

Housing Allocations Policy comparison document

Brief table detailing the changes between the two policies, *updated following public consultation in August 2020.*

Allocations Policy 2013	Allocations Policy 2020	Rationale for change
Residency local connection established through current and five years continuous residence.	Residency local connection criteria established through current residence and have lived in TRDC five out of six years (excluding time spent in temporary accommodation).	To allow customers who have moved out of the district for a period of up to but no more than one year in a six year period to establish a residency local connection.  Examples could include temporarily moving due to employment or to look after family members living in another local authority area.
Family local connection where an immediate family member (parents, adult children, adult siblings) is currently resident and has continuously been a resident within the district for at least ten years.	Family local connection where an immediate family member (parents, adult children, adult siblings) is currently resident and has continuously been a resident within the district for at least ten years. The customer must have a relationship with that family member and a need for their support, at the point of application and point of offer of any accommodation.  <i>We would consider a need for support to be a formal care requirement, child care needs or the need to assist in the care of a child with high complex needs. Any other exceptional circumstances will be considered on an individual basis.</i>	To take into consideration the nature of a family association and the specific need for a customer to move to the district to be near family support. The current policy simply stipulates that a customer must have a family connection, regardless of the nature of a relationship nor whether there is a need or not to move into the district.
Employment local connection established through being employed in the district for a minimum of 24 hours per week for at least the last 12 months.	Removal of employment local connection criteria.  Inclusion of 'Right to Move'. Customers with a 'Right to Move' are exempt from the local connection qualifying criteria. This includes	There is no statutory requirement to include an employment local connection. This is now covered by the 'Right to Move'.  The 'Right to Move' is statutory guidance from the

	customers who need to move to the district to take up employment or an offer of employment who would suffer hardship if they do not do so.	Government. This incorporates the need for a customer being required to move to the district for employment purposes to avoid financial hardship.
No specific exemption to the local connection qualifying criteria for victims of domestic abuse.	Victims of domestic abuse are exempt from the local connection qualifying criteria.	This is in accordance with Government guidance, recognising that victims of domestic abuse may need to move areas to ensure they are free from risk of harm.
<p>The following groups of people are exempt from the local connection qualifying criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a person having serviced in the Regular Forces;</li> <li>• a bereaved spouse or civil partner of someone service in the Regular Forces where the bereaved spouse or civil partner is no longer entitled to reside in military accommodation due and the death of their spouse or partner was whole or partly attributable to their service;</li> <li>• a person who is an existing or former member of the Reserve Forces and are suffering from a serious injury or illness which is wholly or partly attributable to their service.</li> </ul>	<p>The following groups of people are exempt from the local connection qualifying criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• those who are currently serving in the Regular Armed Forces or who were serving in the Regular Forces at any time in the five years preceding their application for an allocation of social housing;</li> <li>• bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the Regular Forces where (i) the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease, to be entitled to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their Service spouse or civil partner, and (ii) the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service;</li> <li>• serving or former members of the Reserve Armed Forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service. a member or former member of the Regular Armed Forces and the application is made within five years of discharge (includes bereaved spouses and civil</li> </ul>	<p>To reflect new Government guidance to ensure that estranged spouses, civil partners and adult children of serving personnel are not disadvantaged when applying for social housing.</p> <p>Members or former members of the Armed Forces who lived in the district for 12 months immediately prior to enlisting will continue to be awarded a minimum Band C priority.</p>

	<p>partners leaving accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of their partner);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a divorced or separated spouse or civil partner of a Regular Armed Forces member who needs to move out of accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence due to a relationship breakdown;</li> <li>• an adult child of a serving Regular Armed Forces member who is no longer able to remain in family accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence.</li> </ul>	
<p>Customers who did not meet the local connection criteria and registered prior to January 2013 could remain on the Housing Register prioritised in Band D.</p>	<p>Only customers with a local connection as defined in Housing Allocations Policy 2020 qualify to remain on the Housing Register.</p>	<p>To remove a 'two-tier' system on the Housing Register, of one set of rules applying to customers who applied to join the Housing Register before the local connection qualifying criteria was introduced (2013) and another set of rules for customers who applied after.</p> <p><i>Housing Services will use the reporting function of the Home Connections software to produce a list of all customers who applied for the Housing Register prior to 2013. These customers will be contacted to inform them of this change and ask for all to complete a Change of Circumstance form to assess their continuing eligibility for the Housing Register.</i></p>
<p>Worker priority (12 months band start date backdate) is awarded to customers who are currently employed for at least 24 hours a week and have been for 12 months.</p>	<p>Worker priority remains, but working priority also awarded to customers who are unable to work due to illness or disability.</p>	<p>To ensure customers who are unable to work due to an illness or disability are not disadvantaged by the worker priority.</p>

<p>A couple making a joint application, their combined employment is 24 hours a week to be eligible for 12 month back date.</p>	<p>A couple making a joint application, their combined employment is 37 hours a week to be eligible for 12 month back date.</p>	<p>To acknowledge a couple who are both able to work will have greater capacity to work the equivalent of one full time job (37 hours) than a single person. This is particularly the case for customers who have caring or childcare responsibilities.</p> <p><i>As applications are verified at the point of offer, the onus will be on a customer to provide evidence of the above should it apply. If evidence is not provided a customer will not receive this additional priority. Customers will be advised of this requirement when making their online application. Backdates in priority will not be awarded should a customer not provide the necessary evidence when applicable.</i></p>
<p>An unborn child is not considered part of a customer's household.</p>	<p>An unborn child will be considered as part of a customer's household four weeks prior to estimated due date.</p>	<p>In most cases a Registered Provider will not accept a nomination if a customer is expecting a new child where this would change the size of the property they need. This change acknowledges this, allowing a customer to bid for the property size they will need once an unborn child is born.</p> <p><i>The shortest time a person was awarded a two-bedroom property was 71 days from receiving Band B. Although this is rare, it shows that should we award this priority earlier than four weeks (for example at production of Mat B1) we could have a situation where a person was housed in a two-bedroom property which may not be affordable to them. If the Committee wish to extend the proposed four-week timeframe it is suggested that this is not more than six-weeks.</i></p>

<p>Customers with a gross income of over £35,000 are considered to have financial means to resolve their own housing need.</p>	<p><i>A customer may not qualify to join the Housing Register if they have the financial means to resolve their own housing need. This customer would typically have in excess of £16,000 in savings or a total gross household income of the below figures listed, as per their bedroom need at point of application and offer;</i></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="608 618 983 943"> <tr> <td data-bbox="616 618 791 730">One Bedroom Need</td> <td data-bbox="791 618 975 730">£34,560.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="616 730 791 842">Two Bedroom Need</td> <td data-bbox="791 730 975 842">£45,396.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="616 842 791 943">Three/Four Bedroom Need</td> <td data-bbox="791 842 975 943">£61,200.00</td> </tr> </table>	One Bedroom Need	£34,560.00	Two Bedroom Need	£45,396.00	Three/Four Bedroom Need	£61,200.00	<p>To reflect the increasing property prices and typical private rented sector rent charge in the district.</p> <p><i>The figures listed have been achieved by taking a snapshot of the current average rent price in the district of each property size and multiplying that by 36. The vast majority of High Street Estate Agencies use this as part of their financial referencing procedure to set the minimum annual household income figure.</i></p> <p><i>For example, the current average market rental price in the district for a one-bedroom property is £961.00 per calendar month. Applying the above calculation (£960.00 x 36 = £34,560.00). A person/couple would need to have a minimum annual household income of £34,560.00 to pass the referencing demanded by an Estate Agency to be able to let the property.</i></p>
One Bedroom Need	£34,560.00							
Two Bedroom Need	£45,396.00							
Three/Four Bedroom Need	£61,200.00							
<p>Housing Register applications are verified at the point of application and the point of offer. A customer must provide all relevant documentation prior to being made live on the Housing Register.</p>	<p>Housing Register applications are verified at the point of offer. Customers are requested to provide relevant documentation at the point of application, but this is not checked until a customer is nominated for a property.</p> <p><i>If a customer is successful in bidding, their application will be verified at the point of offer. There may situations in which an application may be verified at the point of application and the point of offer, specifically but not limited to applications made under 2.2.2 (medical) and 2.2.4. Should a customer exceed the limit of 2.2.4 or</i></p>	<p>Due to the high demand for social housing, most customers who make an application to join the Housing Register will not be successful in bidding for a property. This change will improve officer efficiency, by officers only verifying those who are nominated to a Registered Provider for an offer, rather than all customers applying to join the Housing Register.</p> <p><i>A clause has been included to give the option to verify an application at point of application and point of offer.</i></p>						

	<p><i>apply under 2.2.2 (medical), the application will be verified at the point of application and the point of offer.</i></p>	<p><i>A confirmation page/question will be added to the Housing Register online application form to highlight this process clearly to the customer.</i></p> <p><i>Unless incorrect information has been entered by the customer, Home Connection should inform an applicant they are not eligible to join the register.</i></p>
<p>Non-dependent children living with a customer are considered part of a customer's household.</p>	<p>Non dependent children are not considered part of a customer's household unless they are unable to live independently due to care or support needs.</p> <p><i>Non dependent children (aged 21 or over and no longer in tertiary education or apprenticeship) will not be considered part of a household unless they are unable to live independently due to support or care needs.</i></p>	<p>A non-dependent child is typically considered a child who is over the age of 18 and no longer in secondary education (including sixth-form or college).</p> <p><i>This change does not impact on the existing accommodation occupied by customers. However, they will not be counted if the customer applies for larger accommodation, meaning that if the customer would like to keep their older children at home they will need to recognise that this will come with a need for some flexibility from the family as they will be unable to bid for larger accommodation.</i></p> <p><i>This may mean sharing a room with a sibling or making use of a lounge as a bedroom. This is often a circumstance encountered by families in the private rental market who wish to keep elder children at home for longer.</i></p>
<p>Properties are advertised through Herts Choice Homes.</p>	<p>The Council is no longer part of Herts Choice Homes Consortium. Properties are advertised through Home Connections.</p>	<p>The Herts Choice Homes Consortium disbanded in 2018. The Council changed the housing software system used to administer lettings.</p>

<p>Certain groups of social housing tenants living in a property smaller than their housing need are awarded a five year backdate to their band start date.</p>	<p>No additional priority awarded to these groups of social housing tenants.</p>	<p>Additional priority is currently given to certain groups of social housing tenants over customers in exactly the same housing situation but renting in the private rented sector.</p> <p>These groups of people typically include social housing tenants who have been awarded priority due to living in 'over-crowded' housing.</p> <p>The housing need of customers in either tenure (social housing and private rented housing) does not differ. Removing the additional priority ensures the banding scheme reflects this.</p>
<p>Banding system changes</p>	<p>Applicants living in accommodation and a hazard awareness notice has been served awarded Band D.</p> <p><i>Customers living in accommodation for which an Improvement Notice or a Prohibition Notice has been served, by the Council, in relation to a Category 1 or 2 hazard in the customer's dwelling and the remedies needed to reduce the hazard will require the property to be vacated for a significant period of time or will make the property unsuitable for occupation by the customer awarded Band C.</i></p> <p>Customers owed a Prevention Duty awarded Band D.</p> <p>Customers owed a Relief Duty with a priority need awarded Band C.</p> <p>Customers owed a Relief Duty without a priority need awarded Band D.</p>	<p>To recognise a customer is living in a property where a health and safety issue has been identified and raised with the landlord.</p> <p>New priority has been introduced to incorporate the new Prevent and Relief duties introduced in the Homelessness Reduction Act.</p>

<p>Composite needs not recognised by the banding scheme.</p>	<p>The introduction of composite needs. One composite need must be medical priority.</p>	<p>Composite needs recognises that a customer may have two separate housing needs of 'equal priority' which can result in having an overall greater housing need than another customer with just one housing need.</p> <p>For example a customer could be awarded Band C medical priority and Band C overcrowding priority. The current policy would award Band C priority; however composite needs recognises they have an overall greater priority and they would instead be awarded Band B priority.</p> <p>Customers with two separate Band D (including medical) needs will be awarded Band C. Customers with two separate Band C (including medical) needs will be awarded Band B.</p> <p>However customers with two separate Band B needs will not be awarded Band A. Customers in Band A typically have such an urgent need to move that the highest possible priority is awarded. This would not be applicable to customers with two separate Band B needs.</p>
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