as being above the threshold.
- 4.1.5 If the applicant or anyone on the application has disposed of a property within the last 3 years, the applicant will be asked for evidence of the sale and details of any capital gained from the sale.
- 4.1.6 If the applicant is a Council tenant who has submitted a current application to buy their dwelling under Right to Buy or Registered Providers under Right to Acquire, the applicant will need to demonstrate a change in their savings/income since the application was made.

Maximum Household Income

4.1.7 Applicants whose combined gross household income is higher than the following maximum incomes will not be able to join the Housing Register unless they meet an exception set out below or if there are exceptional circumstances.

4.1.8 The income threshold to join the housing register varies by household size and is set for 2025 at:

| Household's bedroom requirement | Annual household income before tax |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| One bedroom | £38,443 |
| Two bedrooms | £42,715 |
| Three bedrooms | £46,986 |
| Four bedrooms | £51,258 |
| Five bedrooms | £55,529 |
| Six bedrooms | £56,268 |

4.1.9 These incomes are based on the median household income before tax applicable to households of different sizes. These incomes will be updated annually using the method set out in the Income Threshold Calculation (Appendix 4).

4.1.10 Receipt of these incomes means that many households who are not eligible to join the housing register will be eligible to rent affordable housing let at London Living Rent. Many will also be able to access affordable housing delivered for shared ownership.

4.1.11 Household income and savings will be considered before an offer is made. Offers will not be made or completed where the income is higher than the above maximum levels unless there are exceptional circumstances.

4.2 Where the maximum income and savings limits may be ignored?

4.2.1 The maximum income and savings limits do not apply where:

- An existing Council Secure tenant or Housing Association Secure or Assured Tenant has to move because they have been approved for an Emergency Direct Offer.
- Applicants who have priority because they are moving to a smaller home and/or giving up an adapted property they no longer require.
- Applicants who are an existing Council Secure tenant or Housing Association Secure or Assured Tenant and who are required to move because their home is being demolished.
- A former Council Secure tenant who bought their current home under the Right to Buy has accepted an offer from the Council to purchase their current home at a discounted rate in return for granting them a new secure tenancy.
- Where the Secretary of State deems them to be ineligible for an allocation of housing accommodation by a local housing authority unless they are exempt because they are already a secure tenant.

4.3 Exceptional Circumstances

4.3.1 In highly exceptional circumstances, applicants may still be allowed to join the Housing Register if approved by the Exceptional Rehousing Decisions Panel.

4.3.2 Where the Council has decided that an applicant does not qualify to join the Housing Register, the applicant may make a fresh application if their circumstances change.

4.4 Local connection to Haringey

4.4.1 To establish a local connection with Haringey, applicants must be able to demonstrate that they can meet at least one of the following conditions:

- Their principal home is situated in Haringey, and they have been living in the borough continuously for at least 3 years.
- They are a secure tenant of Haringey Council and living in an out of borough property.
- They have been placed in specialised housing by Haringey Council or the local Health Authority and are continuing to receive services from the Council and/or the Health Authority.
- They are resident in a women's refuge and are either currently living in Haringey or (if placed out of the borough) been living in Haringey continuously for at least 3 years immediately prior to moving into the refuge.
- They are temporarily residing outside Haringey in prison, hospital or residential care but have the intention of returning to Haringey and had been living in Haringey continuously for at least 3 years immediately prior to moving into prison, hospital or residential care.
- Haringey Council has accepted a full housing duty under the homelessness legislation.
- They are:
 - members of the Armed Forces and former Service personnel, where the application is made within five years of discharge.
 - bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the Armed Forces leaving Services Family Accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner.
 - serving or former members of the Reserve Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service.

4.4.2 An exception will be made where an existing social tenant needs to move to take up employment or an apprenticeship in Haringey where:

- They are in, or under definite offer of, paid work or an apprenticeship and, have signed, or been offered, a contract of employment or an apprenticeship agreement for a minimum period of 12 months, and
- will work 24 hours per week on average in Haringey, and
- earn the national minimum wage or above, and
- where failure to meet that need would cause hardship to that person or others

4.5 Notification

4.5.1 Where an application is refused as part of the online application process, the applicant can discuss that automated decision by contacting the Housing Demand team.

4.5.2 On making a decision after an application has been completed, the Council will notify the applicant in writing or email of their decision, and if refusing, giving full details of the reason for refusal.

4.5.3 Where an application is refused because the Council has decided either that the applicant is ineligible or that s/he does not qualify to join the Register, the applicant has the right to request a review of that decision under section 166A (9) of the Housing Act 1996.

4.6 Cancellation of housing applications

4.6.1 A housing application will be cancelled (and removed from the Housing Register) in the following circumstances:

- When the applicant requests it
- When the applicant either becomes ineligible for housing, ceases to qualify for inclusion on the Register or becomes a disqualified person.
- When the applicant has been housed through the Allocations Scheme or the homelessness duty has been discharged into the private sector
- When an applicant fails to maintain their housing application through the renewal process, or they move home and fail to provide the Council with a contact address.
- When an applicant fails to respond to a request for further information within the specified time.
- Following refusal of an offer under the one offer policy set out at section 17 below.

4.6.2 Should an applicant whose application has been cancelled subsequently succeed in an application to re-join the Housing Register they will be awarded new Priority Date.

4.6.3 In exceptional circumstances the Council may agree to reinstate a cancelled application without revising the Priority Date if the applicant re-applies within 3 months of the application being removed from the Register.

4.7 Applicants in Haringey 'tied' accommodation which is suitable for their needs.

4.7.1 Applicants are considered to be residing in Haringey tied accommodation if the occupation of their home is essential for the performance of their duties as an employee of the Council and there is a contractual obligation for re-housing.

4.7.2 Applicants residing in tied accommodation will not qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register unless they are 6 months away from retirement or have received a legally binding notice asking them to leave their home. At this point they will be awarded Urgent Priority.

5 WHO CAN BE INCLUDED ON AN APPLICATION?

5.1.1 Applicants can include their partner and dependent children where they (or their partner) have sole parental responsibility. In this section, dependent children are defined as children who are 22 years old or younger.

5.1.2 Other family members (including siblings, parents, and children over the age of 22) can only be included if they have lived in the household for more than 1 year. This residency period is increased to 3 years for offers made under the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme. However, for new applications after the implementation date, adults who live with their own child and/or with a partner are expected to make their own application as a new household and so may be excluded from an application as described below.

5.1.3 Applicants cannot though include anyone who owns a residential property.

5.2 Adults living as part of a couple or with their own children.

For existing applications live at the implementation date

5.2.1 Any applications made before this policy came into force will be allowed to keep their current household members on the application unless

- The applicant is making a new application.
- There is a significant change to the existing application. Significant changes include where the applicant's housing need or reason for rehousing has changed.
- The applicant has requested additional household members to be added to the application. Household member has moved out and returning at a later date will be treated as a new household member and will only be allowed to be added to applications if they meet the requirements set out above.

For new applications made after the implementation date, or amendments as described above.

5.2.2 For applications made after the implementation date (or where they do not meet the above criteria), adults who live with their own partner or their own children are expected to make their own application and so cannot be included on an application form unless an application is being made under homelessness legislation or there are exceptional needs.

5.2.3 Existing couples or adults with their own children can remain on existing applications open as the implementation date, and any additional children may also be allowed to join an application. However, where there are no children or partners on the application new partners or children will be considered a new household and so cannot be added to the application.

Other adults

5.2.4 Applicants may also include other adults where they are currently living with them and are receiving or giving significant care to or from a household member which cannot be provided when not living in the same home.

- the adult is unable to live independently and,
- there is a medical or social requirement for them to be included as part of the household and,

- there are no alternative provisions/arrangements available.

5.2.5 The provision of childcare will not typically count as care unless there are medical or other reasons meaning that this cannot be provided from an alternative address.

5.2.6 When considering who to include in an application, applicants should be aware that among High Priority applicants, this policy gives higher priority to dependent only households than it does to those with non-dependents unless the non-dependent is sharing with a dependent.

5.2.7 Further adults may not normally be added to an application at a later date unless the applicant can demonstrate an exceptional need for them to join the household.

5.3 Administration

5.3.1 The Council can decide whether a person is normally resident as a member of the household.

5.3.2 A Senior Manager has the discretion to allow additional people to be included on the application when they consider it is appropriate, taking into account all of the circumstances.

5.4 Parents with 'staying accesses to dependent children or shared residence orders.

5.4.1 Applicants with a shared residence order or staying access for children are not automatically entitled to bedrooms for their children.

5.4.2 The general principle is that a child needs one home of an adequate size, and that the Council and Registered Providers will not accept responsibility for providing a second home for children.

5.4.3 In working out the size of accommodation a household needs, children will only be counted as part of the household if they live with the applicant for more than 50% of the time. Suitable evidence must be provided, in the form of a Residency Order and a child benefit statement.

5.5 Parents with a dependent child who is in foster care or being looked after by the local authority.

5.5.1 The Council will only take into account children who are currently in foster care or being looked after by the local authority if the Children & the Young People's Service (CYPS) confirms that the children will be returned to the applicant when the applicant is rehoused in accommodation of a suitable size.

5.6 Support for fostering and adoption.

5.6.1 When assessing bedroom entitlement, the Council will take into account the Children & Young People's Service's assessment of the requirements of prospective foster carers and adopters. This will not, however, result in any priority being given for overcrowding.

6 WHO GETS Priority?

6.1 Priority

6.1.1 Priority is given to the person with the highest Priority then to those with the earliest Priority Date.

6.1.2 For example:

- anyone in Urgent Priority will have priority over everyone in High Priority even if those who have waited longer.
- Anyone in High Priority (dependents only) will have priority over everyone in High Priority (Others).

6.2 Priority Date

6.2.1 The Priority Date is the date the households joined their current Band. If they have remained in the same band, then this will be the date the application is received unless they meet one of the following exceptions:

- a) Where an applicant's circumstances have changed such that their Priority is decreased but that they remain on the register, then the applicant will keep the Priority Date of their previous higher band.
- b) Applicants leaving supported accommodation are nominated for move-on and moved to Urgent Priority, their Priority Date will remain as their original application date.

In these cases, the Priority Date will be the date their original application was accepted.

- c) Where the applicant is an existing Secure or Assured tenant who needs to move because their property is being demolished as part of an Estate Regeneration Scheme

In this case, their Priority Date will be the date that their tenancy in their current home began. Those tenants who succeeded to a tenancy will be given the original tenancy in their current home began.

- d) They are a social tenant who is willing to move to a smaller property as they are under-occupying their current home or occupying an adapted home where those adaptations are no longer needed.

In this case, their Priority Date will be the date that their tenancy in their current home began. Those tenants who succeeded to a tenancy will be given the date the original tenancy in their current home began.

6.2.2 Where there a band change has been a delayed unreasonably by the Council's action or inaction, the Priority Date will be backdated to the date the date the decision might reasonably have been made. Backdating will not be considered where the delays are caused by the applicant's failure to provide necessary documents or information.

6.3 Priority Bands

6.3.1 Applicants will be awarded Priority according to their 'housing need'. If an applicant has more than one 'housing need' which have different Priorities, then the applicant will be given the Priority of their highest need.

6.3.2 The completed Application Form will be used to give the applicant a Priority based on how urgently they need to move.

6.3.3 Households accepted onto the Housing Register will be given one of four Priorities in the following order, with Urgent Priority having the highest priority:

- **Urgent Priority**

- **High Priority (dependents only)**

This Priority is awarded where the household has a High Priority and

- The application only includes dependents and non-dependents who can share with a bedroom with a dependent
- or
- Homelessness applicants where the application was made before 9 November 2012

- **High Priority (others)**

This Priority is awarded where the household has a High Priority need and includes non-dependents who are on the application unless that non-dependent can share a bedroom with a dependent.

Single people and couples will also come under this priority.

- **Standard Priority**

Dependents and non-dependents

6.3.4 For the purpose of determining which level of High Priority is awarded to the applicant, a dependent is defined as

- Any child of the tenant (or their partner if included on the application) who is 22 or under where the tenant (or partner) has parental responsibility. This includes adopted or foster children where appropriate.
- Any adult (including children 22 or older) who receives or provides significant support from or to a household member which could not reasonably be provided if living in a different home.

The provision of care will not count as significant care unless this is more than 16 hours a week and cannot be provided from an alternative address.

6.3.5 Households who have applied under homelessness legislation before 9 November 2012 will automatically be included in the High Priority (dependents) regardless of whether they include non-dependents.

6.3.6 High Priority applications which contain other household members (that is, non-dependents) who increase the bed size need will be awarded the lower level of High Priority.

6.4 Emergency Direct Offers

- 6.4.1 Households who require an emergency move can be awarded Emergency Direct Offer status.
- 6.4.2 Emergency Direct Offer status can only be awarded by the Exceptional Rehousing Decisions Panel who will consider cases where there is a life-threatening or extreme need for the applicant to move:
- Where an existing council Secure tenant or partner Registered Provider's Secure/Assured tenant in Haringey needs to move because of harassment, domestic abuse or hate crime.
 - Where an applicant needs to move urgently because of a critical medical or welfare need, including emergencies and situations where there are serious safeguarding implications.
 - Where it is in the overriding interests of the Council to prioritise an allocation of housing to a particular household and/or it is necessary to comply with a Court Order and/or fulfil an urgent statutory or legal duty
 - Where an applicant has been assessed by the Multi-Agency Public Protection Panel (MAPPA) and it is decided by that Panel that the applicant should be offered social housing
 - Where the type and/or location of the accommodation offered to a particular applicant is likely to have significant implications in relation to child protection and/or public protection
 - Where an applicant is being moved under a national witness mobility / protection scheme
 - Where any delay in providing the applicant with suitable accommodation is likely to prove costly to the Council.
- 6.4.3 Emergency Direct Offers will be made for suitable properties which become available and allocated in order of the date the Emergency Direct Offer was approved.

Bidding

- 6.4.4 The Council will seek to move those given the Emergency Direct Offer status by a direct let at the earliest opportunity and will so will typically be un-able to secure a home through Choice Based Lettings before an offer is made. Where the household wishes and is able to bid, they will be given the Urgent Priority. Emergency Direct Offers status will not give any additional priority when a household is bidding.

Suitable properties

- 6.4.5 Offers may not be made if the Council believes that a property is unsuitable even if the applicant wishes to move there. applicants should be aware that if unsuitability is connected to their Priority, evidence submitted showing that their need to move has diminished will result in a reassessment of the Priority they have been awarded.

Examples include:

- if an applicant is given priority as they need to leave a particular neighbourhood, the Council may refuse to allow the applicant to a move within that neighbourhood.

- If an applicant is given priority for a step-free homes, the Council may refuse to allow the applicant to move to a home with internal steps.

6.4.6 Applicants may submit a request to Medical Officer or Exceptional Rehousing Decisions Panel to remove or amend restrictions. Applicants will need to provide evidence to demonstrate that this move is appropriate. Applicants should be aware that that evidence showing a reduction in need may lead to their Emergency Direct Offer status being removed if the Panel believes the need to move has been significantly reduced.

Offers made under the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme

6.4.7 Households who are receiving an offer under the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme will not be given a Priority and will only be made direct offers to the applicable scheme.

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7 Priority Awards for All Tenures

7.1 Exceptional Circumstances including Welfare, Hardship, Safeguarding and Complex Needs

- 7.1.1 Haringey Council may also award a higher priority where there are exceptional circumstances which this policy does not cover. This includes safeguarding concerns, extreme hardship or welfare and those with Special Educational Needs who need to relocate to be closer to support services.
- 7.1.2 Priority will be determined by the Exceptional Rehousing Decisions Panel following a recommendation from a senior manager in Adult Services, Children's Services or Housing Management. The Panel may also, on rare occasions, accept recommendations from other services where this is more appropriate.
- 7.1.3 The Panel will consider the following:
- The vulnerability of the applicant and their household.
 - The benefits from the applicant moving to another property.
 - What alternative arrangements could be made to remove the need to move. This could include adaptations or enhanced measures to the property.
 - What previous offers or arrangements the applicant has been offered and the reasons these were rejected and/or unsuitable.
- 7.1.4 The Panel will not consider cases based solely on a medical need including cases around mobility or access to their home as these will be assessed under Medical Priority.
- 7.1.5 When awarding an appropriate banding/priority, the Panel will award the following:
- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| • Emergency Need to Move | Emergency Direct Offer |
| • Urgent Need to Move (in up to 2 years) | Urgent Priority |
| • Moderate Need to Move (Greater than 2 years) | High Priority |

7.2 Medical Priority

When can Medical Priority be awarded.

- 7.2.1 Applicants may ask to be awarded medical priority where either:
- Their long-term health condition or disability has made their home unsuitable and limits the applicant's ability to carry out day to day tasks. Temporary conditions such as an injury do not qualify.
- or
- Their housing circumstances are affecting their health and wellbeing significantly. This may include the effects of over-crowding in their current home where an alternative and more suitable accommodation cannot be found. For those who are not already a social tenant, this may include offers of temporary accommodation or a private sector tenancy.
- 7.2.2 Band A awarded for medical conditions affected by their property (including over-crowding) may be removed if the applicant has been offered suitable alternative accommodation even if they have refused this offer.

- 7.2.3 Medical Priority can be requested for the applicant themselves or a member of their household.
- 7.2.4 An assessment of an applicant's or household member's health and wellbeing will review the evidence from a specialist involved in their healthcare of any physical and or mental health conditions including any diagnosis of autism.
- 7.2.5 In all cases, Medical Priority will only be awarded where:
- these issues cannot be improved at the current home through adaptations or other interventions at a reasonable cost.
- and
- where a move to an alternative property would significantly improve the applicant's condition, or their ability to manage it, or their ability to carry out their day-to-day affairs.
- 7.2.6 Medical Priority will not be awarded where a condition is temporary and/or likely to improve in the applicant within a year meaning that a move would no longer be required.
- 7.2.7 Medical Priority may not be awarded to those in Temporary Accommodation or in Private Sector tenancies where more suitable temporary accommodation or other accommodation is available or likely to be.

Examples of where Medical Priority may be awarded.

- The condition is life threatening, and the applicant's existing accommodation is a major contributory factor.
- The applicant's health is so severely affected by their accommodation that it is likely to become life threatening.
- The applicant is a wheelchair user who is unable to use their wheelchair within their current accommodation and has an assessed need to move to wheelchair suitable or disability adapted accommodation.
- The applicant (or household member) has severe mobility issues, is housebound and is unable to leave their accommodation without assistance that will result in high risk to themselves or their carer. They have an assessed need to move to accommodation suitable for their needs.
- The applicant's accommodation is directly contributing to the deterioration of the applicant's health.
- Where an applicant's condition is terminal and re-housing is required to provide a basis for the provision of suitable care.
- Where overcrowding in the home leaves the applicant at risk of life-threatening infection.

Medical Conditions Affected by over-crowding.

- 7.2.8 Medical assessments will take into account all aspects of the applicant's current home including the effects of over-crowding. applicants will therefore not receive any additional priority for having two needs (medical and over-crowding) where the medical need to move is caused or largely caused by the over-crowding.

Assessments

- 7.2.9 Applications for medical priority will assess the extent to which the applicant's health is affected by their housing conditions and the expected benefits of providing suitable alternative housing.
- 7.2.10 The Council will complete the assessment based on the medical information provided and will only exceptionally make its own enquiries where it needs information to better understand the medical information and to make an informed decision.
- 7.2.11 The applicant will be awarded one of four categories, and the table below is used as a guide to medical priority:

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Emergency Need to Move | Emergency Direct Offer |
| • Urgent Need to Move (in up to 2 years) | Urgent Priority |
| • Moderate Need to Move (Greater than 2 years) | High Priority (with dependents) or High Priority (without dependents) |

- 7.2.12 Applicants are required to inform the Council of any changes in the circumstances relating to their housing application, including their health and the health of members of their household. Such changes may result in an increase or decrease in the level of priority they are awarded.

Types of property

- 7.2.13 Where the Council awards an applicant medical priority, the Council will specify the type of housing that is suitable for an applicant.
- 7.2.14 Although applicants may be able to bid for properties that do not meet this specification, offers may be withheld and offers already made may be withdrawn if the new home is found to be unsuitable for the applicant and/or cannot feasibly be adapted to address the medical need for which priority was awarded. Adaptions will be considered feasible where they where it can be completed within a reasonable time and at reasonable cost.
- 7.2.15 The Council is currently seeking to establish a data base of the accessibility of all vacant homes. When this project is completed and/or data is available for the majority of void homes, the Council may:
- Only allow bidders with medical priority to bid on suitable homes.
 - Restrict bids for adapted homes to those who need these adaptations.
 - Adverts will indicate if there is a restriction on who can bid for them.
- 7.2.16 Refusal to offer or a decision to withdraw an existing offer may be subject to the approval of an Occupational Therapist.

Review

- 7.2.17 Where an applicant is awarded Urgent Priority, whether due to a Medical or other need, their application and bidding history will be reviewed at least once every six months.

7.3 Overcrowding

- 7.3.1 The priority for given for over-crowding will depend on the applicant's current landlord, the reasons the property has become overcrowded and the number of additional bedrooms the applicant's household needs.

| Tenancy & Landlord | 2 or more bedrooms short | 1 bedroom short |
|---|--|-------------------|
| All tenures | Urgent Priority can be awarded to all tenures where over-crowding is causing or seriously exacerbating medical conditions where the Council is unable to offer more suitable accommodation (see notes) | |
| Council secure tenant | High Priority (Dependents Only or Others) | Standard Priority |
| Assured or Secure tenants of a Registered Provider who has a nominations agreement with the Council | | |
| Assured Shorthold tenants of Registered Providers | Standard Priority | No Priority |
| Registered Providers who DO NOT have a nominations agreement with the Council | | |
| Private Tenants | | |
| In Temporary Accommodation provided by Haringey | No additional priority over Homelessness priority (High Priority) | |

- 7.3.2 Applicants will be deemed to be severely overcrowded when they are lacking two or more rooms than they would be entitled to under Haringey's Allocations Policy.
- 7.3.3 When assessing overcrowding, the Council will only take into account those people who are part of an applicant's household.
- 7.3.4 Applicants will be deemed to be overcrowded when they have one room less than they would be entitled to under Haringey's Allocations Policy.
- 7.3.5 Over-crowding by one bedroom in the private sector will not lead to inclusion on the Housing Register unless there is overcrowding is causing or having significant effect on a medical condition as described above. Private tenants overcrowded by one room will be given advice on how to alleviate this.

Over-crowding caused by someone moving into a home.

- 7.3.6 Additional priority will not be given for overcrowding if the overcrowding is the result of someone moving into the applicants' household.
- 7.3.7 This includes adult children of the tenant returning to the family home after holding a tenancy elsewhere for more than 1 year unless they are:
- returning to provide or receive significant care which could not be provided when living in a different home.
 - Returning home after temporarily living away from home due to studies, prison or serving in the armed forces.

8 Priority Awards for Existing Social Tenants

8.1 Emergency Management Transfers

- 8.1.1 In exceptional circumstances, Secure tenants of Haringey Council and Secure or Assured tenants of certain partner Registered Providers (where Haringey Council has nomination rights) may be provided with an emergency management transfer.
- 8.1.2 This will occur when the Exceptional Rehousing Decisions Panel has determined that a transfer to alternative social housing offers the most appropriate way of ensuring the personal safety of the tenant, members of their household and/or the local community.
- 8.1.3 Although most of the transfer requests that are approved relate to extremely serious incidents involving domestic violence, intimidation and harassment, hate crime or threats to kill, the Exceptional Rehousing Decisions Panel will only approve a transfer where it is satisfied that all other ways of resolving the problem have been exhausted and that it would not be reasonable to expect the tenant to continue living in their home.
- 8.1.4 Where the Exceptional Rehousing Decisions Panel approves the transfer, the tenant will be made an Emergency Direct Offer of alternative accommodation on a like-for-like basis in terms of number of bedrooms.
- 8.1.5 Where the applicant has already been awarded medical priority, the property that they are offered will reflect their assessed needs.
- 8.1.6 Given the urgency of the situation, it is essential that the transfer takes place quickly. For this reason, the Council and the relevant tenancy management officer will work closely with the tenant to ensure effective communication and that all available options are fully explained and properly considered.
- 8.1.7 On completion of the emergency management transfer, the tenant's transfer application will be either cancelled or reassessed in accordance with the wishes of the applicant. If the transfer application is reassessed, the original date of application will apply.

8.2 Under-Occupiers: Social Tenants with a home that is bigger than they need.

- 8.2.1 Tenants who are currently living in social housing and have more bedrooms than they require and who are willing to move to a smaller property which has fewer bedrooms will be awarded Urgent Priority. They will also be given a Priority Date set at the date their current tenancy began rather than their application date.
- 8.2.2 This applies to Secure tenants of Haringey Council and to the Secure and Assured tenants of certain Registered Providers (where Haringey Council has nomination rights) who are 'under-occupying' their homes and want to move to a smaller Council or Registered Provider property.
- 8.2.3 These applicants are given High Priority for rehousing because it will free up larger family-sized homes to meet the housing needs of other applicants who are homeless or living in overcrowded or poor-quality accommodation. Financial incentives and dedicated advice and support will be provided to help tenants to move.
- 8.2.4 Consideration will be given to providing separate housing (in two smaller properties) for families that are under-occupying their home. For example, if a couple with an adult child are under-occupying a property with at least 4 bedrooms, they can be considered for two one-bedroom flats rather than one 2-bedroom flat. However, such moves must always release at least 1 bedroom.

- 8.2.5 Where the applicant has rent arrears, any financial incentive that they are due to receive from moving to smaller accommodation will be used to clear or reduce those arrears. After this has been done, the balance will be paid to the applicant.
- 8.3 Tenants with a specially adapted property that they no longer need.
- 8.3.1 This applies to Secure tenants of Haringey Council and to the Secure or Assured tenants of certain Registered Providers (where Haringey Council has nomination rights) who are occupying a specially adapted property and are willing to transfer to a property more appropriate to their needs.
- 8.3.2 These applicants are given High Priority for rehousing because it will free up specially adapted properties to meet the housing needs of applicants who require disabled facilities and are currently living in unsuitable accommodation or unable to leave hospital or residential care. To assist their move, such tenants will be awarded Urgent Priority. They will also be given a Priority Date set at the date their current tenancy began rather than their application date.
- 8.3.3 Secure or Assured Tenants who are willing to transfer from a family home that has three or more bedrooms and has been substantially adapted to meet the needs of a wheelchair user or someone with very limited mobility may be allowed to under-occupy their new home so long as they are moving to a smaller property.
- 8.4 Essential Repairs Decant Priority
- 8.4.1 Essential Repairs Decant Move Priority only applies to Secure Council tenants or Secure/Assured tenants of a Registered Provider who allocate all their properties through the Haringey Council Allocations Scheme.
- 8.4.2 A decant (for essential repairs) is where the landlord needs to do major repairs to their home and the home needs to be vacant for this work to be carried out. Usually, these will be temporary moves where tenants will be expected to return to their original home when the works are complete. These temporary moves do not fall under this policy and are governed by the Temporary Moves (Decants) Policy.
- 8.4.3 On rare occasions, there will be a need for Decant (repairs) move to be permanent. Priority for permanent moves will only be made in exceptional circumstances agreed by the Exceptional Rehousing Decisions Panel following consideration by and referral from the Decant Panel. Requests for a permanent decant move cannot be made without first being considered by the Decant Panel.
- 8.4.4 All offers to those approved for a Permanent Decant will be made by Direct Offer to enable the landlord to move applicants as quickly as possible. Offers will be made for a home of the same size as the property they need to move, unless they were under-occupying according to this Policy. In these cases, the tenant will be required to move to a smaller home though will be able to retain spare bedrooms if they have been under-occupying their home by more than one bedroom.
- 8.4.5 Any complaint about disrepair in homes managed by the Council or a Registered Provider must be reported to the Repairs Service of the applicant's landlord.
- 8.5 Estate Renewal Decant Priority
- 8.5.1 Secure and Assured Tenants who need to move from their home on a permanent basis as a result of redevelopment or regeneration will be moved in a planned way. Each redevelopment/ regeneration scheme will be subject to consultation, an Equalities Impact Assessment and approval by Cabinet.

- 8.5.2 Once a re-development decant status is authorised, existing Secure and Assured tenants will be awarded Urgent Priority on a phased basis and be encouraged to bid an alternative property using the Choice Based Lettings system.
- 8.5.3 If the tenant has not been offered accommodation 18 months prior to the Council requiring vacant possession, a direct offer of accommodation may be made to the tenant. If this offer is refused, a further offer of accommodation will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and if none exist, the Council may decide to take possession proceedings.

9 **Priority Awards for individuals left in a Council home after a tenancy has ended.**

- 9.1.1 When a tenancy is ended by the tenant, the Council or by a Court, any occupants left in the home will usually be expected to leave and surrender possession to the Council or face eviction. However, there are some circumstances where the Council will consider granting a new tenancy to the remaining occupants.

9.2 Grants of Tenancy instead of Succession

- 9.2.1 Succession is when a tenancy of a property is passed to a partner (or sometimes a family member) who was living with them. This can only happen once for each tenancy and certain conditions need to be met. This is described in the Succession Policy. As this is not a new tenancy, and so is not covered by this policy.
- 9.2.2 If an occupant remains in a property after the tenant has died and has no legal right to succeed to the tenancy, they will be given notice to leave the property. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where the occupants may be granted a new tenancy to allow them to remain in the home.
- 9.2.3 All requests for a grant of tenancy on the death of a tenant where no statutory succession takes place will be considered by the Exceptional Rehousing Decisions Panel. Guidance on this is available in a separate document Grant of Tenancy. Offers made under Grant of Tenancy will be direct offers.

9.3 Grants of Tenancy where joint tenancy has been ended by one tenant.

- 9.3.1 Where there is a joint tenant, either tenant can give the Council Notice to end the tenancy for both tenants. If one of the joint tenants wishes to remain, they will need to request a new tenancy.
- 9.3.2 Tenants should be aware that the property is not automatically offered to the tenant remaining and the remaining tenant may be asked to leave or may only be offered a smaller home if more suitable.
- 9.3.3 If the leaving former tenant wishes to apply for housing, they must apply to join the register in their own right.
- 9.3.4 If the remaining former tenant qualifies to be offered the same property, the Council will offer them the tenancy of that property, which will be made by a direct offer.
- 9.3.5 If the remaining former tenant qualifies to be offered a smaller property, the Council will seek to make them a Direct Offer.
- 9.3.6 If the applicant subsequently refuses a suitable offer, they will have no right to remain in their current accommodation.

10 **Priority Awards for applicants applying as Homeless.**

- 10.1 Applicants for whom Haringey Council has accepted a rehousing duty under the homelessness legislation.
- 10.1.1 All homeless households for whom the Council has accepted a rehousing duty (which has not yet been discharged) under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 will be awarded either High Priority (dependents only) or High Priority (Others)) as described in 6.3.3.
- 10.1.2 In order to minimise the cost of temporary accommodation (and the amount of time that homeless households spend in temporary accommodation), the Council will bid for all properties on behalf of homeless households unless the applicant has made their own bid in that advertising cycle.
- 10.1.3 The Council may also make a 'direct offer' of suitable accommodation.
- 10.2 Accepted homeless households in severe need which cannot be resolved by a move to alternative Temporary Accommodation or to a Private Sector Tenancy.
- 10.2.1 In exceptional circumstances, homeless households (for whom Haringey Council has accepted a full rehousing duty under the homelessness legislation) will be awarded Urgent Priority if they are assessed, by the Council, as having complex needs. Assessments of Complex Needs will be made by the Support Co-ordinator or Move-on Manager.
- 10.2.2 An 'accepted' homeless household maybe considered for an assessment of having complex needs (so may be awarded Urgent Priority) if any of the following situations applies to the applicant or a member of their household and that these situations will be demonstrably improved by an offer of Social Housing in comparison to an offer of alternative Temporary Accommodation or a Private Sector Offer:
- They have a terminal or life-threatening illness.
 - They are permanent wheelchair users.
 - They are frail and elderly.
 - They have severe mental health problems and/or have been 'sectioned' under the Mental Health Act and have been unable (or are likely to be unable) to cope with living in temporary accommodation.
 - They have a critical medical or welfare need, including situations where there are critical safeguarding implications. Safeguarding assessments will be undertaken by Adults or Children's Services as applicable.
 - They are especially vulnerable, and the Council is unable to provide them with suitable temporary accommodation.
- 10.2.3 The Council will decide which of these applicants will be awarded Urgent Priority.
- 10.3 Other homeless households not owed a duty.
- 10.3.1 Other applicants who are homeless (including those who have no fixed address) or threatened with homelessness within 28 days but are not owed a rehousing duty under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 are still entitled to 'reasonable preference'.
- 10.3.2 This covers people who are intentionally homeless and those who are not in priority need, but not those who are ineligible for assistance.
- 10.3.3 These applicants will be awarded Standard Priority.
- 11 **Priority Awards for applicants living in Supported Housing**

- 11.1.1 The Pathway Model provides vulnerable single people with appropriate support, to develop the skills to live independently. As part of the pathway approach an assessment will be carried out by the Pathway Manager to determine whether private sector or social housing is suitable, when the client is ready to move on. If it is deemed that the client needs to continue to be in a more supported environment, then social housing will be prioritised.

Standard Priority for those living in Supported Housing

- 11.1.2 All applicants currently living in a supported housing scheme can make an application and, subject to meeting the general qualifying rules, will be awarded Standard Priority
- 11.1.3 Applications can be made 12 months/years before they are expected to leave the current supported housing. This will include Care Leavers from the age of 17 but offers will not be made until the applicant has reached the age of 18.
- 11.1.4 This priority only remains while the applicant is in supported housing. If the applicant leaves supported housing (other than for short temporary reasons), then they will lose their Supported Housing priority.

Increase priority for those Nominated for Move-On

- 11.1.5 Applicants who are nominated for move-on accommodation by the Move-On Manager will have their Priority increased Urgent Priority and will retain their original Priority Date.
- 11.1.6 If the applicant has not been rehoused within six months of being awarded Urgent Priority, their case will be reviewed to assess whether they are still in need of Social Housing.
- 11.1.7 If the applicant is still in Priority Need and is not bidding, they will then be placed on Autobid.
- 11.1.8 If the applicant remains in Supported Housing but is no longer in priority need (or not ready for a move), their Priority will be reduced to Standard Priority. This decision can be reversed on appeal or where it is deemed that a new Nomination should be made.
- 11.1.9 If the applicant is no longer in Supported Housing, they will be removed from the Housing Register unless they have an alternative Housing Need.
- 11.1.10 Nominations for applicants with Urgent Priority may be withdrawn where the applicant has refused a suitable offer of accommodation.

11.2 Specialised Housing Quotas

- 11.2.1 In addition to those awarded Urgent Priority, the Council may also set move-on quotas for the following needs listed below:
- Housing First
 - Learning Difficulties
 - Complex Needs
- 11.2.2 Lets for these quotas will be directly allocated to applicants as nominated by the appropriate Move-On manager.
- 11.2.3 The number of lets (the Quota) will be set annually in the Annual Lettings Plan. This may include a zero allocation when appropriate.

12 Priority Awards for other applicants

12.1 Private tenants

- 12.1.1 People living in private sector accommodation in poor condition will be referred to the Council's Housing Improvement Team (Private Sector) who will assess the situation and seek to provide a resolution to enable the tenant to remain in their home.
- 12.1.2 If an applicant's home lacks permanent facilities (such as cooking facilities, washing facilities, toilet facilities or heating) and there is no other housing need, they will not qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register. Instead, they will be advised of alternative housing options to alleviate the issue.

12.2 Sharing with another household.

- 12.2.1 People sharing facilities with others will not qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register unless there are other qualifying needs. Instead, they will be advised of alternative housing options to alleviate the issue.

12.3 Owner Occupiers

- 12.3.1 People who own their own home or another residential home (freehold or leasehold) will not normally qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register either as an applicant or as a household member included on an application.
- 12.3.2 Applicants or household members who have previously owned a property and have sold it will be asked to provide proof of the sale, together with evidence of the proceeds received from the sale and what has become of them.
- 12.3.3 Unless they are unable to meet their housing needs from their own resources and require an adapted property or supported housing owner occupiers will not qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register.
- 12.3.4 Owner-occupiers may qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register if they fall within one of the following groups:
- They are over 50 and have been assessed as being unable to meet their housing needs from their own resources; or
 - They have a disability, require an adapted property and have been assessed as being unable to meet their housing needs from their own resources, or
 - They are required to leave their current accommodation because their home is being demolished as part of an Estate Regeneration Scheme, and they have been approved for a social tenancy as their current assets and income do not allow them to find alternative accommodation which will meet their housing needs as set out in this section.
 - They were a former Council Secure tenant who bought their current home under the Right to Buy and wish to return to being a tenant, and an offer has been made and accepted for the Council to repurchase their home. Such offers will only be made at the Council's discretion and subject to any approved policy setting out when these offers can be made.
- 12.3.5 The Council will decide whether or not an applicant is able to meet their housing needs from their own resources. To make this assessment, it will require details of the applicant's income and savings. In the case of a homeowner on an Estate Regeneration Scheme, this

assessment will be undertaken by the scheme's Discretion Panel with any recommendations made to the Assistant Director of Housing for approval.

12.3.6 After considering all of the information, the Council may decide that:

- The applicant has sufficient resources to buy or lease a suitable home outright, without the need for shared ownership or a mortgage.
- The applicant has sufficient resources and the mortgage potential to buy or lease a suitable home with a mortgage.
- The applicant has sufficient resources to rent a suitable home in the private sector.
- The applicant cannot afford to buy, lease or privately rent a suitable home.
- If the applicant meets the criteria in paragraph 5.8.5 above and the Council decides that they are unable to buy or lease suitable accommodation, their application will be awarded a higher priority if they are awarded priority on medical or welfare grounds.

12.4 Grants of Tenancy: Applicants who negotiated a surrender of a former council tenancy.

12.4.1 At the Council's discretion, former tenants of Haringey Council may be awarded Urgent Priority where they have negotiated the surrender of their tenancy in return for an offer of housing at a later date.

12.4.2 A negotiated surrender of a tenancy typically take place where the tenant needs to leave their home for an extended period which would make sustaining the tenancy impossible. Examples of when this may be considered include long-term stays in hospital, rehabilitation, residential care, a temporary stay in supported accommodation, or when they have received a prison sentence.

12.4.3 Before agreeing to a tenancy surrender, Haringey Council must satisfy itself that the tenant meets the following conditions:

- They were a Haringey Council Secure tenant when they left or are expected to leave the property.
and
- They have been, or are likely, to be absent from their home for more than 13 weeks (including, where appropriate, the time spent on remand)
and
- They have conducted their tenancy in a reasonable way and have not broken their tenancy agreement.
and
- Their rent is up to date and
 - They have not been served with a 'notice seeking possession' and
 - They were living alone, require only a bedsit or one-bedroom property and offer to end their tenancy.and, for those taken into custody,
- that the offence did not mean that they had broken their tenancy.

12.4.4 Applicants in this category will be awarded Urgent Priority six months before their scheduled release from prison hospital, rehabilitation or residential care. They will receive only one offer of suitable accommodation which will be made by Direct Offer; after which they will lose their priority under this category.

12.4.5 If accommodation is not available at the time the applicant is released from prison, they will have to make their own housing arrangements until they receive their 'direct offer'.

12.5 Secure/Assured tenants of Registered Providers where no nomination rights exist.

- 12.5.1 There are some Registered Providers in Haringey that are not subject to nomination agreements and can therefore choose to let all of their properties according to their own rules.
- 12.5.2 Applications received from tenants of these landlords will be treated in the same way as an application from a tenant in the private sector and this may mean that these tenants do not qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register.
- 12.5.3 This recognises that, when the tenant moves out of their current home, the accommodation will not become available to help meet Haringey's unmet housing need.

12.6 Armed Forces

- 12.6.1 To support its commitment to the resettlement of former Service personnel, the Council agree an annual quota of properties to be offered to this client group. This quota is managed by a named agency by way of an approved nominations agreement.

12.7 People living in mobile homes, houseboats or caravans.

- 12.7.1 People living in a caravan, mobile home or houseboat will not qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register if there is no other housing need, reflecting parity with other private sector applicants.

12.8 Tenants of tied accommodation under notice.

- 12.8.1 Tenants in tied accommodation who have been served with a valid Notice to leave their accommodation and the Council is satisfied that they have little or no prospect of successfully defending the possession proceedings, will be awarded Standard Priority.

12.9 Protected tenants under notice.

- 12.9.1 This applies to a tenant with a 'protected' tenancy (that is a tenancy with protection from eviction, but not an assured shorthold tenancy).
- 12.9.2 If the applicant has been served with a valid Notice to leave their accommodation and the Council is satisfied that they have little or no prospect of successfully defending the possession proceedings, they will be awarded Standard Priority. If the possession order has been granted because of a breach of tenancy, an applicant will be ineligible for inclusion on the Housing Register.

12.10 Qualifying Agricultural workers (protection under the Rent (Agricultural) Act 1976).

- 12.10.1 Certain categories of agricultural workers who are provided with accommodation as a condition of their employment, may be protected against eviction even if their employment comes to an end.
- 12.10.2 The worker can only be asked to leave their accommodation if an Agricultural Dwelling House Advisory Committee (ADHAC) decides that the accommodation will be required by a successor or that the home is no longer in the interest of efficient agriculture.
- 12.10.3 If ADHAC decides that a worker must leave their accommodation, the local housing authority must use their best endeavours to offer housing to the worker.

12.10.4 An authority would not be properly carrying out its duty if it were to refuse to offer suitable accommodation to the worker because they did not have enough priority on the register.

12.10.5 In such cases this applicant will be awarded Urgent Priority.

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13 REASONS WHY SOMEONE MAY HAVE THEIR PRIORITY LOWERED

13.1 Applicants who have deliberately made their housing situation worse or taken actions or inaction which was likely to make their housing situation worse.

- 13.1.1 The Council will consider whether an applicant has deliberately made their housing situation worse to increase their housing need, and consequently improve their chances of rehousing through the Housing Register.

Examples of this include:

- Selling a home that was affordable and suitable for the applicant's needs.
- Giving up or moving from a suitable and affordable tenancy to less secure or less settled or overcrowded accommodation.
- Requesting or colluding with a landlord or family member to issue them with a Notice to Quit.
- Intentionally overcrowding their home by moving in friends and/or other family members who have never lived together previously and/or have not lived together for a long time, then requesting re-housing to larger accommodation.
- Obtaining accommodation that is not suitable for their needs where suitable sized accommodation was affordable.

- 13.1.2 If the Council decides that whether before or after inclusion on the Register the applicant has deliberately made their housing situation worse, the applicant will be awarded Priority that reflects their housing need before the action (or inaction) that made their situation worse.

- 13.1.3 The assessment will be reviewed on request but not normally within the first twelve months of the application being made. This will remain in place until reasonable steps have been taken to address the housing needs caused by the deliberate action.

13.2 Offering Housing to applicants who owe rent

Applicants who owe rent or have other debts with the Council.

- 13.2.1 Unless an offer is being made under one of the exceptions listed below, the Council will withdraw (or decline to make) an offer a property to an applicant if the applicant has substantial current and/or former rent arrears for a Council property or other debts to the Council and which are not being reduced, or where there is a Possession Order for rent arrears in a Current Council property.

- 13.2.2 This can include debts owed to the Council for:

- Unpaid rent/charges on their current or former Council tenancy.
- Arrears of rent/charges from a current or former temporary accommodation placement.
- Unpaid costs of rectifying unauthorised works or damage to a Council property.

- 13.2.3 Offers may, at the Council's discretion, still be made where an offer is made in the following exceptions unless there are on-going possession proceedings:

- Where the applicant is downsizing to a smaller Council home
- Where the offer is made as an Emergency Direct Let
- Where the offer is approved by an Estate Renewal Discretion Panel after considering the rent arrears/debts, or
- Where the Council has assessed the applicant is an existing social tenant whose current home to be unaffordable and a move to an affordable home has been approved.
- Where the arrears were substantially caused by reasons outside of the applications control (see below)
- Where the Exceptional Rehousing Decisions Panel has approved that rehousing a specific applicant or group of applicants is in the Council's interest.

Debts included on a current Possession Order

- 13.2.4 Where the Council has a possession order for the applicant's current home which includes rent arrears, no offers will be made (or offers withdrawn) regardless of any payment history.

Debts not included on a current Possession Order

- 13.2.5 The Council may withdraw (or decline to make) an offer where applicants have arrears unless:
- The applicant owes less than 6 weeks rent of their current net rent liability (or more than £1,000) and those have been reducing over the last 3 months through regular payments made by the applicant.
 - The applicant owes more than 6 weeks of their current net rent liability (or more than £1,000) and has been making regular payments for 6 months according to an agreed repayment plan.
- 13.2.6 Any reductions made by Housing Benefit backdated payments will not be taken into account when considering the applicants payment history.

Repayment of arrears

- 13.2.7 Irrespective of the level of arrears, if the applicant is able to clear all outstanding arrears within 48 hours of any offer, the Council will proceed with the offer of the new tenancy.

Circumstances outside the Applicants Control

- 13.2.8 The Council will, at its discretion, consider exceptions with regards to rent arrears, where they were substantially caused by circumstances occasioned by factors which are or were outside the applicants control.
- 13.2.9 This may include factors such as illness or fleeing violence but will not include the applicant's unreasonable failure to apply for or submit documentation for benefits unless this was caused by something outside of their control.
- 13.2.10 Such cases will be considered, and a course of action decided by Exceptional Rehousing Decisions Panel. There will be no appeal against any such decisions outside of the Councils complaints procedure.

14 WHAT SIZE PROPERTY WILL BE OFFERED?

14.1.1 A landlord may agree an applicant will be allowed to move into a property that is smaller than their needs, where this improves their situation. For example, if an applicant has 4 children and is entitled to a 4-bedroom property but is living in one with 2 bedrooms, their application for a 3-bedroom property may be considered.

14.1.2 Registered Providers may apply different standards. The Home Connections advert will confirm how many people can be accommodated.

14.2 Bedrooms

14.2.1 In calculating the number of bedrooms available within properties, the Council will treat every habitable room as a bedroom except kitchens, bathrooms and one room for use as a living room. The Council will normally consider additional downstairs rooms in houses for use as bedroom in accordance with Housing Benefit Regulations.

14.2.2 A second reception room will be counted as a bedroom where it could reasonably be used as such.

Applicants and their Partners and other couples.

14.2.3 Any couples on an application will be assessed as requiring one bedroom unless there is a medical, behavioural or social reason why they cannot share a bedroom.

14.2.4 Typically, this will include the applicant and their partner if included on the application but will also apply to other couples where both people are included on the application, including (but not limited to) parents or grandparents of the applicant(s), and to children and their own partners.

14.2.5 Applicants (or their partners) are not though expected to share with their children regardless of the sex or age of those children.

Children under the age of 10

14.2.6 Children under the age of 10 are expected to share a bedroom with other household members of the same sex, or with any other household members under the age of 10.

Other Household members

14.2.7 All other household members of the same sex are expected to share a bedroom unless:

- There is a medical, behavioural or social reason why they cannot share a bedroom.
- There would be an age difference of more than 25 years.

14.2.8 For the avoidance of doubt, autism will be assessed in line with the assessment of medical needs.

How the number of rooms are calculated.

Step 1: One bedroom for the applicant, and partner/spouse (if any)

Step 2: One bedroom for any other adult couple

Step 3: One bedroom for any two additional people of the same sex who have an age difference of less than 25 years.

Step 4: One bedroom for any two additional people of the opposite sex where both are under ten years old.

Step 5: One bedroom for any additional person.

14.3 Medical Need for an additional bedroom

- 14.3.1 Where an applicant believes they require an additional bedroom due to a household member's medical needs, they will need to provide supporting information for an assessment to be carried out. An additional room will only be awarded where there is an essential need for it, e.g. because a member that would otherwise be expected to share cannot because of their health or medical requirements.

14.4 Pregnancy and Children

- 14.4.1 Where an applicant is pregnant and will be entitled to a larger property, priority may only be given for overcrowding when that baby is born and only where the new child is unable to share with existing household members.

14.5 Extra rooms for carers

- 14.5.1 If an applicant states that they need an extra room for a carer, the Council will carry out an assessment of the applicant's needs and decide whether or not an extra room is required. Due to the high demand for housing, such requests are only likely to be agreed in exceptional circumstances where there is a demonstrable essential need for such an arrangement. There will not be an essential need if a reasonable alternative could be put in place.
- 14.5.2 The Council's Adult Social Care service should be able to provide evidence of the need for a 'live in' carer and confirmation (where appropriate) that, if the support was not provided, the applicant would qualify for funding for a 'live in' carer.
- 14.5.3 Where the Council is satisfied that there is a need for a live-in carer who is not cohabiting with another member of the household, the household will be entitled to an additional bedroom.

14.6 Homes which have an exceptional large internal space

- 14.6.1 A limited number of homes have significantly larger internal space compared to a typical council void. The Council reserves the right to allocate these homes to larger households to ensure that each bedroom (other than the applicants) is occupied by two household members and/or where there are medical reasons where a larger property would be more suitable.

14.7 Additional properties for large families

- 14.7.1 Due to the shortage of family sized homes, very large families may prefer to be offered two separate properties, rather than wait for a larger property.
- 14.7.2 Unless there are exceptional circumstances approved by the Exceptional Rehousing Decisions Panel, the Council will only consider requests where the applicant is currently homeless and where the Council accepted their homeless duty before 9 November 2012.
- 14.7.3 Requests may be considered and, at the Council's discretion, accepted or refused after considering the following.

- There must be an adult member (or couple) within the household who is eligible and qualified for housing and is willing to hold the second tenancy, referred to as the “selected adult”. Eligibility will include the need to meet the maximum income and wealth criteria set out in 4.1.2 to 4.1.11.
- The original applicant must be willing to accept smaller alternative accommodation that reflects the reduced size of their household.
- The selected adult must join the Housing Register and be rehoused after the original applicant.

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15 PROPERTY ACCESS CATEGORIES

- 15.1.1 Properties that have level access will be prioritised for those applicants who have a very serious medical need (and so are in Urgent Priority) or who have been approved for an Emergency Direct Offer) and require such accommodation.
- 15.1.2 The Council is currently seeking to establish a data base of the accessibility of all homes. When this project is completed and/or data is available for the majority of void homes, the Council may:
- Only allow bidders with medical priority to bid on suitable homes
 - Restrict bids for adapted homes to those who need these adaptations.
- 15.1.3 Adverts will indicate if there is a restriction on who can bid for them. Where the Council holds data, the Council may decide to include the following in the advert and may also decide to restrict bidding for these homes to those who have an assessed need for them.
- Category A: Wheelchair accessible throughout.
Designed to allow full use of all rooms and facilities to someone who uses a wheelchair all the time.
 - Category B: Wheelchair accessible essential rooms.
Properties designed or adapted to meet the needs of wheelchair users but may not offer full use of all facilities.
 - Category C: Lifetime Homes.
(Properties may have internal stairs. Where this is the case, the stairs are likely to be able to accommodate a basic-sized stair-lift.)
Designed to meet the space standards of Lifetime Homes. Main features include a level approach / entrance and wider doorways.
 - Category D: Easy access.
(Properties may have internal stairs. Where this is the case, the stairs are likely to be able to accommodate a basic-sized stair-lift.)
Designed with level access to the home door.
 - Category E: Step free.
(Properties may have internal stairs. Where this is the case, the stairs are likely to be able to accommodate a basic-sized stair-lift.)
Level access housing but possibly with narrow doors and corridors.
 - Category E+: Up to six steps.
(Properties may have internal stairs. Where this is the case, the stairs are likely to be able to accommodate a basic-sized stair-lift.)
May have up to six steps to the home.
 - Category G: Not yet assessed.
Any home we have not yet been able to assess.
 - Category F: General housing.
Properties that do not meet the above specifications.

16 TYPES OF TENANCIES OFFERED

16.1 Introductory and starter tenancies

16.1.1 Applicants who are offered permanent housing where the landlord is the Council will be offered an introductory tenancy or a secure tenancy. Where the landlord is a Registered Provider, a starter tenancy or assured tenancy will be offered. Some Registered Providers offer fixed term tenancies.

16.1.2 Introductory tenancies and starter tenancies are 'probationary tenancies' and provide reduced security of tenure during their first year. If the tenancy is conducted to the landlord's satisfaction, it will automatically convert to a secure tenancy or assured tenancy after 12 months have elapsed.

16.1.3 Tenants with an introductory or starter tenancy cannot mutually exchange their home or assign their tenancy but are eligible to transfer.

16.2 Letting permanent housing on a temporary licence or non-secure tenancy

16.2.1 A proportion of permanent housing may be let temporarily to homeless households under a licence agreement or non-secure tenancy. This accommodation will not be let through choice-based lettings.

16.3 Joint tenancies

16.3.1 The Council will normally only offer joint tenancies to applicants (including existing tenants) who have satisfied the Council of their intention to live together on a long-term basis.

16.3.2 The Council cannot offer a joint tenancy where one of the tenants is an ineligible person as one of the joint tenants.

16.3.3 There is no right to a joint tenancy and a request for one will not be agreed in the following cases:

- Where there is a current Notice of Seeking Possession or Notice to Quit against the existing or proposed joint tenant.
- Where Haringey Council is contemplating serving or re-serving a Notice of Seeking Possession or Notice to Quit upon the existing or proposed joint tenant.
- Where there are management problems such as nuisance or anti-social behaviour on the part of the tenant or someone living with or visiting them.
- Where the proposed joint tenant is not maintaining an acceptable agreement in respect of rent arrears.
- Where one of the proposed joint tenants does not qualify for an allocation of housing due to their behaviour.
- Where a request is made to join an existing tenancy, applications will only be considered where the current tenant has no rent arrears or other tenancy breaches.

16.3.4 Haringey Council Secure tenants who hold a joint tenancy but who have experienced a relationship breakdown can apply to the Housing Register.

16.3.5 Should one or other party be successful in securing an offer of accommodation, they will be required to serve notice to terminate the existing joint tenancy. The Council will then make a

decision on the future of the remaining joint tenant in accordance with section 9.3 below. In cases of proven domestic violence, the Council will always seek possession of the property.

17 FINDING A HOME

17.1.1 The Council operates three methods of matching a property to a household.

These are:

Choice Based Lettings.

17.1.2 Choice Based Lettings is where the applicants choose which properties they want and (after viewings) the property goes to the highest on the waiting list who told us they wanted it.

17.1.3 Choice Based Lettings may be suspended by the Director of Housing, Regeneration & Planning if there are National or Local restrictions such as Lockdowns which make its operation impractical or where it would create a danger to the community.

Auto-Choice/Auto-Bid.

17.1.4 Auto-Bid is where bid or bids are made for an applicant who has not already bid for two suitable properties in that bidding cycle.

17.1.5 Auto-Bid may be used, in the Council's discretion, in any of the following circumstances.

- Where the applicant is in temporary accommodation and has not bid for two properties in that advertising cycle.
- Where the applicant is in Urgent Priority for at least **6 months** and has not bid for a property in that advertising cycle.
- Where the applicant informs the Council that they wish to be placed on Auto-Bid.
- Where the Council, in consultation with support workers and other interested parties, believe the applicant is unable choose their own home.

17.1.6 The property will still be awarded to the applicant with the highest priority who may be someone who has actively chosen it or someone who bid it through Auto-Bid.

Direct Lets.

17.1.7 Directly lets is where the Council decides who gets a particular property.

17.1.8 Anyone qualifying for an Emergency Direct Offer will be offered a property through a direct let as this is the quickest way to get an appropriate offer. As the Council will seek to move those given the Emergency Direct Offer status by a direct let at the earliest opportunity and will so will typically be unable to make a successful bid through Choice Based Lettings before an offer is made.

17.1.9 A direct let will also be made to

- Bespoke Homes.
These homes are new build homes with significant aids and adaptations undertaken during the construction process to facilitate a suitably adapted home at Practical Completion. These homes will be allocated in advance to households in Urgent

Priority whose medical needs are unlikely to be met through adaptations to existing housing stock.

- New homes let through the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme
- Sheltered or Supported Housing.
- Homes let through a Local Lettings Plan
- Homes which are subject to a sensitive let.

17.1.10 A Direct Let may also be used in other circumstances, for instance where the property has specific adaptations made for an individual household or where an applicant has specialist requirements which do not come up in many properties.

17.2 Choice Based Lettings.

17.2.1 Applicants who are accepted onto the Housing Register will be able to bid a new home unless they are excluded for one of the following reasons:

- Applicants seeking a move through the Neighbourhood Move Scheme (unless they qualify for bidding under a different housing need).
- Applicants where the Council considers that, due to their age or their need for specialist support, they are not yet ready to sustain a tenancy.
- Applicants who have already been accepted a new property but not yet moved in.

17.2.2 As the Council will seek to move those with Emergency Direct Offer status by a direct let at the earliest opportunity, they will typically be unable to bid through Choice Based Lettings before an offer is made.

17.3 Size of homes

17.3.1 Applicants will normally bid properties which match their 'housing need' – that is, the size of property the Council has decided is suitable for them:

- **Properties larger than the applicants 'housing need'**
Only applicants who are downsizing from a larger Council or Registered Provider property can bid for a new home which is larger than their 'housing need'.
- **Properties smaller than the applicants 'housing need'**
Applicants can choose to bid for a property one bedroom smaller than their 'housing need'. They may choose to do this to move quicker or because their household is likely to change in the near future so they may need fewer rooms.

Registered Providers have their own standards for occupancy and may not offer properties that are smaller than the applicant needs.

17.4 Advertising available homes

17.4.1 Properties that are offered through Haringey's choice-based lettings scheme will be advertised on the Home Connections website. (www.homeconnections.org.uk)

- 17.4.2 The Council may also send emails for suitable properties to applicants who are likely to be successful if they bid them.

Not all properties will be advertised. Reasons for not advertising a property include:

- The property is needed to deal with an emergency move to an applicant requiring an Emergency Direct Offer
- It is a property particularly suitable for applicants who have specific housing needs or have been specially adapted to meet the particular needs of a specific applicant.
- It is a newly built or purchased property which is being offered through the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme or a Local Lettings Plan.
- The property has been designated as a 'Sensitive Let'.
- The property will be used to provide temporary alternative accommodation for a tenant who has to move out of their home because it has become unsafe or requires extensive repairs.
- the property will be used to provide temporary accommodation for homeless households.
- It is a Registered Provider property which is not being offered to the Council.

17.5 Labelling of properties

- 17.5.1 The Council will label the advertised homes in a way that provides as much information as possible about the property and which applicants are eligible to express an interest including:

- The address
- A description of the property
- The rent and service charges
- The number of bedrooms
- Type of property
- The floor level
- Whether there is a lift to the property floor level
- The number of steps needed to access the property from and to any lift,
- The type of heating,
- Any special facilities or adaptations.
- Parking
- whether pets are allowed
- Other relevant details.

- 17.5.2 The Council may also include any restrictions on which applicants can bid for a property e.g. where the Council is able to state which adaptations have been made and/or accessibility.

17.6 Restrictions on who can bid for some homes:

- 17.6.1 The property will be labelled to show whether it is restricted to any particular group of applicants.

- 17.6.2 Where an applicant does not meet the criteria outlined, they will not be considered for the property.

17.6.3 Examples of where this may be used include.

- **Transferring tenant:**

The Council and Registered Providers may sometimes decide that a property will only be available for their own existing tenants.

- **Adapted homes:**

Properties that are particularly suitable for people with disabilities will have special symbols to help applicants with those needs to identify them.

Adverts for adapted or accessible homes (for example those with wheelchair access) will specify that they are only available for people assessed as needing them.

- **Age restrictions:**

Some properties may have a minimum age requirement.

- **Properties with gardens**

Properties with their own private gardens may be designated or prioritised for where there is an applicant who, the opinion of the Council's medical officer, has a demonstrable and severe medical need for external space. This is distinct from a medical need for a ground floor property.

Priority for a garden will not prevent offers to those who need a ground floor home where they have a higher priority.

- **Particular Housing Needs group or bands:**

Some homes may only be offered to applicants who are in particular housing need or particular Bands. This will be determined by the Annual Lettings Plan and typically, will reserve a proportion of homes for High Priority or lower bands, or for those in Temporary Accommodation.

- **Local lettings policies:**

In order to promote sustainable and settled communities, the Council and Registered Provider may introduce specific lettings policies in some areas which will vary from this Housing Allocations Policy.

They may do this, for example, where new homes are reserved for tenants who needed to move when the new homes were being built, or where there are too many vulnerable residents in an area or there is a need to reduce child density or tackle serious anti-social behaviour.

17.7 Expressing an interest in available homes

- 17.7.1 Applicants will only be able to bid for a new home if they are eligible for Choice Based Lettings as set out in 17.2.1 & 17.8. Applicants on Auto-Bid will automatically have a bid(s) made for all properties which meet their housing need unless they have already bid for two properties in that advertising cycle.

- 17.7.2 To be considered for an available home, applicants must apply for the property by the publicised deadline and meet the labelling criteria.
- 17.7.3 Applicants will generally be able to make expressions of interest each advertising cycle.
- 17.7.4 In each weekly cycle, applicants will be able to express an interest in up to two properties for which they are eligible.
- 17.7.5 The number of homes in which an applicant may express an interest each bidding cycle, the length of the bidding cycle and the frequency with which details of newly available properties are added to the choice-based lettings website may be changed after monitoring of the scheme.
- 17.7.6 Support will be offered to applicants who require assistance in using the scheme.
- 17.7.7 Applicants will be able to express an interest in a property by using the website or having an advocate to use it on their behalf.
- 17.7.8 In certain circumstances applicants may bid for properties by proxy. Council staff, support agencies and other providers may be used as proxies for this purpose, subject to the Council's agreement to any such request.
- 17.8 Applicants who may be suspended from bidding through the choice-based lettings scheme.
- 17.8.1 An applicant may be suspended from bidding through the choice based letting scheme (or any bid that they make may be disregarded during shortlisting) in any of the following circumstances:
- Where the applicant's eligibility or level of priority is being reviewed because of, for example, a change of circumstances or concerns about possible fraud or the accuracy of the information that has been supplied in relation to their application for housing.
 - Where the applicant has already accepted an offer of another property or has been formally offered another property and has not yet confirmed whether or not they will accept that offer.
 - Where the applicant is subject to one offer only and has refused a suitable offer and is awaiting the outcome of an appeal and/or for their Priority being amended.
- 17.9 Shortlisting of interested applicants.
- 17.9.1 Once the advert deadline has passed, a shortlist of applicants expressing an interest in the property will be produced from those who are eligible and meet the labelling criteria.
- 17.9.2 Following production of the shortlist, arrangements will be made by the landlord for the shortlisted applicants to see the property as soon as possible.
- 17.10 Properties selected for a 'direct let'.
- 17.10.1 Not all properties that become available will be advertised and offered through the Choice Based Lettings (CBL) process. Some properties may instead be let through a direct let or may be used for alternative use.

Properties may be offered through a direct let because:

- **the property itself is not suitable to be offered through choice-based lettings.**

Examples include:

- Offers of Sheltered Housing Lets
- Offers made through the Neighbourhood Moves
- Sensitive Lets
- Offers which come under a Local Lettings Plans

or

- **because the property is being offered to an applicant where a direct let is more suitable**

Examples include:

- Emergency Direct Lets
- Offers made to applicants on a Quota (e.g. Housing First)
- Where the applicant is unable to use Choice Based Lettings
- Where a Social Tenants has spare bedrooms and willing to transfer to a property that is more appropriate to their needs. This is called under-occupation.
- Where a Social Tenant is living in a home with significant adaptations which they no longer need and are willing to release that home.
- Former Council Secure tenants who previously surrendered their tenancy and where the Council has agreed to offer them a tenancy of a bedsit or one-bedroom property.

Where there is a property is suitable for one of the above (and is not a property subject to letting restrictions described above) will be offered to Emergency Direct Offers (in order of the date the Panel approved the offer) and then to other applicants in the above list, in order of applicant's Priority Date.

Properties offered by direct let will be selected in the order of the earliest expected void completion date, then the date they became void.

or

- **a combination of the above**

Examples include.

- Bespoke Homes specifically adapted to an individual household.
- Offers made to an existing resident of that home.
- Where a specially adapted property has been built, acquired or adapted in order to meet the needs of a specific applicant.
- When a Council home is used as temporary accommodation which are then let to the existing resident as an introductory or secure tenancy.
- Where a property is currently occupied by a homeless household (as temporary accommodation and on the basis of a non-secure tenancy) and that property is then offered to them as an introductory / starter tenancy or secure / assured tenancy

17.10.2 Some properties may let outside of this policy or used for other purposes where.

- Where a property is being offered as a service tenancy e.g. to a caretaker.
- Supported housing, including sheltered housing, housing for older people and extra care supported housing.
- Properties which will be used to provide temporary accommodation for homeless households.
- Shared ownership, rent-to-buy and keyworker homes (although these will be publicised through the choice-based lettings advertisements).
- Where the property is scheduled to be demolished e.g. as part of an estate regeneration scheme
- Where the Council decides that the property is more suitable for alternative use.
- Where a council Secure tenant or Registered Provider's Secure/Assured tenant in Haringey requires extensive disabled facilities that can be provided more appropriately in alternative accommodation of a particular type

17.10.3 Exceptionally, there may be properties which are larger than the needs of any household on the housing register. Where this occurs, the Council will decide if the property should be considered for alternative use. If the Council decides that the property should be let to a household with the nearest housing need, offers will be considered and made by the Exceptional Rehousing Decisions Panel.

17.10.4 There may also be exceptional circumstances where for urgent operational or financial reasons there is a need to make direct offers of housing outside the Choice Based Lettings, Urgent Priority and date order criteria set out in this policy. These offers will be made via the Exceptional Rehousing Decisions Panel.

17.11 How direct lets are made.

17.11.1 Properties will be selected for direct offers on the basis of the assessed requirements of the applicants.

17.11.2 Where a 'direct let' is made, the property will not be advertised through the choice-based lettings scheme. However, to ensure transparency, the Council will report that the property has been used as a 'direct let'.

17.12 Circumstances when homeless households living in temporary accommodation may be made a 'direct offer'.

17.12.1 Direct offers may be made to applicants living in temporary accommodation in the following circumstances:

- Where an applicant is homeless and in temporary accommodation and owed a section 189B(2) Relief duty or 193(2) main duty and the Council decides it needs to move applicants out of temporary accommodation to manage the budgetary or legal impact on the Council, the Council may make a direct offer of suitable accommodation at any time.

- If an applicant is not being realistic in the areas or types of properties for which they are bidding.
- Where the Council decides that the applicant is unsuitable for Auto-bid because of the specific nature of their housing requirements or other suitability issues.

17.13 Properties designed or adapted for people with physical disabilities.

- 17.13.1 The Council and a number of Registered Providers own and manage purpose-built and specially adapted housing in the borough.
- 17.13.2 Designed or adapted for people with mobility problems or physical disabilities, these homes will be let to households who have an assessed need for such accommodation.
- 17.13.3 Although some Registered Providers may decide not to advertise all of their homes, the Council is committed to ensuring that as many of these homes as possible are advertised through the Choice Based Lettings scheme. To enable applicants to identify them easily, these properties will be clearly labelled.
- 17.13.4 Some specially designed or adapted properties, however, may not be included in the Choice Based Lettings scheme, so will be directly allocated.
- 17.13.5 Examples include the following:
- Where a specially adapted property has been built, acquired or adapted in order to meet the needs of a specific applicant.
 - Where the property is required in an emergency or for use as alternative accommodation (with disabled facilities) for a tenant who is required to move out of their home because it has become unsafe or requires extensive repairs

17.14 Verification of Application before an offer is made.

- 17.14.1 Before offering an applicant the tenancy of social housing, the Council will need to verify that the applicant is in the appropriate Priority, is eligible for the size and type of the home they are interested in.
- 17.14.2 Verification may take place before or after a viewing but where this has not been completed at the time of the viewing, any agreement to offer the property to an applicant is subject to the applicant passing the verification.
- 17.14.3 All applicants who are eligible for housing will be expected to produce original documents to verify their housing need. The Council will require proof of identity, together with proof of residence for all addresses used during the past five years. It will also require proof of income, proof of pregnancy, medical conditions and any disabilities, and a range of other documents, including for example birth certificates, marriage certificates, divorce papers, tenancy agreements, and bank statements, as appropriate.
- 17.14.4 If an applicant is unable to produce the relevant documents, they may not be able to go ahead with any current offer and may be removed from receiving further offers if they are ineligible to remain on the Housing Register.
- 17.14.5 A verification interview may take place before or after an applicant is shortlisted for a particular property. The purpose of the interview is to check on the accuracy of the Council's initial assessment.
- 17.14.6 A photograph may be taken of all applicants in the household aged 18 years and over.

17.14.7 If an applicant fails the verification process, they will not be offered the tenancy of the accommodation even if they are the highest on the shortlist of applicants who have confirmed an interest in being offered the tenancy. In such cases, the applicant will be told why they were not being offered the tenancy of the accommodation.

17.15 Offers made through a Choice Based Lettings (including Auto-Bid)

17.15.1 Where the home is being offered through Choice Based Letting, the property will usually be offered to the applicant with the highest priority and then longest waiting time who has accepted it at a viewing (subject to them passing verification and being eligible for the property).

17.15.2 However, on occasions, the property may be offered to an applicant living in temporary accommodation with the highest priority and then longest waiting time even if they do not accept it at a viewing. This is irrespective of whether or not they have chosen to attend the viewing.

17.16 Offers made via a Direct Let

17.16.1 If an applicant refuses a 'direct let', the Council will consider the applicant's reasons for refusing the offer and decide whether or not the offer was suitable.

17.16.2 Where the Council decides that it was reasonable for the applicant to refuse the accommodation offered, the Council will make one further offer of a 'direct let' of suitable accommodation.

17.16.3 Where the Council decides that it was unreasonable for the applicant to refuse the accommodation offered, the Council will make no further offers of a 'direct let' and, if the applicant is living in temporary accommodation, the Council's duty to accommodate them under Part 7 of the Housing Act will cease.

17.17 Accepting an Offer

17.17.1 Regardless of how the offer is made, the applicant will receive an offer letter which will describe the action the applicant must take to accept the offer of accommodation, including signing the tenancy agreement and collecting the keys. This letter may be sent via email, post or by hand.

17.17.2 The tenancy will commence on an agreed date after the property is ready for occupation and with reasonable notice given to the tenant.

17.17.3 The selected applicant will have up to 24 hours to make up their mind as to whether or not to accept the offer. In exceptional circumstances, this period of time may be increased.

17.17.4 When an applicant says that they are no longer interested in a property after the viewing, and where the applicant is not subject to a one-offer only policy, the applicant who is next on the shortlist will normally be considered for the tenancy.

17.18 Homeless households living in temporary accommodation.

17.18.1 If an applicant is living in temporary accommodation and makes a successful bid for accommodation (or if an 'Auto-Bid', made on their behalf, is successful), they will be offered the tenancy of that accommodation. This is irrespective of whether or not they have chosen to attend the viewing.

17.19 Refusing an offer of accommodation

- 17.19.1 When a shortlisted applicant (who is not subject to one offer only) views a property, and says they are no longer interested in being offered the tenancy, the next applicant on the shortlist will be considered.
- 17.19.2 An applicant is considered to have refused a property if they placed the Bid for the property (either themselves or upon request via a member of staff or automatic bidding) and:
- a) they have been made an offer of accommodation which they then declined. This includes offers made during a viewing.
or
 - b) they would have received a formal offer of accommodation but inform the Council or landlord that they do not wish to be considered or if they did not attend a viewing where they would have been successful had they attended.
- 17.19.3 Criteria setting out what is considered or not considered a reasonable. A refusal of an offer of the correct size and type in an area where there is no risk of violence against the applicant will normally be considered unreasonable.
- 17.19.4 The consequences of refusing an offer of accommodation depend on the circumstances in which the offer is made and is set out in the table on the following page.
- 17.19.5 It is important for an applicant who is owed a homelessness duty to understand that the refusal of a suitable offer of accommodation is highly likely to result in cessation of the Council's duty to accommodate them, the loss of any temporary accommodation, and the loss of priority under this Housing Allocation Policy.
- 17.20 One offer policy
- 17.20.1 Except for
- under-occupying social tenants,
 - permanent decants for regeneration and
 - previous regeneration decants with a right to a second move.
- applicants will only receive one offer of a suitable property.
- 17.20.2 Second offers will only be made if a review officer has deemed the property is unsuitable (e.g. due to access or known threats of violence) or if the Exceptional Rehousing Panel has approved a second offer is appropriate.
- 17.20.3 Refusal of an offer will result in the Housing Register application being cancelled unless that offer was made through the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme. The applicant will have to re-apply to the Housing Register and will be given a new Priority Date in accordance with the date of the new application.
- 17.20.4 The refusal of an offer may also result in the applicant's current accommodation being withdrawn.

17.21 Applicants with Emergency Direct Offer status

17.21.1 Applicants who refuse an Emergency Direct Offer will not be made a second offer unless the property was unsuitable or there are exceptional circumstances.

17.21.2 A property may be unsuitable if it

- does not have enough bedrooms for the household (as set in this policy), or
- is inaccessible for one or more members of the household or
- where there is a risk of violence against the applicant or a member of the household from a known perpetrator

17.21.3 Applicants who believe they have exceptional reasons for refusing the offer will need to make an appeal to the Exceptional Rehousing Decisions Panel who will decide if a further offer is to be made.

17.21.4 If the Panel decides that exceptional circumstances exist, the Panel may reset their Priority Date will be reset to the date they refused the offer.

17.22 Applicants in temporary accommodation

17.22.1 If an applicant is living in temporary accommodation, they are expected to accept any suitable offer of accommodation that is made to them. If the offer is refused, the applicant will be invited to reconsider the offer within the specified time period, but applicants are encouraged to accept offers. They have the right, however, to request a review of the suitability of that offer of accommodation.

17.22.2 Where such an applicant refuses an offer of suitable accommodation, the Council's duty to accommodate them under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 will cease.

17.22.3 Applicants in temporary accommodation have the right to request a review of the suitability of that offer of accommodation (except in management transfer cases). Where the Council decides that the accommodation offered was not, the Council will make one further offer of a 'direct let' of suitable accommodation.

17.22.4 This means that, subject to the outcome of any review, the Council will stop providing the applicant with temporary accommodation. As well as losing their priority for housing, the applicant will have to make their own arrangements for housing. Their Housing Register application will be cancelled. If an applicant wishes to re-join the Housing Register, they will need to make a new application, and priority will be given on the basis of their new Application date.

17.23 Failing to attend a viewing

17.23.1 Failure to attend a viewing will also be counted as a refusal if the applicant would have been successful had they attended.

17.24 Failing to respond to an offer of accommodation.

17.24.1 If an applicant fails to respond to a written offer of accommodation within the timescales specified and without good reason, they will be considered to have refused that offer of accommodation. This includes offers made by a direct a let, offers made through the choice-based lettings or through auto-bidding.

17.25 Where the Council may withdraw an offer of accommodation

17.25.1 Following a written offer of accommodation, the Council can only withdraw an offer before the tenancy agreement is signed and only where one or more of the following situations applies:

- The applicant has made a false declaration or failed to provide the Council with up-to-date information and that, after reviewing their housing application, the Council has determined that the applicant is not eligible for the home.
- The property details available at the time that the written offer was made were incorrect and it was subsequently discovered that the size and type of the property did not, in fact, match the applicant's needs.
- The applicant's eligibility has changed, since the written offer of accommodation, following a review of the application. This includes where the applicant's household income or savings are higher than the permitted maximum levels.
- Where the property is unsuitable for the applicants needs and in particular, where the property does not meet the requirements for which Medical Priority was awarded. For instance, where a home has internal stairs, and the applicant was given priority on the basis of a level access home being required.
- Where the applicant is a Council Tenants who has a current application to buy their dwelling under Right to Buy or Registered Providers under Right to Acquire or purchasing a property through shared ownership.
- A fourth tier (or above) Officer decides that, taking all factors into account, the property should not have been offered to the applicant.

17.26 Request to decline an offer after a tenancy agreement has been signed.

17.26.1 If an applicant signs a tenancy agreement and then rejects the home, this does not count as a refusal of an offer of accommodation because, at this stage, they are the tenant of that property.

17.26.2 If the applicant no longer wishes to move into the new property, they will need to serve a Notice to end that tenancy. It is likely that the landlord of the new home will insist on the full rent being paid for the notice period, and it is highly unlikely that this notice period will be paid by benefits.

17.26.3 If the applicant has already given notice on their previous home, it will not be possible for them to withdraw the notice (although their former landlord may decide nevertheless to permit them to remain).

17.26.4 Where the applicant is living in temporary accommodation and refuses to move out of that accommodation after signing a tenancy agreement following an offer under this Scheme, they will be evicted from their temporary accommodation and the Council's duty to accommodate them under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 will cease. This means that the applicant will have move into the property offered or give notice to end the new tenancy and to make their own arrangements for housing.

19 REASONS PROPERTIES MAY NOT BE OFFERED BY CHOICE BASED LETTINGS

19.1 Sensitive Lettings

- 19.1.1 A sensitive letting may be used if the Council knows that an applicant has committed serious offences that restrict where they can live. This may include Registered Sex Offenders or those identified as posing a serious risk to a specific community. In such cases, the Council will consult fully with the Police, the Probation Service and other agencies.
- 19.1.2 There may also be occasions when it is necessary and appropriate to make a sensitive letting to a property that has become vacant. This usually only made where there was a period of serious nuisance or anti-social behaviour caused by the drug, alcohol or mental health issues of the former tenant and/or their associates. This restriction will typically apply to the property vacated by the perpetrator but, in extreme cases, this may also be applied to properties in the immediate neighbourhood which become vacant in the same period.
- 19.1.3 In such instances, applicants who have such issues (and are likely to cause similar problems to arise or likely to be vulnerable to these issues) will be prevented from being considered for the property.
- 19.1.4 Similarly, there are on occasions where it is necessary and appropriate to make a sensitive letting to a property which has become vacant because the previous tenant was transferred due to harassment based on particular characteristics. While the Council is continuing to take legal actions against the perpetrator, the Council may consider restricting lets to households who do not share the same characteristics which formed the basis of the harassment of the previous tenant.
- 19.1.5 All Sensitive Lettings in the above three sections will be made by Direct Offer only.

20 LOCAL LETTINGS POLICIES & SENSITIVE LETTINGS

- 20.1.1 In exceptional circumstances, the Council and its partners may decide to allocate homes in a particular area on a slightly different basis from normal. This is called a 'Local Lettings Policy'.
- 20.1.2 Local Lettings Policies may be used to achieve a wide variety of housing management and other policy objectives, including:
- Reducing anti-social behaviour
 - Reducing deprivation
 - Improving difficult-to-let estates.
 - Protecting existing stable communities
 - Creating balanced communities and achieve wider community objectives, such as a broader social mix and supporting and encouraging people into employment.
 - Making best use of the Council's housing stock.
- 20.1.3 The decision to apply a Local Lettings Policy will be made jointly by the Council and the landlord of the properties. Such policies should not directly or indirectly discriminate against any particular person.
- 20.1.4 In the case of new build Council housing, this is done through the borough-wide Neighbourhood Moves Scheme described in Appendix 3. For smaller areas, this will be done through a Local Lettings Policy.
- 20.1.5 All Local Lettings Policies will be subject to consultation with affected parties and will be supported by an Equalities Impact Assessment.
- 20.1.6 The Lead Cabinet Member for Housing has delegated authority to approve Local Lettings Policies.
- 20.2 Local Lettings Policies – Existing properties
- 20.2.1 If a Local Lettings Policy is applied to an area due to a history of anti-social behaviour, applicants applying for such properties may be asked to supply a tenancy reference and confirm that they, or a member of their household have no history of criminal convictions (this does not cover those convictions that are legally spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974).
- 20.2.2 Where it is proposed to introduce such a policy, there will need to be clear evidence that it is desirable and a time limit for review of not more than 2 years will apply. The implications for equal opportunities and the 'reasonable preference' criteria of the law will be considered.
- 20.3 Newly built or acquired Council housing.
- 20.3.1 For new social housing acquired or built by the Council for letting on secure tenancies, and where the scheme is more than three new social housing tenancies, the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme described in Appendix 3 will be used to allocate the initial letting of these new properties. The Neighbourhood Moves Scheme forms an appendix to this policy.
- 20.4 Newly built or acquired social rented housing owned by non-Council landlords.
- 20.4.1 For new social housing owned by non-Council landlords, those landlords in agreement with the Council may decide to let properties under a Local Lettings Policy. The reasons for

doing so need to be clearly stated and should fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Targeting some properties to lower need bands on first lettings. Equal opportunities and legal issues would need to be taken into account.
- Targeting some, or all properties to applicants that are in employment (the definition of 'employment')

20.4.2 Sometimes Registered Providers may have agreed that they will allow a certain amount of their stock to go to their own tenants. If this happens, properties may be advertised accordingly, subject to the Council's agreement.

21 THE ANNUAL LETTINGS PLAN

21.1.1 The management of the Council's lets and nominations is set out in the Annual Lettings Plan. This plan forecasts the lets for the coming year and allocates them between competing housing demand groups.

21.1.2 The Annual Lettings Plans will be approved by the Director of Regeneration, Planning and Development in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing.

21.1.3 The Annual Lettings Plan will:

- Review how lets in the previous year were allocated.
- Forecast the number of lets that are expected to be available during the year.
- Forecast how these lets may be shared between different housing needs.
- Set the number or proportion of lets set aside for specific groups including a zero allocation where appropriate. These are called Quotas. The total number of Quota lets included in any Annual Lettings Plan will not exceed 25% of the total number of projected lets for that year.

21.2 The Annual Lettings Plan will be published each year.

21.3 Allocating Lets within the Quotas

21.3.1 The applicants selected for a Quota Let will be decided by the Move-on Manager as follows.

21.3.2 On recommendation from the relevant Move On officer, the Housing Demand Service will then identify the next suitable match for the needs of the applicant selected and a Direct Offer will be made.

22 REVIEWS, APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

22.1 Right of review

22.1.1 Applicants have the right to ask for a review of certain decisions that the Council has made about their application for housing or an offer of accommodation. This includes a review of:

- Decisions about refusing an application to join the Housing Register (whether because ineligible or non-qualifying)
- Decisions to remove an application from the Housing Register
- Offers of housing
- The facts which the Council considered (or may have considered) when making a decision whether to offer the applicant housing.

22.1.2 An applicant may request a review, for example, if the Council decides to exclude them from the Register, or remove them from the Register, or where they dispute a fact that is taken into account when deciding whether or not to make an allocation of accommodation.

22.1.3 Homeless applicants also have a statutory right of review on certain homelessness decisions, including decisions on their eligibility, suitability of accommodation offered and any discharge of duty.

22.2 How to request a review

22.2.1 Applicants who disagree with a decision that the Council has made must request a review, in writing, within 21 days of the date of the letter or email that informed them of that decision.

22.2.2 If an applicant is unable to put the request in writing, they may be offered an interview to explain why they disagree with the decision.

22.2.3 Where an applicant has requested a review, the Council is required to respond to it, in writing, within 56 days. This period starts from the date that the Council receives the applicant's request for a review.

22.2.4 Where the Review Officer finds in favour of an applicant who has been prevented from joining the Housing Register or has been given 'reduced preference', the original decision will be cancelled and their application re-instated.

22.2.5 Where the Review Officer decides that the offer of accommodation was not suitable, any penalty that has been imposed (including the discharge of the Council's homelessness duty) will be cancelled:

- Applicants who have not accepted the offer will be entitled to another offer of accommodation (through choice-based lettings, a direct offer or Auto-bid, as appropriate)
- Applicants who have accepted the offer and taken on the tenancy of that accommodation will be awarded Urgent Priority of the Housing Register and will be given a Priority Date that matches the date that they accepted the tenancy.

22.3 The Council's complaints procedure

22.3.1 Applicants unhappy with a decision about housing applications are expected to request a review where this is available. However, where there is no review which applies, then the

applicant can make a formal complaint unless the matter has already been decided by a court, tribunal or ombudsman ruling.

22.3.2 Applicants should note that complaints will not be accepted where:

- Where there is an alternative appeal process before a court or tribunal, e.g. about the refusal of planning permission, school admissions or exclusions, housing benefit, penalty charge notices, contractors or suppliers disputing invoices, terms of contracts or alleging a breach of contract.
- Matters already decided by a court, tribunal, or ombudsman ruling.

23 DISCRETIONARY POWERS

23.1.1 The Allocations Policy cannot cover every eventuality. Where there are exceptional circumstances, evidence-based decisions on offers of housing will be made by the Exceptional Rehousing Decisions Panel. This will include applications from tenants requiring an emergency management transfer to alternative social housing and grants of tenancy.

23.1.2 Exceptional Rehousing Decisions Panel will have discretionary power to award (or remove) additional priority and approve (or withdraw) offers of housing.

23.1.3 The Exceptional Rehousing Decisions Panel will have specific remits/purpose and membership set out in the Panel's Terms of Reference which will be published on the Council's website. The Council reserves the right to amend a Panel's name and remit and to combine or split a Panel's duties as it sees fit.

24 REVIEWING AND MONITORING

24.1 Reviewing and monitoring the Housing Allocations Policy

24.1.1 The Housing Allocations Policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it meets its stated objectives, complies with existing and proposed legislation and guidance, and does not operate in a manner that disadvantages, or discriminates against, any particular group.

24.1.2 Where the Allocations Policy is found to be in conflict with legal duties, statutory directives or changes in legalisation or case law:

- The application of the policy will be amended to resolve these conflicts.
- For clarity, these operational changes will be published alongside the Allocations Policy.
- Any required changes will be adopted into the next Housing Allocations Policy following consultation.

24.2 Monitoring and review

24.2.1 To ensure that housing allocations continue to comply with its duties the Council will record and monitor lettings that result from the use of Local Lettings Policies and the Neighbourhood Moves scheme.

24.3 Equal opportunities and monitoring

24.3.1 The Council is committed to the principle of equal opportunities in the delivery of all of its services. The Council will seek to ensure that its Housing Allocations Policy is applied in a

manner that is fair to all sections of the community regardless of nationality, ethnic origin, marital status, age, gender or disability.

- 24.3.2 The Council and its partners will be responsive, accessible and sensitive to the needs of all applicants. They will not tolerate prejudice and discrimination and will actively promote equality.
- 24.3.3 Applicants will be invited to indicate if they wish to make use of the Council's translation and interpretation services, and if they require other special services as a result of visual impairment, hearing difficulties or other disability.
- 24.3.4 Confidential interview facilities are provided at all Customer Service Centre all of which are wheelchair accessible. Home visits will be carried out as required, especially where the applicant has a disability or mobility problems.
- 24.3.5 All applicants for housing or re-housing will be asked to provide details of ethnic origin, age, gender, faith, sexuality and disability. This will not, however, be a requirement for acceptance of an application. Diversity records will be kept and monitored on a regular and systematic basis to ensure properties are being offered and allocated fairly and will be reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 24.3.6 The Housing Allocations Policy (including amendments) will be reviewed regularly in order to ensure that it does not operate in a manner that disadvantages, or discriminates against, any particular group.

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25 APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Definitions

Unless stated otherwise, the following terms should be interpreted as follows.

Social Tenancy

A Secure or Introductory tenancy with Haringey Council or a Secure or Assured tenancy with a Registered Provider.

This does not include Assured Shorthold Tenancies, Licences, non-Secure tenancies, Service tenancies or those issued for temporary accommodation.

Council Secure tenants

Secure and Probationary tenants of Haringey Council but does not include other tenants of the Council such as those in temporary accommodation or service tenancies.

Registered Providers or Housing Associations

Partner organisations that have entered into nomination arrangements with the Council.

Registered Providers or Housing Association tenants

Secure or Assured tenants of Registered Providers or Housing Associations have entered into nomination arrangements with the Council.

Health Authority

Haringey Public Health authority

Appendix 2: Applications from Councillors, Council employees & their families

25.1 Councillors' involvement in decision making.

- 25.1.1 Elected Councillors cannot be involved in assessing housing applications or the allocation of specific properties or allocation to specific households.
- 25.1.2 This does not prevent them, however, from seeking or providing information on behalf of their constituents, or from being involved in developing and approving future policy including future allocation and local lettings policies.

Members of the Council, staff and their relatives.

- 25.1.3 In order to ensure that the Council is treating all applicants fairly, any application for housing or re-housing from Councillors or employees of the Council or associated persons, or their siblings, parents or children must be disclosed.

Relatives of the employee or councillor are:

- Anyone living with them as their partner or as a member of their household.
- Natural/adoptive/stepparents.
- Children.
- Sisters and brothers.
- Daughters- or sons-in-law.
- Grandparents.
- Aunts and uncles.
- Estranged spouses or partners, regardless of whether or not they live as part of the applicant's household.

- 25.1.4 The above list of relatives includes those who are relations created through adoption or marriage.
- 25.1.5 These applications will be assessed in the normal way, but any allocation of housing must be approved by a third tier (or above) Officer.

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Appendix 3: Neighbourhood Moves Scheme

Introduction

The Neighbourhood Moves Scheme is intended to offer the benefits of new homes to Social Tenants living near them by giving priority for newly delivered rented homes to be let by the Council or a Housing Association (Register Providers) who has agreed to take part in the scheme.

This Scheme will by default apply to all developments where ten or more newly built homes are either being acquired or directly delivered by the Council or Housing Association for letting at Council rent or London Affordable Rent or a Housing Association rent unless a Cabinet decision is made to exclude a particular development and/or to consult on and approve an alternative Local Lettings Plan. It will however apply to homes that remain unallocated after completion of an alternative Local Lettings Plan.

This Scheme only applies to the first let of each new home. Re-lets of each property, and the letting of the successful applicant's former home will be allocated in line with the Housing Allocations Policy.

The scheme will not apply to any individual Bespoke Homes or Supported Housing and the whole scheme will only apply if there are ten or more homes being built or purchased which are not Bespoke Homes or Supported Housing.

Bespoke Housing are new build homes with significant aids and adaptations undertaken during the construction process. These homes will be allocated in advance to households in Urgent Priority whose medical needs are unlikely to be met through adaptations to existing housing stock. Bespoke Homes does not include minor adaptations which could be undertaken after (or just before) a tenant moves in.

Eligibility for Neighbourhood Moves Scheme

Applicants in all groups will need to supply information about their households and their current housing. Applicants are recommended to make an application to join the Housing Register as properties will only be offered according to assessed Housing Need, and applicants' place on the Housing Register may be used to assess priority order if there is a tie within a Group or sub-group. Full Applications to join the Housing Register may not be required where the Council (or Housing Association) is able to verify housing need. A decision whether a full application is required will be at the Council's discretion.

Tenants whose homes have been, or are to be, demolished in order to build new homes (Group 1) will be eligible for this Scheme once a formal Council decision has been made to implement an estate renewal project following a statutory section 105 resident consultation and a decision has been given to award Urgent Priority rehousing status, unless the Council decides to make 'early offers' to tenants or leaseholders prior to this decision formally being made.

Local existing Secure Tenants in Group 2 and 3 will be eligible for this Scheme where they meet the following criteria:

- The tenant must hold a social tenancy with Haringey Council or a Housing Association who has agreed to join the scheme. The tenancy must be in their own name and cannot be a tenancy in supported housing or in a home being offered as temporary accommodation.
- The tenant will be required to hand back the keys and give vacant possession of their existing home on taking up an offer of a new home through this Scheme.

- The tenant must have lived at their current address for at least 24 months prior to the date estimated for completion of the development at the time at which tenants are invited to apply under this Scheme (see “Administration” below).
- The tenant cannot have moved to their current home through a previous Neighbourhood Moves Scheme offer in the last 5 years unless they are moving to a smaller home and/or need to move due to accessibility of their current home.
- The tenant must have a housing need to move as set out in the Housing Allocations Policy.
- The tenant cannot have.
 - rent arrears, court costs or former tenancy arrears at the time of the move unless they meet the exceptions set out below (see Arrears).
 - caused any significant and/or persistent anti-social behaviour on the applicant’s tenancy file or where legal action is being taken by the Council, a Housing Association or Police or other authorities in the last two years. The decision on what constitutes significant antisocial behaviour will be at the discretion of the tenant’s current housing officer.
 - committed any other tenancy breach which has warranted a Notice of Seeking Possession in the last 2 years or where a Notice to Quit has been served. Notices of Seeking Possession may be disregarded if they have been withdrawn or if the housing office is satisfied that the breaches have been resolved and unlikely to reoccur.

Breaches of tenancy (including rent arrears) may be disregarded where the Exceptional Rehousing Decisions Panel has agreed there are exceptional circumstances why these may be disregarded.

- The tenant cannot have an active / approved Right to Buy application on their current home.
- The tenant cannot have an alternative offer of rehousing. Tenants who have been offered and accepted alternative housing elsewhere are expected to take up those existing offers. Refusal of alternative offers will not reinstate their eligibility for the Scheme unless the alternative property was unsuitable or if there are exceptional circumstances.
- That the proposed scheme is in an area which is un-safe for the applicant, or the available properties are unsuitable.

For example,

- Applicants who have given or in the process of requesting priority to move out of the area due to a threat of violence will not be able to move to a new home in the same area.
- Applicants who need level access will not be able to move into a new home if this is not available in the new home,

Arrears

Tenants who have debts owing to the Council or Housing Association will be allowed to apply for a move through the Scheme. However, unless there are exceptional circumstances, they will not receive an offer if:

- The applicant owes less than 6 weeks rent of their current net rent liability (or more than £1,000) and those have been reducing over the last 3 months through regular payments made by the applicant.
- The applicant owes more than 6 weeks of their current net rent liability (or more than £1,000) and has been making regular payments for 6 months according to an agreed repayment plan.

Arrears caused by delays in the payment of Housing Benefit may be disregarded if Housing Benefit confirm that the payment is imminent.

Debts considered include.

- Arrears on their current tenancy
- Unpaid arrears on a former Council or Housing Association tenancy account including those due for temporary accommodation.
- Unpaid court costs owed to the Council or Housing Association connected to their current or former tenancy.

Who may be included on the application form.

When determining the size of property applicants need, the Council (or Housing Association) will only consider household members who are either a partner or a child of the tenant or a live-in carer.

Children of the tenant must

- Are either 22 years old or younger or have lived with the tenant in their current home for at least 1 year at the date of the application.
- Do not have their own children or a partner living with them.
- Do not have a separate housing application.

Other household members (including adult children) may be accepted if significant care is being given to them or if they are giving support to the tenant or another household person.

All household members need to be declared on housing benefit, council tax and voting register where applicable.

Priority for new homes

Applicants will be given priority for new homes in the area in the order set out on the next page, with Group 1 having the highest priority. Where there is more than one household in a group, priority will be determined by the sub-group appropriate to themselves and any order within that sub-group. Where there are more than one household following this priority order, Priority will be given to the tenants with the highest position on the housing waiting list where applicable, and then to the tenant with the longest current tenancy. Priority for all remaining homes (i.e. within Group 4) will be as otherwise set out in the Housing Allocations Policy.

Tenants will only be assigned homes appropriate for their assessed housing need for their dependents and will not be assigned homes which do not match their housing need unless there are exceptional circumstances or where they are under-occupying their current homes and bidding for properties smaller than the home they currently occupy. Under-occupying tenants will only be allowed to retain one spare bedroom.

Any homes which are wheelchair accessible, on the ground floor, or have any other facilities linked to need will only be allocated to household with those specific needs. This means that where there is no one with these needs within a Priority Group, these homes will be available to the next highest Priority Group where someone meets these needs and ultimately, to those applicants on the wider Housing Register who require them.

Group 1: Council or Housing Association social tenants whose existing homes are to be demolished to build new homes.

Priority within this Group will be given based on the location of homes being demolished and in the following order:

- 1) Firstly, to tenants whose homes are being demolished in order to build the new Council homes being offered, or whose homes are being demolished as part of the same estate renewal scheme, then to
- 2) Tenants whose homes are being demolished to build new Council homes in the same ward, then to
- 3) Tenants whose homes are being demolished to build new Council homes in a neighbouring ward.

Tenants who have already moved as part of an estate renewal scheme will not be eligible to move again under this Scheme unless their previous move was to allow the new homes to be built on the same development to be built and are returning under a 'Right to Return'.

Group 1 tenants will be excluded from offers for new homes built on the Broadwater Farm estate.

Group 2: Council or Housing Association tenants who have spare bedrooms and willing to move to a smaller home.

Priority within this Group will be given in order of the number of net number of bedrooms they will be releasing, and then by their place on the housing register, and then (for those not on the register) in order of the start date of their current tenancy.

Group 2 tenants will be excluded from offers for new homes built on the Broadwater Farm estate.

Group 3: Council or Housing Association tenants living within a 250-metre radius of the new housing.

Priority within this Group will be given in the following order:

- 1) tenants who are currently under-occupying their home, and bidding for a smaller home than they currently occupy, in order of the number of net number of bedrooms they will be releasing, and then by their place on the housing register, then to
- 2) tenants who are currently over-crowded in order of the net number of additional bedrooms they require, and then by their place on the housing register, then to
- 3) tenants on the Housing Register in order of their place on the housing register, then to

Tenants on the Broadwater Farm Estate will be regarded as being within 250 meters of any new homes of that estate.

Group 4: All other households on the Housing Register

Any remaining properties will be advertised and let in accordance with the general Housing Register.

Distance from the development

The distance from the development will be measured.

- From the location submitted in the GLA or other funding bids attached to the new homes. Where a location is not submitted as part of a funding bid, the locations will be determined by the central point of the new development as calculated by the scheme's architect.
- To the location of the tenant's home as set out in the Eastings and Northings for that property on the Council's property database.

Administration

The 250 meters will be measured from the middle of each phase in each development. For any schemes receiving planning permission after the implementation date, the middle of each phase will be determined by the architects as part of the planning submission unless the New Homes Board approves an alternative point due to unusual features of the scheme.

The Council will contact the eligible tenants within the boundaries at least six months before the estimated date for completion of the development to invite them to make a Housing Register application.

At the Council's discretion, however, where the number of homes to be allocated is small and the number of prospectively eligible tenants large, this contact will initially request a response intended to identify whether the tenant would be likely to have priority within the Scheme, and invitations to make a full application will be restricted to an appropriate number of those with an identified higher Scheme priority.

Following the closing date for applications, applications will be reviewed. Where appropriate following that review – where applicants with priority under the Scheme can clearly be matched to available homes - new homes will be allocated using Direct Lets. Otherwise, new homes will be allocated using Choice Based Lettings. Households who are unable to join the register because they are adequately housed will be offered any remaining homes by Direct Let.

The Council will advise eligible tenants of the date the properties are advertised where Choice Based Lettings is used.

Tenants who have been offered and accepted alternative housing elsewhere are expected to take up those existing offers and will not receive an alternative offer through this Scheme.

Existing Local Lettings Plan and recent Purchases

The Scheme will not replace existing Local Lettings Plans in Broadwater Farm or Love Lane and will only apply to homes left after those Lettings Policies have been applied.

Discretion

This policy cannot cover every eventuality, and the Council reserves the right to make offers outside of the Scheme in exceptional circumstances. Where a tenant believes there are exceptional reasons for making an offer outside the scope of the area or other conditions, an application can be made to the Exceptions Panel for the estate or, if there is none, then to an alternative Exceptions Panel.

Appendix 4: Income threshold calculations

The Income thresholds are set at the median income of households of their size living in Haringey.

The Council establishes the median income for households of different sizes in the borough in line with the calculations made by the GLA when setting London Living Rent. Every year, the GLA publishes benchmark London Living Rents for every ward in London. London Living Rent is designed to be affordable for local households on a median income and is therefore set by the GLA at a third of the gross median household income in each ward.

To establish a borough-wide median income, the Council first calculates the borough's median London Living Rent from all wards in Haringey and then multiplies that figure by three to establish the mean incomes used in the GLA calculations. By these means, the Council establishes the median household income before tax that is applicable to households of different sizes.

This method ensures that many households who are not eligible to join the housing register will be eligible to rent affordable housing let at London Living Rent. Many will also be able to access affordable housing delivered for shared ownership. Affordable shared ownership and London Living Rent homes are accessed through the GLA's Rent to Buy site and fall within the remit of the Council's Intermediate Housing Policy. But only households receiving the median income or less will be eligible to join the housing register.

Where a household includes non-dependent adults who are not lead applicants, their incomes are included in the assessment of household income.

A household will be deemed automatically to meet the income eligibility criteria if the lead applicant or applicants are in receipt of means-tested social security benefits such as Universal Credit, Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Pension Credit, Working Tax Credits or Child Tax Credits.

Income from social security benefits paid specifically to sick or disabled people and carers is not included in the assessment of a household's income for housing register eligibility purposes. Such benefits include Personal Independence Payment, Disability Living Allowance for children, Attendance Allowance, Carer's Allowance, and Employment and Support Allowance (ESA).

Income received by non-dependent adults in the household from pension credits are not included in the household in the assessment of a household's income for housing register eligibility.

The eligibility threshold figures will be updated using the same method every year from January 2026 when the GLA publishes updated London Living Rents. Figures are rounded to the nearest pound. If during the lifetime of the Allocations Policy the GLA ceases to publish updated London Living Rent benchmarks, the thresholds will instead be updated annually on publication of the year's CPI inflation figures.