

Housing Allocations Policy Revised

Amended October 2013

EALING COUNCIL

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INTRODUCTION

Part 1

This document contains the Allocations Scheme, required by the Housing Act 1996 as amended. It sets out the policies and procedures to be followed in the letting of housing accommodation, and its priority levels; both to the Council's secure tenants on the transfer list and those seeking housing, known as 'homeseekers', on the Housing Register. In framing our allocations scheme we have had regard to the new code of guidance (June 2012), the council's Homelessness Strategy, the Tenancy Strategy and London Housing Strategy and taken into account the Equality Act 2010.

Part 2

This Section contains additional policies and procedures, in respect to priority levels, to be followed in transferring secure tenants within the London Borough of Ealing.

In drawing up this scheme there has been consultation with all registered social landlords, with whom the Council has nomination arrangements (Housing Associations), and various departments of the Council, including Social Services. Due consideration has also been given to the Council's powers and duties, as detailed within the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) and related legislation, and guidance given by the Secretary of State in respect to equal opportunities, in accordance with related legislation.

Lettings Policy

The Council is faced with a substantial demand for social housing, and an insufficient supply to meet this demand within Ealing. The allocation of housing, to those who apply, is severely limited by the small number of properties available. An annual review of anticipated demand for and supply of, housing will take place; from this, a plan for all lettings will be set for the coming year. This will contain targets for each identified group of housing demand to receive a percentage of the available housing resources. These targets are set taking into account housing need:

- Statutory and contractual obligations
- The cost of temporary accommodation and other financial considerations
- The Council's responsibility as a landlord
- The need to make the best use of Council stock
- The housing situation within the borough
- Other matters in the Council's interest as they arise

If a demand group does not receive the expected proportion of properties any imbalance in relation to the targets will be addressed. This will be achieved by the allocation of certain properties, exclusively to certain groups, in line with the agreed lettings plan until the balance is restored.

Choice Based Lettings and Allocation of Property

The Council will, in the main, allocate property by the use of an advertised Choice Based Lettings Scheme. At present this scheme includes a number of partners, Registered Providers and Local Authorities, in West London. For the purposes of allocation to properties, applicants are placed in one of four Bands, measured by their circumstances, and based initially on an assessment of the information supplied by the applicant on their registration form. The criteria for the Bands are set out in this document.

SECTION 1

PART ONE – HOUSING REGISTER

1. Eligibility to Join the Housing Register (Homeseekers)

The Council maintains a Housing Register and the following persons are eligible to be put on it (these persons are referred to as 'eligible persons'):

- a) persons aged over sixteen
- b) young persons leaving care, referred by Social Services under their quota arrangements
- c) persons in hospital, prison, or the armed forces whose last settled address was in the borough
- d) persons accepted by Ealing, for rehousing, under the Housing Moves Scheme, or other regional/national mobility schemes that Ealing may participate in.
- e) persons who the council considers should be eligible, on a case by case basis, due to exceptional circumstances or special needs
- f) assured tenants of registered social landlords, or other housing authorities, who are residents within the borough
- g) other persons who are considered 'eligible persons' in accordance with current legislation

Persons not currently resident within the borough, who fall within groups b, c, d, will be assessed and awarded priority according to the general criteria set out in this scheme

The Localism Act 2011 allows significant local control over who qualifies for housing and the priority given to national and locally determined groups that are assessed as being in housing need. These flexibilities are now reflected in the policy.

The Head of Allocations and Accommodation has the discretion to allow a homeseeker to retain their priority in Band A, B or C on the Register after they have moved out of the borough in exceptional circumstances.

The following persons are not eligible for entry onto the Housing Register for the allocation of social housing:

- a) persons disqualified, under Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 and associated statutory instruments, on the grounds that they are subject to immigration control, except for those allowed by the law
- b) persons not habitually resident in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and the Republic of Ireland, except for those allowed by law
- c) EU nationals required to leave the UK by the government
- d) Where the applicant, or any member of the household, have been found guilty of serious anti-social behaviour, the Council considers that they are unsuitable to be a tenant as a result, including but not limited to where:-
 - They, or any member of the household, have assaulted a member of staff and an injunction is being sought or has already been obtained

- They, or any member of the household, who have knowingly given false or misleading information, or withheld information, that has been reasonably requested

e) Households with a joint income of more than £60,000 or capital assets of more than £24,000

f) **Households that have not been resident in the Borough for the last 5 years.**

NB. Households wishing to move whose adult children or parents have lived in the borough for over 5 years can be considered by the Social Welfare Panel.

The following applicants will not be disqualified on grounds that they do not have a local connection:

- Members of the Armed Forces and former Service personnel, where the application for housing 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 serious injury, medical conditions or disability sustained as a result of their service

The Council retains the ability, in exceptional circumstances, to exercise its discretion when making decisions with regard to including persons on the Housing Register. Such cases will be referred to the Social Welfare Panel for agreement (e.g. where there is urgent housing need such as mental health issues, but has breached their tenancy agreement or is in the process of having legal action taken against them.)

Persons not currently resident within the borough, where discretion has been given to join the register will be placed in band D, unless they are in one of the five categories of person to whom reasonable preference is given under Section 167 of the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002, Section 16(3), in which case they will be placed in Band C. In addition, at the time of offer, this group of non-residents will be given less preference than other members within the same Band who are currently resident within the borough (i.e. irrespective of priority date, an in-borough member would be given preference over an out-of-borough member). Preference between out-of-borough members would still be determined by priority date.

2. Right of Review

We will write to anyone who is being excluded from the register detailing our reasons. Homeseekers/ex-members have a right to ask for a review of a decision to refuse, or terminate, their membership (see Appendix B, Review Procedure).

A fresh application will be considered if:

- a) the applicant's immigration status has changed
- b) the applicant can demonstrate good behaviour for a minimum period of 12 months.(see d) above)
- c) a minimum period of 12 months has passed since an applicant, or any member of their household, has knowingly given false or misleading information, or withheld information, that has been reasonably requested.
- d) the applicants financial circumstances change and income and capital assets reduce below the threshold

e) after a lapse of time the five year local connection with Ealing can be demonstrated

3. Who can be considered part of the household

- a) Applicants requesting rehousing are required to complete an online application in order to be put on the register. Only the applicant's own children, where the homeseeker is the sole legal guardian, will be accepted as part of the household. Where there is another legal guardian, a decision will be made on a case-by-case basis to agree whether it is reasonable to accept the child as part of the household on the application. Exceptions will be made where there are reasonable grounds e.g. where parents of a child/ren have passed away and the applicant has taken over the full care and responsibility. Joint applications will only be accepted for couples; adult relatives and siblings will be expected to make separate applications.
- b) Persons included and accepted as a member of the household for the purposes of a homelessness application where the local authority has accepted a rehousing duty will be considered. However, household member(s) joining after the duty has been accepted will be subject to the general housing register criteria.

Following registration, the following persons can be considered as part of the household.

- a) Persons who were accepted as part of the household, at the date of registration, and are still in occupation.
- b) A partner who is living in a permanent relationship with the homeseeker, and can prove that they have done so for at least twelve months, or are married.
- c) Children born since the registration date, and dependent children under the age of 18 joining the household, where it can be proved that the homeseeker is the sole legal guardian and that there is no other available option for rehousing. Where there is another legal guardian a decision will be made, on a case-by-case basis, to agree where it is reasonable to accept the child as part of the household. If the applicant is separated from a partner, and the children are subject to a shared residence order, a decision will be made as to the best method of meeting the housing needs of both parties.
- d) A dependent relative who has joined the household because they are unable to live independently, and there are no other available options for the family, e.g. the relative owns a property, or occupies a property, large enough to accommodate the family. Advice will be sought from the Medical Adviser on whether the relative needs to live with the family. Where this is not considered essential other options, such as sheltered housing, will be discussed with the family before a decision is made by the Allocations Manager as to whether the relative should be included in the application or advised to make a separate Housing Register application. Normally only adults in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, which includes the higher rate care component, or those receiving Attendance Allowance, at the higher rate, will be included. The dependent relative must be eligible for an offer in order to be considered.
- e) A carer, where the homeseeker can demonstrate that a live-in carer is required and who has been identified and has moved in with the homeseeker, or is ready to do so when accommodation is made available, and where the Medical Adviser agrees that a carer is essential.
- f) A carer, if agreed by the Social/Welfare panel, is required on social grounds.

4. Re-registrations (renewals)

Homeseekers and tenants have to re-register annually to remain on the Housing Register, and are sent a reminder in the anniversary month of the original date of registration.

Homeseekers and tenants are allowed one month in which to re-register following which the file is perused for other recent contact, i.e. telephone calls, interviews or correspondence. If none, the applicant is notified that he/she will be removed from the register unless the Council considers that they should remain on the register.

5. Removal and Suspension from the Housing Register

A homeseeker or tenant will be removed from the register if:

- it is found that he/she has never been, or ceases to be, an eligible person
- fails to re-register within one month of the annual anniversary of their registration
- the Council considers there are good reasons, and sufficient grounds, for doing so

Before removing a person from the register under the above circumstances, the Council will give written notice. The notice will ask the person to provide information, which the Council requires in order to help them decide whether or not to remove them from the register. This notice will give the homeseeker 21 days to provide the Council with the requested information, and explanations of the Council's possible decisions to remove them from the register; including failure to provide requested documents.

Homeseekers will be notified in writing of their removal from the register, with the reasons for this, and their right to request a review of the decision. (see Appendix B, Review Procedure)

A homeseeker or tenant will be suspended from the register if they:

- bid for and refuse three or more reasonable offers within a 6 month period may be suspended for six months
- fail to attend a verification interview or provide requested verification documents.

6. Eligibility for membership of Locata (Transfers and Homeseekers)

All applicants registered on the Housing (Homeseeker) or Transfer registers (see Transfer Policy at Part Two) of any partner, local authority, or housing association, are eligible for membership, unless ineligible for any of the reasons referred to in 1. above. Partners are:

- London Borough of Brent
- London Borough of Ealing
- London Borough of Harrow
- London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
- London Borough of Hillingdon
- London Borough of Hounslow
- A2 Dominion
- Catalyst Housing
- Notting Hill Housing Association
- Genesis
- Paradigm Housing Group
- Shepherds Bush Housing Association
- Stadium Housing Association
- Thames Valley Housing Association
- Other organisations that join the partnership

7. Pre-Registration Checks

- a) All homeseekers are required to complete an online application to be put on the Housing Register, although an eligible person may be registered without an application in some circumstances, e.g. a referral from Social Services, at the Council's discretion.

- b) If the Council is satisfied that the homeseeker is an eligible person, he/she will be registered and notified that they have been registered.
- c) If the homeseeker is not eligible they will be notified in writing, giving the reasons for the decision, and the right to request a review of this decision (See Appendix B, Review Procedure).
- d) Eligible persons are required to submit, when requested, passport photographs, and proof of identity for all persons on the application, and proof of residence for all persons aged 16 or over included on the application, covering the last ten years. Examples of acceptable proof are:
- Passport
 - Marriage certificate
 - Television Licence
 - National Insurance Number card
 - DWP payment book
 - Mortgage statements
 - Council and/or Housing Benefit letters
 - P60
 - Payslips
 - Bank statements

Where the applicant(s) is unable to provide the above documents, the reasons given will be considered, e.g. the applicant has recently arrived from abroad or unable to provide due to age i.e. below the age of 16.

Applicants who do not provide the required documents may be registered at the discretion of the authority. However, if following registration they fall into Band C or above, their application will be suspended pending submission of required documents. This discretion does not apply to passport photographs.

The Council will take all necessary steps to guard against misrepresentation and fraud. Enquiries will be carried out with relevant agencies at any time, either at the application stage or subsequently including the grant of tenancy. An applicant who obtains accommodation by making false or misleading statements, or withholding relevant information, or who have failed to inform the Council of any material change in their circumstances, may be prosecuted. Possession proceedings will be taken to recover any tenancy granted to such persons.

8. Registration and Initial Assessment

An initial assessment is made based on the information on the application form and any other information available. All eligible persons will be assessed, placed in the appropriate 'bedroom category' and in one of the four priority Bandings in order of date of registration.

Eligible persons in bands A to C will be notified in writing that they have been registered as either a homeseeker or a transfer, and that they can bid for homes through the Locata Home online publication and will subsequently be provided with a membership pack which includes the following information:

- Locata Identification Number (LIN)
- Band and the reason for it
- Priority date
- Bed size
- Mobility group, if applicable (disability level)

Homeseekers in band A to C will also be advised that they will be sent coupons for bidding and an explanation of how to bid for properties.

SECTION 2

PRIORITY BANDS (See Appendix A for full listing of Bands)

1. The four priority Bands and their definitions are:

Band A: Emergency and Top Priority Members

This Band is for cases of an exceptional level of need and where there are compelling and urgent reasons for placing them in this top priority Band. This will include cases where this is due to the seriousness of the applicants circumstances, or that there is an overriding and urgent need, from the Council's point of view to rehouse them.

Band B: Members with an urgent need to move

This Band consists of the housing demand groups that are given high priority by the Council. This high priority status is given because of:

- Statutory duties
- High levels of housing need amongst tenants or homeseekers
- Where tenants need to be decanted from regeneration schemes
- Where it is in the Council's interest to transfer
- Where special transfer policies have been agreed
- Where there are special needs for supported housing

Band C: Members with an identified housing need – **reasonable preference**

This Band is for households with an identified housing need, and fall within the criteria set out in the 1996 Housing Act (as amended), which states that **reasonable preference** must be given to certain types of applicants.

Band D: All other members

This Band will consist of households wishing to apply for inclusion on the Housing Register, but not falling within any of Band A, B or C criteria. Band D applicants will not be able to actively bid for properties. They will remain on the inactive register unless there are properties which are not wanted by any applicant in the priority bands. In this case consideration of a direct offer will be given to the applicant with the earliest registration date requiring a property of that size or type.

There is a residual discretion for households whose defining features are deemed to be so exceptional that a higher priority is deemed to be necessary and are assessed as such. Where the defining features (including the cumulative needs) of a member are considered so exceptionally severe as to warrant immediate/imminent rehousing, or where it is considered in the Council's interest, there is a discretion to enable the household to be made a direct offer of accommodation in addition to the advertised scheme.

2. Applicants who work or adhere to the rules in conducting their Council tenancy

20% of lettings will be made available to applicants from working households and those Council tenants who comply with their tenancy agreement and pay their rent and Council tax.

Working households will only qualify if they have been employed for a minimum of 24 hours a week and for 12 out of the last 18 months. Evidence of employment will be required in the form of tax returns, copy of employment contract and/or any other suitable proof as requested.

Ealing Council has a scheme which rewards good tenants who want the opportunity to seek a transfer. These transfer applicants are existing tenants who have demonstrated that they are “model” tenants by complying with the terms of their tenancy agreement for a specified period of time.

In order to bid successfully for properties advertised as part of this scheme, Households :-

- a) Must not have rent arrears for the previous 12 months.
- b) Must not have breached their tenancy conditions for the previous two years.
- c) Must not have any anti-social behaviour record.

Once tenants have been accepted for the scheme they must continue to comply with the above criteria until they are rehoused in order to remain with the scheme.

Applications will be prioritised by band and date within that band.

Properties available under this scheme will be clearly marked in the Locata Home publication

3. Change of Circumstances

Members must inform the Housing Department of any changes in their circumstances. If this results in a Band change, the member will be informed in writing of their new Band, the reason for it, and the applicable priority date. They will also be informed of their right to request a review of this decision (see Appendix B, Review Procedure)

4. Priority dates

The principle to bear in mind is that no-one should overtake existing members, in a higher Band, when being placed into it or have a later (more recent) priority date when moving down to a lower Band.

When moving up a Band (from D towards A) it will be the date that the higher priority has been given.

When moving down a Band (from A towards D) the new priority date reverts to the date applied when the member was previously in that Band, or any earlier date when they were in a higher Band. The principle is that when moving down they should be awarded the earliest date that they were in the new lower Band, or in a higher Band.

The Council may determine that, in certain circumstances, an earlier priority date can be awarded to better reflect the needs and waiting time of the household, super-ceding the later date already issued. See examples below:

Example 1	Priority Date
Member applies to register in January and is awarded Band D	January
In February member is awarded Band B	February
In March member is awarded Band A	March
In April member is downgraded to Band C	February

Example 2	Priority Date
Member applies to register in January and is awarded Band C	January
In February member is awarded Band B	February
In March member is awarded Band A	March
In April member is downgraded to Band C	January

Example 3	Priority Date
Member applies to register in January and is awarded Band C	January
In February member is awarded Band A	February
In April member is downgraded to Band B	February

Example 4	Priority Date
Member applies to register for sheltered accommodation in January and is awarded Band C	January
In February member changes circumstances and wants one bed, non- sheltered, accommodation and is downgraded to Band D	January
In April member is awarded medical priority - Band C	April

Example 5	Priority Date
Member applies to register in January and is awarded medical priority – Band B	January

Band A rating will generally be given for a limited period of time, and at the discretion of the Council. In each case this will be reviewed at regular intervals to check, for example, whether failure to apply for properties indicates that a member's case is not a genuine emergency.

Priorities within Bands will be on a date order basis, according to the date the member was placed into that Band. There are separate rules for out-of-borough residents, as detailed in Section 1, Eligibility to Join the Housing Register.

There is a residual discretion for households whose defining features are deemed to be so exceptional that a higher priority is deemed to be necessary.

The relevant dates for the four Bands are as follows:-

Band A	Date
Emergency Medical	date approved as emergency
Emergency Management transfer	date approved as emergency
Urgent permanent decant	date agreed move is urgent
Social Welfare Panel	Date approved at Panel
Urgent priority for the Council	Date approved
Under-occupation	date transfer application registered (for smaller property)

Band B	Date
Urgent Medical	date medical assessment completed by Medical Adviser
Homeless lease end (if lease cannot be extended)	date agreed person is priority for move-on
Statutory overcrowding	date agreed as statutorily overcrowded
Unauthorised occupants (non-statutory successor)	date approved for rehousing
Urgent Management transfer	date approved for management transfer
Ex-tenant discharged from institution	date new housing application registered
Permanent decant	date person agreed for rehousing
Adapted Property Release	date transfer application registered (or occupant with disability deceased/moved out, if later)
Ex-service tenants	registration date
Unauthorised occupants (non-statutory successor)	date approved for rehousing
Supported housing release	registration date (provided approved by Social Services for move-on)
Young People Leaving Care and other quotas	date accepted as quota
High Priority hardship	date high priority agreed
Severe Social hardship	date high priority agreed

Bands C & D

Registration date unless moving from Band D to Band C because of newly unsatisfactory housing conditions, new medical needs, when duty is accepted by Ealing to a homeless household under Section 193 of the 1996 Act or Section 65 of the 1985 Act, or when becoming eligible for sheltered accommodation (or new Care Plan) when the date of the new assessment is used.

Applicants who work or adhere to the rules in conducting their Council tenancy.

Working Households	By original band and by priority date within that band
Tenants who play by the rules in conducting their council tenancy	By original band and by date within that band.

20% of lettings will be prioritised to these groups of applicants.

Ealing

SECTION 3

Assessments

Following the registration, a decision will be made on what follow up action is appropriate. This can include referral to the Medical Adviser; the Housing Occupational Therapist (HOT), Environmental Health Officer (EHO), Housing Solutions Service if there is threat of homelessness, Social Services and/or the Head of Housing Solutions. Where there are exceptional circumstances, a case may need to be referred to the Social Welfare Panel or any other appropriate panel formed for such purposes.

1. Medical Adviser

Homeseekers who indicate that they have an illness or disability, which is affected by their current home, or who may be vulnerable due to physical or mental health grounds, and in need of settled accommodation, are referred to the Medical Adviser for recommendations which will inform the council's decision.

Such homeseekers are requested to complete an online Application for Medical Assessment. This is referred to the Medical Adviser who may consult the applicants General Practitioner or hospital consultant, as appropriate. The Medical Adviser may request a report from the Housing Occupational Therapist (see (b) below)

Assessments are made on the homeseeker, or members of their household, in relation to the effect present housing may have on their state of health. If there is an adverse effect, due to current housing, the Medical Adviser will consider whether the overall effect on the household is sufficiently severe to warrant the recommendation for inclusion in a higher Band.

Where a household is overcrowded, and/or there are other adverse circumstances, the medical assessment will take this into account on the overall health of the household. Overcrowding, unless it is statutory overcrowding which applies to Council tenants only, places homeseekers into Band C. The Medical Adviser, in his/her recommendation, will consider whether an overcrowded household contains someone whose health is adversely affected by their housing, and/or there are other adverse circumstances, should be placed in a higher Banding (i.e. given extra priority) because of the additional impact on the health of the household.

In each case the recommendation is based upon the judgement of need. If there is a recommendation for floor level, this must be recorded against the appropriate disability level. On receipt of the recommendation, the Council will reach a decision and Homeseekers will be placed in one of the following Bands:-

Band A

Emergency Medical to be recommended where:-

- a) The homeseeker, or a member of the household, has a life threatening condition which is seriously affected by their housing; or homeless households in emergency temporary accommodation which is unsuitable due to a severe medical condition.
- b) Where the housing conditions, and/or other circumstances, are having such a major adverse effect on the medical condition of the applicant or member of the applicant's household as to warrant emergency priority.

Band B

Urgent Medical to be recommended where the current housing conditions are having a major adverse effect on the medical condition of the homeseeker or a member of the household.

Band C

Medical Need to be recommended where the current housing conditions are having an adverse effect on the medical condition of the homeseeker, or a member of the household, which creates a particular need for them to move.

2. Housing Occupational Therapist

Where a homeseeker, or a member of the household, has a substantial and permanent physical disability, which may place them in disability levels 1 or 2, a referral should be made to the Housing Occupational Therapist (HOT). The HOT will visit and carry out a full assessment of the disability and housing needs. The HOT will place the applicant in one of the following mobility groups:

1. Wheelchair user, indoor and/or outdoor
2. Persons who cannot manage steps or stairs, and may use a wheelchair some of the time
3. Independent, but can only manage one or two steps

3. Environmental Health Officer

A referral may be made to the EHO for an assessment where a homeseeker has indicated that he/she is living in insanitary conditions, including lacking one or more of the following:

- food preparation facilities (i.e. sink and space for a cooker)
- inside WC
- bathing and personal washing facilities

Where there is a statutory duty to rehouse, and there are no other housing solutions, homeseekers will be placed in Band A. This will usually be e.g. where the EHO has notified that he/she has issued a Closing Order (i.e. properties unfit for human habitation, where there is no alternative measure to render the property fit) or Compulsory Purchase Order to enable site clearance for a road widening scheme.

If the EHO considers the property to be unfit by virtue of substantial or major disrepair, and would justify service of notice under Section 189 of the Housing Act 1985, the applicant will be placed in Band C.

4. Housing Solutions Service

Homeseekers who have been served with a Notice to Quit (NTQ) or Possession Order (PO) will be referred to the Housing Advice and Assessment Service who will investigate the validity of the Notice and offer advice and assistance. Where a duty is accepted the applicant will be placed in Band C.

5. Social Welfare Panel

The purpose of the panel, is to consider and award additional priority to homeseekers and tenants where a household is experiencing severe hardship as a result a combination of different factors which make the need for rehousing more urgent than when considered separately.

The panel will be chaired by the Head of Allocations and Accommodation (or another appropriate senior officer as required) and include at least two other managers from within the Housing Demand division

Three levels of priority Banding and additional bedroom need will be considered and the household will be awarded the appropriate Band on the merits of their circumstances, taking into account multiple needs.

Multiple needs are those where a household meets more than one priority and when considered holistically, this will warrant and increased banding.

The panel will also consider cases where a household would not be eligible to register under the 5 year residential qualification, but where households wish to move into the borough for specific reasons, and have adult children or parents who have lived in the borough for over 5 years.

a) Process

Households must be either eligible, registered applicants from the housing register or existing Council tenants. Referrals should be through the appropriate housing officer, who will complete a SWP referral form, The Panel will consider cases referred to it on a monthly basis, although severe emergencies may be considered on an ad-hoc basis.

The Panel will then review each referral to determine whether additional priority for rehousing is necessary to prevent further hardship or deliver other forms of support eg. through Social Services etc.

b) Priority Banding

The member will be placed in the appropriate Band as follows:

Band A – Homeseekers and Tenants:

- Where the property is unsuitable due to severe disability, severe harassment, severe violence towards the occupants or severe disrepair.
- Where there are exceptional circumstances and/or there are multiple needs which warrants emergency priority.

Band B – Homeseekers and Tenants

- Welfare agency referrals (Police, Social Services) eg
 - child protection reasons
 - persistent harassment of a serious but not life threatening nature
- Urgent need to move due to severe social hardship agreed by Social/Welfare Panel eg
 - to give or receive care or support
 - multiple needs

Band C – Homeseekers and Tenants

Where a tenant needs to move for social reasons, eg

- accommodation required to assist Social Services in delivering a Care Plan
- to relieve other social/welfare hardship eg multiple needs.
- release adapted property

c) Additional Considerations

Homeseekers in temporary accommodation where someone in the household has obtained employment, and is experiencing severe or additional financial hardship, as a result can be awarded additional banding (either A or B).

The panel will also consider and award an extra bedroom for a carer for social reasons. Applicants requiring a live-in carer for medical reasons should be referred for a Medical assessment. In this case the Panel will consider all the details of current care arrangements as requested in the report. This would only apply where the household was not entitled to a separate bedroom under current policy.

The Panel will consider potential Housing Register applications where the household would not be eligible to register due to the 5 year residential qualification, but where households wish to move into the borough for specific reasons, and have adult children or parents who have lived in the borough for over 5 years

d) Re-referral

There is no right of appeal against decisions made by this panel. Homeseekers or tenants can only be re-referred to the Panel if there has been a significant, demonstrable change in their circumstances. In these cases the referral must include new evidence in regards to their request.

SECTION 4

Homeseekers

1. Rent Arrears Policy

Homeseekers in temporary accommodation

- Homeless households in temporary accommodation will be advised that, if they fall into rent arrears, they will be ineligible for an offer

Homeseekers will not be eligible for an offer if they:

- refuse to pay the rent
- fail to make a commitment to repay arrears
- fail to provide supporting information for a Housing Benefit claim

If a homeseeker falls into arrears, their application will be made ineligible. The application will remain ineligible until the arrears are cleared, or an agreement has been reached to clear the arrears and this agreement has been kept to for at least three months. Depending on the amount of the arrears, and the nature of the agreement, discretion will be exercised to review cases and make the application eligible earlier or later than three months. Exceptions can be agreed to this policy, in particular for those cases in Bands A or B.

Where a homeseeker is in the private sector, any arrears will not be taken into account. However, where they have lost their previous accommodation through the non-payment of rent, or they were previously Council or Housing Association tenants and who have been found to be intentionally homeless, they will be treated as ineligible for offers (see Section 8(9), Ineligibility for Offers). This decision must be reviewed at regular intervals, or at least once a year (see Section 8(10), Review of Ineligible Members).

2. Verification

All Homeseekers eligible to bid for properties must have their circumstances, and housing conditions, verified usually by home visits.

Homeseekers placed in Bands A and B, and those homeseekers in B and C who have been waiting the longest, and

Homeseekers with medical needs, that appear to qualify them for Bands A and B, are to be visited and verified. All homeseekers will be notified that a visit is to be arranged and will be advised that they are required to provide the following documents prior to the visit:

- Proof of identity and residence for all persons included on the application
- Proof that they are still eligible persons
- Out-of-borough residents will have their circumstances verified in conjunction with their local authority

3. Home visit

At the home visit previous addresses and the reasons for leaving will be investigated to determine whether the applicant lost their accommodation by doing or failing to do something. This will include:

- a) where the applicant is a former tenant of a social landlord and was evicted as a result of a breach of tenancy agreement
- or
- b) where the applicant is a former Council tenant with rent arrears

The scheme will be fully explained to the homeseeker at the visit. It should be stressed that homeseekers will no longer be able to wait for an offer; they must actively homeseek if they are to be rehoused.

Following the visit, the visiting officer will complete a Housing Visit Report and refer the file, with all documentary evidence obtained, and recommendations, if appropriate, to the Housing Solutions Officer. They will update and reassess the application, amending the Band if necessary, and make any further enquiries and request any further documents needed before referring the case to the Head of Housing Solutions for a decision. The officer will indicate if the applicant has given false, misleading, or has withheld information, or if any of the circumstances at a) or b) above apply.

The Manager will agree that homeseekers are eligible or ineligible for offers and refer them back to the Housing Solutions Officer. Reasons for ineligibility for offers will be provided, e.g. having deliberately lost accommodation by doing or failing to do something to prevent it or giving false or misleading information in the application or supporting documents or withholding information the Council has reasonably requested.

The Housing Solutions Officer will amend and update the application ensuring that the verification date and all necessary information is noted on the system. Unverified members who bid for property will not be allowed to sign up.

The Housing Solutions Officer will notify ineligible homeseekers in writing, and the reasons of their ineligibility, and how to request a review of the decision (see Section 8(10), Review of Ineligible members)

4. Non-secure tenants

If a block is scheduled, or being considered, for redevelopment or demolition, the Council may decide to re-let vacant properties in that block to homeless households on non-secure tenancies.

If the Council requires possession of a property in order for redevelopment or demolition to proceed, the Head of Housing Allocations and Accommodation will place priority homeless households, who are non-secure tenants of that property, into Band A or B, depending on when possession is required. This will also apply to assured shorthold tenants of a registered social landlord, placed by Ealing Council, living in the same block.

Asylum seekers who do not qualify for the Housing Register, but who have been accepted as unintentionally homeless and in priority need, may be housed in a Council property with a non-secure tenancy. If they are granted exceptional leave to remain in this country, or refugee status, and meet all other eligibility criteria they will qualify for the Housing Register.

In these three circumstances above the Head of Housing Solutions will authorise the granting of a secure tenancy of the property they occupy, unless one of the following applies:

- the Council is taking, or seeking to take, action against the tenant due to rent arrears or other breaches of tenancy
- the property is larger than the tenant needs
- the property is in a block that is scheduled for demolition or redevelopment, or which the Council has a policy of letting only to non-secure tenants

SECTION 5

Other Groups on the Housing Register

The following groups will be placed on the Register if they are eligible persons:

1. Quota Cases

The Cabinet agrees annual quotas for single people nominated by Social Services to assist young people being discharged from care, homeseekers with mental health problems or learning disabilities who are leaving specialist care and for foster parents. Quotas are also provided for move-on accommodation to assist voluntary housing agencies working in Ealing. All quota homeseekers must be eligible persons and have local connection as defined by Part VII of the Housing Act 1996. Quota homeseekers except young persons leaving care are generally allocated studio and one-bedroom flats for which there is limited demand. Young persons being discharged from care (YPDC) will be offered accommodation in line with current policy on bedroom categories. Quota homeseekers will be placed in Band B.

Voluntary organisations with a quota must have a local housing project; quota housing is provided as move-on accommodation in order to free up temporary accommodation for other local people with housing needs.

- Quota homeseekers complete an application form which is referred by Social Services, or the voluntary agency, with supporting/background information
- The Housing Solutions Officer will register the application and refer to the Head of Housing Solutions, who will check eligibility for the quota and for monitoring purposes
- The Manager will refer back to the Housing Solutions Officer to arrange an interview, medical assessment if needed for rehousing requirements, update and advise applicant of Band group etc, as detailed in Section 8 above. They must also be advised that they have 3 months, from the date of acceptance, to exercise choice by bidding for appropriate properties. If they fail to secure accommodation within the given period their application will be reviewed and they may be made one offer only in line with current policy.

2. Obligations

Ex-service tenants who the Council has a contractual obligation to rehouse, and ex-Council tenants released from an institution who the Council has undertaken to rehouse.

- a) They must complete an application form, which is registered and referred to the Manager for eligibility checks.
- b) The Housing Solutions Officer will interview, arrange a medical assessment for rehousing requirements, verify details as appropriate, and amend and advise applicant as detailed in Section 8 above.

Ex-service tenants and ex-Council tenants released from an institution, who the Council has undertaken to rehouse, will be placed in Band B. In these cases it is essential that the Housing Solutions Officer enters the verification date on the system.

These homeseekers must also be advised that they have 3 months, from the date of acceptance, to exercise choice by bidding for appropriate properties. If they fail to secure accommodation within the

given period their application will be reviewed and they may be made one offer only in line with current policy. Ex-service tenants are entitled to two offers as part of their service conditions.

3. Unauthorised Occupants (Non statutory successors)

Unauthorised occupants, for the purposes of this scheme, are categories of persons set out in a), b) and c) below, who were residing in the property at the time the previous tenancy ended.

Any other unauthorised occupiers, not falling within these categories, must be referred to the Housing Solutions Team and advised to seek independent housing advice.

- a) Persons not entitled to take over a tenancy from a secure tenant by succession following the death of the previous tenant.

If, following the death of the secure tenant, the unauthorised occupant was residing in the property at the time the secure tenant died and appears to meet one or more of the criteria below, an Officer from the Council will interview the applicant:

- Where it is in the Council's interest to offer a tenancy, e.g. where the applicant is vulnerable or has dependent children, or where to rehouse into a smaller unit would release a large unit quickly
- gay partners of deceased tenants who would have qualified for succession if they had been heterosexual
- persons who would have qualified for succession had there not previously been a succession, are not in priority need, but have been living with the deceased tenant continuously for 20 years or more
- former carers of deceased tenants who have undertaken caring responsibilities for at least 12 months prior to the death of the tenant

- b) Persons holding over following the termination of the tenancy by Notice to Quit, Surrender or other reasons whom meet the criteria set out below.

- Spouse
- Children
- Partners (including gay partners) who have resided in the property continuously for 20 years or more
- Carers of the former tenant who have undertaken caring responsibilities for at least 12 months prior to the departure of the tenant from the property

- c) Former Joint Tenants holding over

In cases where a joint tenancy is due to end, or has been ended e.g. where one party has served a Notice to Quit, and an application for continued accommodation is received from the ex-tenant left, or to be left, in occupation after the tenancy has ended, the Council's Housing Officer will interview the ex-tenant.

The Officer will provide a report, and a completed application form by the applicant, to Head of Allocations and Accommodation for a decision. In reaching a decision as to whether an allocation will be made, the following will be taken into account:

- whether the remaining ex-tenant has dependent children whether the ex-tenant is vulnerable on medical or other grounds, such as to be likely in priority need if they were homeless

- whether they held the previous tenancy for 20 years or more

All applicants in categories must complete an application form, which will be referred to the Housing Solutions Manager, if the applicant appears to meet the criteria. The applicant is registered by a Housing Solutions Officer, and then may be invited for an interview and verification, before being referred to the Manager to check eligibility.

In reaching a decision the Manager will consider how they meet the criteria above, including the age of the applicant, whether the applicant would likely be in priority need if they were homeless, and any other relevant consideration. If a decision is made that an allocation of housing should be made to the above members, the Head of Allocations and Accommodation will decide whether to grant the tenancy of the property, occupied by the applicant, or whether they should be placed in a Band to bid for alternative accommodation in line with the guidelines below:

- Unauthorised occupants, in priority need, approved for move to smaller accommodation, or giving up one or more bedrooms, will be placed in Band A
- Other unauthorised occupants, approved for move to same sized accommodation but who cannot for other reasons remain in their present accommodation, will be placed in Band B

Homeseekers must be advised that they have 3 months, from date of acceptance, to exercise choice by bidding for appropriate properties. If they fail to secure accommodation within the given period they may be made one offer only in line with current policy. If this is refused possession proceedings will commence; this must be closely monitored by the Council's Housing Officer.

4. Creation of Joint Tenancies

The Council will consider an application for joint tenancy by an existing secure tenant. Such a request must be referred to the Council with the following supporting information:

- completed housing register form showing address history of the applicant
- proof of eligibility and residency for the applicant covering the last ten years, in line with housing register pre-registration criteria
- proof of identity
- passport photographs
- income and details of other/previous property ownership

In reaching a decision the Council will also take into consideration rent account position, whether the applicant is eligible for an offer in line with the Council's policy, and relationship between the two parties. Tenants will be expected to have maintained a clear rent account in the three months prior to their request. Applications will be considered for couples (including same sex) who have been living in a permanent relationship for at least twelve months, and can prove that this is the case. In exceptional circumstances close relatives, if they meet all the criteria above, are able to prove that a joint tenancy is necessary for other special reasons.

SECTION 6

Housing for the Elderly

Ealing has two specific types of accommodation for the elderly. These are:

- **Elderly Persons Dwellings (Part 1)**

These are specifically designated for elderly people who can live independently and do not need the services of a Community Housing Officer. Homeseekers for these units should be aged fifty or over with fairly good mobility as many of the flats are on the first or second floor without a lift.

- **Sheltered Housing (Part 2)**

Applicants need to be 60, or over 55 if registered disabled, and in need of housing support. They should be able to live independently, with the provision of housing support, but not in need of 24 hour care. They should be able, and prepared, to live within a close community without presenting unmanageable risks to self and others.

1. Processing Applications from the Elderly

Homeseekers may indicate on the application form if they wish to be considered for sheltered accommodation; but they may also be referred by relatives, social workers, doctors or by recommendation from the Council's Medical Adviser.

- a) Following registration and notification, as detailed in Section 6 above, a home visit is arranged for verification (see Section 2, Verification & 3, Home Visit, above).
- b) A Sheltered Assessment Form will be completed, which must include, in detail, the homeseeker's ability to manage independently, any medical problems including any advice from the Medical Adviser if applicable, and how these may affect day-to-day activities, their present living conditions and any difficulties experienced in the accommodation
- c) At the home visit the homeseeker is asked if they are interested in other partners' areas
- d) Following the home visit, and necessary verification, the file is referred to the Sheltered Panel. This panel, which meets every two weeks, is chaired by the Head of Housing Solutions and consists of one or two representatives from the Sheltered Housing team; either the Sheltered Housing Manager and/or Community Housing Manager. The Gateway Liaison Officer may also attend and present appropriate cases
- e) Homeseekers are assessed by the Panel as requiring, or suitable for, Part 2 accommodation. If the panel makes a decision that the applicant does not meet the eligibility criteria, reasons for this decision must be recorded, e.g. if the applicant has no support needs
- f) In cases where the Sheltered Panel is unable to make a confirmed decision on eligibility and suitability, it will refer back to the Housing Officer for clarification of needs
- g) Homeseekers who are considered by the Panel to need a higher level of care, than that which can be provided by Part 2 accommodation, are referred to Social Services for an assessment for residential care (Part 3 accommodation)
- h) If homeseekers express an interest in sheltered accommodation in other partners' areas, following agreement by the Sheltered Panel, the completed assessment is sent to the relevant authority to decide if they are able to assist
- i) The other partners will inform the London Borough of Ealing of their decision

- j) The Housing Solutions Officer will advise homeseekers which, if any, partners are able to assist and explain how to bid

Homeseekers agreed for sheltered housing will be placed in Band C, or higher Banding if they qualify on other grounds, e.g. homelessness, medical, under-occupation.

Elderly homeseekers who do not want sheltered accommodation will be placed in Band D, unless they qualify for a higher Band for other reasons. If the member meets the sheltered housing criteria through age and a suitable property is available to meet the clients need a direct offer of suitable accommodation may be made if the applicant is in band C or above, dependent on stock available and persons on the housing register waiting list. Should the offer be refused the applicant has a right to appeal on suitability of the offer. If the property is deemed reasonable the applicant may have their priority removed.

Existing tenants in sheltered accommodation with a medical need to move to alternative sheltered accommodation will be prioritised for a transfer without the need to be approved through the Sheltered Panel.

If more than one existing tenant in the scheme bids for sheltered then priority between them will be decided in band and/or date order. Applicants with a need to move out of sheltered accommodation will be considered by the Social Welfare Panel.

All tenants in sheltered accommodation requesting a transfer to alternative sheltered accommodation would automatically be placed in Band C unless there is an overriding priority placing them in a higher band.

Final

SECTION 7

Housing Moves – Pan-London Mobility

The Council participates in pan-London mobility (PLM) arrangements and accordingly up to five per cent of the properties that become available to the Council for re-letting or nomination each year will be made available to transferring tenants from other boroughs under those arrangements. For more details of the PLM arrangements see www.London.gov.uk.

The decision as to which of our vacancies will be put forward to the operators of PLM for applicants from other boroughs will be made by the Allocations Manager when available properties become available. This is dependent on need within the borough at that time and will be up to a maximum of 5% of total re-lettable properties based on previous years letting percentages.

The ultimate decision as to which PLM registrant will be let the property will be made by the Allocation Officer using the Pan-London Priority banding/filters as advertised. For Pan-London properties advertised those eligible registered on the scheme who express an interest will have priority, but should there be delay in letting the property (over 5 days from advert) or subsequent urgent need identified from an in-borough applicant, the authority reserves the right to withdraw and let outside the Pan-London Scheme or to a member of the West London Locata partnership.

As a result of our participation in PLM, existing tenants of this Council can make transfer applications through PLM to be considered for vacancies in other London local authority areas.”

Housing Moves Nominations (Housing Mobility)

Housing Moves is a voluntary scheme designed to provide housing mobility opportunities, and assistance with housing problems, for people in London and throughout the British Isles.

Nominations from other housing organisations can be considered from homeseekers who have a local connection, such as employment or social reasons. This also includes Central Quota nominations for move-on accommodation from hostels. Those willing to accept accommodation, for which there is no local demand from priority homeseekers, may be accepted from time-to-time depending on all the prevailing circumstances.

Criteria:

- I. Employment - homeseekers are expected to provide proof of employment in the borough. This would usually be a copy of the employment contract or a letter from the personnel department confirming their employment status
- II. Social reasons - homeseekers who need to be near close relatives living in the borough, to give or receive support, and homeseekers fleeing from domestic violence or harassment. Nominations are referred to the Allocations Officer who either accepts or rejects them, depending on whether they meet the above criteria, the availability of the accommodation required, areas requested and performance against targets

The Housing Solutions Officer will place accepted nominees on the Housing Register. All incoming nominations accepted will be placed in Band C and notified as detailed in Section 6 above

Outgoing Mobility Nominations via MoveUK, Out of London or any such scheme which may be introduced in the future.

- I. Homeseekers requesting rehousing in another borough, which is not in the partners' areas, will be considered for nomination to another local authority or housing association via the MoveUK Scheme, if they are eligible persons. The nominee will also have to meet the criteria of the

receiving authority, where applicable, e.g. needing to have a local connection with the borough they wish to move to

- II. Homeseekers meeting these criteria will have to complete the necessary application/ referral form. The Council's Officer will telephone the receiving organisation to find out if they will accept the nomination. Homeseekers who have not been agreed for housing will be referred to Housing Solutions team to arrange a visit if required
- III. If the receiving organisation is willing to consider the nomination, the Council will nominate via MoveUK or Out of London. Details are noted on the system to ensure that if they are shortlisted for an offer via Locata a check is made with the receiving authority, in order to avoid duplicate offers. If the nomination is rejected, this information is removed from the system. Homeseekers will be informed by letter of the progress of their nomination at each stage i.e. nomination, rejection

Final

SECTION 8

Advertising and Bidding for Properties

1. Labelling Properties for Advertising

The Allocations Officer will describe and label properties which are ready to advertise. This will include information as to whether the property is suitable for Transfers or Homeseekers, or both, taking into account targets. It may specify if it is more than likely it will go to a Band A or B customer in order to avoid high volumes of unsuccessful bidding from applicants in Band C. Eligibility criteria for the properties will also be set such as:

- minimum and maximum numbers of persons in the household
- if children are allowed or required
- if there are age-limits/restrictions
- the mobility group, if applicable. These are:-
 - Wheelchair user, indoor and/or outdoor
 - People who cannot manage steps/stairs and may use a wheelchair some of the time
 - Independent but can only manage one or two steps
- if applications are restricted to specific groups of applicants such as Quota/ Homeless/ Decant/Key Worker
- if pets are allowed
- whether it is available for cross-borough bids
- sheltered (Part 2)
- over 50s (Part 1)
- who owns the property and whether it is a specialist landlord
- the weekly rent including any other charges
- The date the property will be ready for occupation
- Where the local lettings plan applies, properties will be labelled accordingly
- Sheltered accommodation where priority is given to existing tenants of that scheme with a medical need to move, and next priority is given to other sheltered tenants with a medical need to move

Where a property has two living rooms, and one can reasonably be used as a bedroom, it will be labelled on that basis.

2. Advertising properties

Partners and associates will advertise their vacant properties in a fortnightly on-line publication called Locata Home. All properties will be labelled as detailed in Section 19 above. The bulletin will be available on the internet at www.locata.org, and may also be posted directly to homeseekers on payment of a small subscription. Locata, the Partnership's Central Lettings Agency, will co-ordinate publication.

3. Bidding for properties

Eligible members can make up to three bids, per edition, for properties advertised in Locata Home by sending in their completed coupons or online via the website www.locata.org. They are also able to bid by telephone, text messages, and any new technology that may become available in the future. These methods will be updated in the scheme user guide. All members will be sent coupons and more can be obtained by contacting the relevant number as displayed in the online bulletin. Members who make more than three bids will have additional ones disregarded.

Members with support needs, and those who have difficulty with written English, will be assisted and encouraged to read the online bulletin and choose properties.

Members who urgently need to be moved, and who do not bid for properties, will be allocated directly. (see Section 12 below, Direct Allocations).

Locata checks that all bids for a property meet the eligibility rules. They exclude from consideration all those who are ineligible. Members who consistently bid for properties, for which they are ineligible, may be contacted to discuss how to bid.

4. Time limits for bidding for properties

The following time limits will apply dependent on stock available and demand from priority applicants:

- Quota homeseekers – three months from date of acceptance
- Homeless homeseekers in Bands A or B – to be reviewed monthly and a direct offer may be made
- Other homeless homeseekers owed a rehousing duty – to be reviewed as necessary at the discretion of the local authority
- Ex-service tenants – three months from date of acceptance
- Ex-council tenants, released from an institution, who the council has undertaken to rehouse – three months from date of acceptance
- Unauthorised occupants (non-statutory successors) – three months from date of acceptance
- Urgent Management transfers – three months from date of acceptance
- Permanent decants Band A – as advised by the Allocations Manager in line with the decant policy
- Permanent decants Band B - as advised by the Allocations Manager in line with the decant policy
- Under-occupiers who have succeeded to the tenancy, where the Council can obtain possession by offering alternative accommodation – three months from date of succession
- Emergency transfers- priority will be reviewed monthly

Applications will be reviewed after the time limits stated above. For all tenants, the time limit will depend on the type of property needed and whether they are making appropriate bids. After the time limits above have passed, members may be offered accommodation in line with one-offer-policy (see Section 12 below, Direct Allocations).

5. Eligibility Rules

To be eligible, a bid must satisfy the following rules:

Rule	Notes
Not offered elsewhere	Making an offer to a member makes all other bids from that member ineligible whilst the offer is live. A person who is eligible for more than one property may be considered for another offer at the landlord's discretion.
Not suspended	
On partner's list	If a property is not cross-partner, the member must be on the property's partner's list.
On correct housing list	The member's housing list (Homeseeker or Transfer) must match that of the property.
Bid before cut-off	The bid must be processed before the short list is closed.
First three bids	Only the first three bids, from a member for each online bulletin, are eligible.
Maximum persons	The members household must have no more than the maximum number of persons for the property.

Minimum persons	The members household must not have less than the minimum number of persons for the property.
Maximum beds	A member cannot bid for a property with more bedrooms than they are assessed as needing*.
Minimum age	The member must satisfy the age requirement on the property label.

* This may not apply to under-occupiers, who may be allowed to over-occupy, by one bedroom on a case by case basis.

6. Bed Size Eligibility

The maximum number of bedrooms, for which members are eligible to bid, is determined by the size of their household but, as there is a shortage of large homes, members may be advised to bid for smaller accommodation than they would prefer. Where a property has two living rooms, and one can reasonably be used as a bedroom, it will be labelled on that basis.

The bedroom size that members can bid for or is allocated is set out below:

Lone person	Studio flat or one-bedroom
Couple without children	One-bedroom
Pregnant woman (with or without partner)	One-bedroom
Parent/s with child under one	One or two bedrooms
Parent/s with child over one	Two bedrooms
Parent/s with two children under 10	Two bedrooms
Parent/s with two children, same sex up to the age of 21.	Two bedrooms
Parent/s with two children of opposite sex (one over the age of ten)	Three bedrooms
Parent/s with three or four children	Three or four bedrooms (depending on ages and sexes of children)
Parent/s with five or more children	Four bedrooms

An additional bedroom will be allocated where the Medical Adviser or Social Welfare panel recommends this as essential.

7. Selection

- a) All eligible members are placed into priority order. Priority is decided first by Band and second by date order within each Band, thirdly by registration date and finally by random selection. Every bid is assigned a random number when the bid is made. This number is used to resolve ties, the higher number gets priority
- b) The prioritised list is referred to the landlord for offer
- c) If there are no eligible bidders for a property, either a direct allocation will be made, or the property will be relabelled and advertised again in the next edition of Locata home

8. Offers

In order to minimise delays the landlord, the authority may arrange multiple viewings for up to five members per property. Members are required to bring proof of identity to the viewing. Unverified members will be advised, via the 'Invitation to view notification', to contact their Housing Officer within 24 hours in order to arrange for verification and confirmation of their eligibility prior to the viewing date.

Process

- a) The Allocations Officer carries out any further eligibility checks considered necessary, maintaining contact with the exporting landlord throughout the process
- b) The member is offered the property and invited to sign for the tenancy
- c) If the member refuses, the next person is selected. A member is not penalised for refusing properties, although checks are likely to be made if several properties are refused
- d) Members who fail to have their verification completed before the viewing date will not be offered the property
- e) Existing Council tenants cannot be granted a new tenancy until their existing tenancy has been ended

If the previous tenants stated that they were victims of racial harassment, prospective tenants of ethnic minority origin must be advised of this after they have viewed the property and expressed an interest in it, but before they formally enter into a tenancy.

9. Ineligibility for an offer

Members will not be made an offer of accommodation if, at the time they bid for a property, any of the following circumstances exist:

- I. The financial resources available to a person to meet his/her housing costs
 - a. Homeseekers who are found to have sufficient financial resources to obtain accommodation for themselves in the private sector. This would be subject to review but is currently Households with a joint income of more than £60,000 or capital assets of more than £24,000
 - b. Tenants who have a current application to buy their dwelling, or for a home purchase grant e.g. Homebuy, at the time a bid is made for a property.
- II. Behaviour of a person which affects his/her suitability to be a tenant:
 - a. Tenants who have any rent arrears, although consideration will be given to varying this rule in Band A cases, or where other exceptional circumstances apply (see Section 6 of Part Two, Rent Arrears Policy below).
 - b. Homeless homeseekers placed in temporary accommodation who have rent arrears. Consideration will be given to varying this rule, where exceptional circumstances apply or, depending on the level of arrears, if they have made a satisfactory agreement to clear the arrears and have kept to that agreement for at least three months
 - c. Tenants upon whom the Council/RSL has served notice of its intention to seek possession, or obtain an injunction, due to breach of one or more of the tenancy conditions; except those who have rent arrears, see above
 - d. Ex tenants who have deliberately lost their accommodation e.g. eviction due to rent arrears
 - e. Tenants who have wilfully damaged or neglected their property or are refusing to allow repairs to be carried out
 - f. Tenants or new homeseekers, or any member of their household, who have attacked or threatened staff, or those with a history of anti-social or criminal behaviour related to housing
- III. Any local connection, within the meaning of Section 199 of Housing Act 1996

Homeseekers who do not have a local connection, unless a homeless duty has been accepted by Ealing and Ealing has decided not to refer under Section 198 (see out of borough residents).

10. Review of ineligible members

Members in categories (i), (ii) & (iii) of Section 8 and 9 above will remain in their priority Bands and date appropriate to their housing circumstances, but they will not be made an offer until they apply to their landlord or local authority for a review of the decision that they are ineligible. The landlord or local authority, in reviewing the decision, will determine whether the ineligibility should continue to apply. Under Section 8 and 9 the member would need to demonstrate, for example, that they have modified their behaviour e.g. by paying off rent arrears, remedying damage, or allowing repairs to be carried out. If legal action has been withdrawn or a court order has been given in favour of the tenant, then the local authority will carry out a review.

Under Section 8 and 9, the member would need to prove that a local connection has been established (See Appendix B, Review procedure).

11. Feedback on Let Properties

All properties let are listed in a future copy of the Locata Home. This will show the number of bidders for each property, the Band and priority registration date, of the successful member. However, the majority of properties, especially those that are 2 bed or larger, will go to applicants in Bands A and B, due to the high levels of need within these groups, and the shortage of supply to meet all the housing needs on the register. The property bulletins may specify whether this is likely to be the case in order to better inform the many applicants in Band C and D where in bidding for these properties they will inevitably be disappointed.

12. Direct Allocations (outside the bidding process)

In certain, very limited circumstances, partners may use their discretion to allocate properties directly to the following members, if they do not secure rehousing within the time limits (if applicable) set out in Section 8:

- “special circumstances” , e.g. public protection panel cases. One offer in line with policy will be made which, if refused, members will lose their priority
- Applicants, who must be eligible to join the housing register, who require supported housing, or are required to vacate supported housing, as assessed by Gateway, may be made one offer of accommodation outside the advertised scheme
- Homeless homeseekers, owed a duty by the local authority & quota homeseekers, will be made one offer before duty is discharged/quota status removed and will lose any priority based on their previous status
- Under-occupiers in very desirable properties who have highly specific requirements
- Under-occupiers adult family member or child, when agreed for rehousing to bedsit/one bed by the Head of Allocations and Accommodation
- Ex-service tenants, who have highly specific requirements will be made two offers. If these are refused, their case will be referred to a review panel
- Transit properties for temporarily decanted tenants; if the offer is refused possession proceedings will commence
- Tenants who are reluctant to be decanted; if the offer is refused possession proceedings will commence
- Unauthorised occupants will be made one offer in line with policy; if the offer is refused possession proceedings will commence
- Tenants covered under Request to Return in line with Decant Policy

- Members in Band A whose defining features, including their cumulative needs, are considered to be so exceptionally severe as to warrant immediate/imminent rehousing.
- Tenants approved for emergency transfers

In the above cases, a reasonable offer will be made. "A reasonable offer of accommodation is one which so far as possible is in an area which the applicant has chosen and matches the size and type of property the applicant is eligible for", as set out above. For bed size offered under direct allocations refer to Section 8 Offers - Bed Size Eligibility.

13. Refusals following direct allocations

The homeseeker is required to complete a Refusal of Accommodation form, giving their reasons. This is faxed by the Area Team or Housing Association to the Allocations Officer. Where the offer has been made via Housing Moves the Allocations Officer will request information about reasons for refusal from the other landlord.

If the offer is to an applicant, to whom a homeless duty has been accepted, the reasons for the refusal must be considered in conjunction with the Housing Solutions Team and followed by the appropriate action taken by the Housing Solutions Team e.g. discharge of duty.

There is a statutory right of review, for homeless households, in relation to suitability.

The Allocations Officer will consider the reasons for refusal. If there is a clear mis-match e.g. where the homeseeker or property details were recorded incorrectly, the offer will be withdrawn and the homeseeker notified by letter.

If there is no obvious mis-match, the Allocations Officer will remove the priority, investigate the reasons for refusal, and consult the Estate Officer where appropriate, before making a recommendation to the Manager as to whether the offer was reasonable.

The Manager will decide whether the offer was reasonable and the Allocations Officer will inform the homeseeker by letter. If the offer is not reasonable, they will withdraw the offer and reinstate the priority.

If the offer is reasonable, the Officer will advise the homeseeker of the Manager's decision, and the effect this has on their application. They have a right to a review of the decision, by writing, to the Allocations Manager.

The Allocations Officer will take the following action:-

- If it is a first offer, to an ex-service tenant, they will be advised that they will be made a second offer. If it is a second offer they will be advised that their case will be referred to a review panel (see Appendix B, Review Procedure)
- If the offer is to a quota case they will be advised that their quota status has been removed and they will be placed in the appropriate Band on the general waiting list, if they are eligible persons. Social Services must be kept fully informed at all stages
- If it is an offer to a temporary/permanent decant, housing management must be advised so that they can commence possession proceedings; this must be closely monitored by housing management
- If it is an offer to an under-occupier who has succeeded to the tenancy, where the Council can obtain possession by offering alternative accommodation, housing management must be

advised so that they can commence possession proceedings; this must be closely monitored by housing management

- If it is to a “special circumstances” case they will be advised that their priority has been removed and they will be placed in the appropriate Band on the general waiting list, if they are eligible persons. Any professionals involved in the case must be kept informed at all stages

Final

Part Two - Transfer Policy

Introduction

This document deals with the Councils' lettings policies and procedures that apply to secure tenants. However, the entire Allocations Policy document covers both tenants and homeseekers as appropriate.

Secure Council tenants may apply for a transfer and will be assessed according to the Council's Allocations Scheme. Under the scheme tenants will become members of Locata and can actively search for a home. Vacant properties will be advertised in a regular online bulletin, Locata Home, and on the Internet. Members of Locata will be able to bid for properties. All members are placed, in date order, into a broad needs Band according to their circumstances.

1. Transfer from Council Accommodation & Banding

Priority will be awarded to secure council tenants based on their need to move. The main groups are as follows:

BAND A

a) Emergency Medical

Agreed, in exceptional circumstances, taking account of the recommendation of the Medical Adviser and any other medical information, when the tenant or a member of the tenant's household, has a life threatening condition which is seriously affected by their current housing.

Agreed where the housing conditions are having a major adverse effect on the medical condition of the applicant, or a member of the applicant's household, and/or there are other adverse circumstances to warrant emergency priority

b) Emergency Transfers

Agreed, in exceptional circumstances, by the Allocations Manager or Needs due to significant and insurmountable problems associated with the tenant's occupation of a dwelling and they are considered at risk of death, or imminent personal risk if they remain in the dwelling, e.g. witness to a serious crime.

Such requests will be investigated and must be supported by appropriate evidence from the Police, Social Service and any other pertinent agency.

Such transfers will be to properties of the same size and type. There is discretion to make direct offers in line with the one offer policy. Where the tenant prefers to exercise choice, this will be reviewed after one month and a direct offer may then be made or priority withdrawn if applicable.

Where there are exceptional circumstances, and/or there are multiple needs, which warrants emergency priority as agreed by the Social Welfare panel

c) Underoccupiers

Agreed transfers to smaller accommodation but requiring 2 bed+ and relinquishing only one bedroom. Tenants underoccupying property moving to family sized accommodation and giving up only 1 bedroom.

Underoccupiers who have succeeded to the tenancy, where the Council can obtain possession by offering alternative accommodation, will be required to secure accommodation within three months of succession. If they fail to do this they may be made one offer only in line with current policy. If this is

refused, possession proceedings will commence; this must be closely monitored by Housing Management.

d) Urgent Permanent Decants

Where the property is imminently required because of lease expiry, or for essential works, and the tenant will not be returning (e.g. development schemes).

This may also be necessary if the freehold of the property belongs to another landlord, the lease is due to end, and the Council is obliged to return the property with vacant possession.

Tenants must be advised that they will be expected to bid for properties within a limited time period, as advised by the Allocations Manager. If they fail to do so they may be made one offer only in line with current policy. If this is refused, possession proceedings will commence; this must be closely monitored by Housing Management.

e) Urgent Priority for the Council

This covers a range of circumstances where it is in the Council's interest to facilitate an urgent transfer e.g. Closing Order or Compulsory Purchase Order, enable Fostering/Adoption, where agreement has been reached with Social Services to provide permanent accommodation.

f) Social Welfare Panel

Where a tenant in temporary accommodation has obtained employment, and is experiencing severe financial hardship; or the property is unsuitable due to severe disability, severe harassment, severe violence or severe disrepair. Where there are exceptional circumstances and/or there are multiple needs which warrants emergency priority. See earlier section in Social Welfare Panel for more detail.

BAND B

a) Permanent Decants

Where property is required because of lease expiry, or for essential works, and the tenant will not be returning (e.g. development schemes). Eligible members will be moved to Band B at the appropriate time and must be advised that they will be expected to bid for properties within a limited time period, as advised by the Head of Allocations and Accommodation. The time limit will depend on the type of property needed. If they fail to do this they may be made one offer only in line with current policy. If this is refused possession proceedings will commence; this will be closely monitored by Housing Management.

b) Statutory Overcrowding

Statutory overcrowding as defined by Part X of Housing act 1985 or Court Order to rehouse. This priority will only be awarded in relation to members of the household entitled to be on the transfer application (see Section 2 below).

c) Urgent Management Transfers

Agreed by the Council or Managing Agent for urgent transfer for the following reasons:

- harassment due to race, sex or disability
- domestic violence or other instances where tenants suffer from unprovoked violence or the threat of violence e.g. threatening language or behaviour or witness to a crime.

This may also be awarded where urgent transfer is considered to be in the best interest of good housing management, e.g. where a young person is legally occupying a sheltered housing unit.

Such priority must be supported by appropriate evidence from the Police, Social Services and, any other pertinent agency. Such transfers will be to properties of the same size and type. Priority will be reviewed every three months, and will apply for no longer than six months, unless there are good reasons for priority to continue to apply. The Council's Housing Officer will be required to produce a report, for consideration, by the Council in order to extend the period.

e) Urgent Medical (including mental health)

Agreed taking account of the recommendation of the Medical Adviser and other medical information, where the current housing conditions are having a major adverse effect on the medical condition of the tenant or a member of the tenant's household.

It will not apply where the effect of housing conditions on health is comparatively moderate, slight or variable.

f) Social Welfare Panel

Urgent need to move due to severe social hardship agreed by Social Welfare Panel

- to give or receive care or support
- child protection reasons
- other social/welfare reasons
- multiple needs
- Release adapted property

Tenants underoccupying property, moving to studio or one bedroom, or giving up two or more bedrooms. There is agreement where demand for property size/area, that family compositions can be split to allow for an adult child (eligible for housing register) to be made an offer of one bed/bedsit accommodation to facilitate under-occupiers transfer to alternative suitable accommodation. In such circumstances the adult child will be placed in Band B as a homeseeker.

BAND C

a) Unsatisfactory Housing Conditions

- overcrowding
- multiple needs

b) Medical (including Mental Health)

Where a tenant's, or member of the household's, current housing conditions are having an adverse effect on their medical condition which creates a particular need for them to move.

c) Elderly Approved for Sheltered

Tenants, over sixty years of age, who have been assessed by the Sheltered Panel as needing sheltered accommodation. Sheltered accommodation where priority is given to existing tenants of that scheme with a medical need to move, and next priority is given to other sheltered tenants with a medical need to move.

d) Identified Housing Need Accommodation required to assist Social Services in delivering a Care Plan, or to relieve other social/welfare hardship, as agreed by the Social/Welfare Panel.

BAND D

All other registered transfers. Band D transfers will not be able to actively bid for properties. They will remain on the inactive register unless there are properties which are not wanted by any

applicant/transfer in the priority bands. In this case consideration of a direct offer will be given to the transfer with the earliest registration date requiring a property of that size or type.

2. Who can be considered part of the household

- a. Persons who were part of the household at the start of the tenancy, and are still in occupation
- b. A partner where the tenant is living in a permanent relationship and can prove that they have done for at least twelve months, or who are married
- c. Children born since the start of tenancy, and dependent children under the age of 18, joining since the tenancy started
- d. A dependent relative who has joined the household because they are unable to live independently and there are no other options for the family; e.g. the relative owns a property, or occupies a property, large enough to accommodate the family. Advice will be sought from the Medical Adviser on whether the relative needs to live with the family. Where this is not considered essential, other options, such as sheltered housing, will be discussed with the family before a decision is made by the Area Contract Manager, or Head of Allocations and Accommodation, as to whether the relative should be included in the application or advised to apply onto the Housing Register. Normally only adults in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, which includes the higher rate care component, or those receiving Attendance Allowance, at the higher rate, will be included
- e. A carer, where the tenant can demonstrate that a live-in carer is required and who has been identified and has moved in with the tenant, or is ready to do so when accommodation is made available, and the Medical Adviser agrees that a carer is essential
- f. A carer, if agreed by the Social/Welfare panel on social grounds

3. Tenancy Conditions

- a) If the Council has served notice of its intention to seek possession, or obtain an injunction, due to breach of one or more of the tenancy conditions, the transfer will be suspended as ineligible for an offer; except for rent arrears (see Section 6 below).

The suspension will be lifted if and when the Council withdraws legal action, or a court decision is given in favour of the tenant.

- b) Tenants who have wilfully damaged or neglected their property will also be suspended from the transfer list until they have remedied the damage (see Section 26 of Part One above, Ineligibility for Offers).

4. Assessment and registration

An initial assessment is made based on the information on the transfer form and any other information available. All eligible tenants will be assessed, placed in the appropriate bedroom category, and in one of the four priority Bandings in date order of registration (see Sections 6 to 9 of Part One, Banding / Priority Dates, and Appendix B, Right of Review). Where the tenancy is in joint names, applications for transfer will be considered from all parties to the tenancy.

Emergency and Urgent Management transfer homeseekers will only be eligible to bid for similar size and type property, e.g. house to house, flat to flat. These cases must have the special flag SFLG set to emergency to enable the Allocations Officer to closely monitor them. Tenants who fail to bid for “like-for-like” properties within the time limit will have their priority status reviewed and if necessary withdrawn (see Section 22 above, Time Limits).

5. Home Visits & Verification

A home visit will be carried out by an estate Officer, to inspect the property and verify the household details, before an offer is made (see Section 21, Bidding for Properties and Section 23, Eligibility Rules).

6. Rent arrears

Tenants are allowed to be members of Locata even if they have rent arrears. However, at the time that they bid for a property they must have a clear rent account. Consideration will be given to varying this rule where other exceptional circumstances apply as follows:-

- Tenants with rent arrears of less than £1000, and urgent management priority in Band B, may be transferred at the discretion of the Area Housing Manager. In most cases, tenants will be less than 10 weeks in arrears, or on Housing Benefit, and have been reducing the arrears regularly for at least six months; or the urgency of the case is considered to warrant a move despite the arrears
- Tenants with rent arrears of more than £1000, and urgent management priority in Band B, at the discretion of the Allocations Manager or appropriate panel. The Area Housing Manager will decide whether to refer such cases. Cases referred will either have been reducing the arrears regularly for at least six months; or the urgency of the case is considered to warrant a move despite arrears
- Tenants who need to move because of statutory overcrowding or where Band A priority has been awarded by the Head of Allocations and Accommodation, or where a permanent decant is essential, may be transferred despite rent arrears.
- Tenants moving through the under-occupation initiative will be subject to guidelines above but will be permitted to move if the incentive payment is greater than arrears balance outstanding. In these circumstances, any incentive payment will be offset against the arrears with any remaining credit being paid to the tenant.

7. Offer Policy (outside the bidding process)

“A reasonable offer of accommodation is one which so far as possible is in an area which the tenant has chosen and matches the size and type of property the applicant is eligible for, according to the Council's Allocations Scheme”.

8. Refusals (outside bidding process)

In certain, very limited circumstances, partners may use their discretion to make direct allocations outside the bidding process, (see Section 28)

For example:-

- Tenants who need to be decanted permanently
- Underoccupiers who have succeeded to the tenancy

In these cases a tenant who wishes to refuse a property is required to complete a Refusal of Accommodation form giving reasons. This is faxed by the Voids Officer/Team or Registered Provider to the Allocations Officer. Where the offer has been made via HOMES, the Rehousing Officer will request information about reasons for refusal from the other landlord.

The Allocations Officer will consider the reasons for refusal. If there is a clear mis-match e.g. where the tenant or property details were recorded incorrectly, the offer will be withdrawn and the tenant notified by letter.

If there is no obvious mis-match, the Allocations Officer will remove the priority, investigate the reasons for refusal and consult the Officer concerned before making a recommendation to the Manager as to whether the offer was reasonable.

The Manager will decide whether the offer was reasonable and the Allocations Officer will inform the tenant by letter. If the offer is not reasonable, they will withdraw the offer and reinstate the priority.

If the offer is reasonable, the Allocations Officer will advise the tenant of the Manager's decision and the effect this has on their application, and that they have a right to a review of that decision, by writing to the Head of Allocations and Accommodation.

The Officer will take the following action:

- a. If it is an offer to an Urgent Management transfer case, the Allocations Officer will remove the priority status, informing the tenant and the Area Housing Contractor, who will place the tenant in the appropriate Band
- b. If it is an offer to a permanent decant, possession proceedings will commence; this will be closely monitored by Housing Management
- c. If it is an offer to an underoccupier who has succeeded to the tenancy, where the Council can obtain possession by offering alternative accommodation, possession proceedings will commence; this will be closely monitored by Housing Management
- d. For all other offers the Allocations Officer will remove the priority status and the case will be reviewed

APPENDIX A

Band A	Tenants	Homeseekers	Defining Features of Applicant
Time-Limited Top/ Emergency Priority Rating (time limit is at registering partner's discretion)	Emergency medical	Emergency medical	<p>1. Emergency Banding is granted only in exceptional circumstances, when the applicant or a member of the applicant's household has a life threatening condition, which is seriously affected by their current housing.</p> <p>2. Where the housing conditions and/ or other circumstances are having such a major adverse effect on the medical condition of the applicant or member of the applicant's household as to warrant emergency priority.</p>
	Emergency transfer (e.g. emergency harassment)		Agreed by Head of Allocations and Accommodation in exceptional circumstances due to significant and insurmountable problems associated with the tenant's occupation of a dwelling and there is imminent personal risk to the tenant or their family if they remain in the dwelling. Such transfers will be to properties of the same size and type.
	Urgent Permanent Decants		Where the property is imminently required because of lease expiry or for essential works & the tenant will not be returning (e.g. development schemes)
		<p>Social Welfare Panel Homeless households owed the main duty by Ealing* under sec.193 of the 1996 Act or sec. 65 of the 1985 Act & placed in temporary accommodation</p> <p>(*Provided that Ealing has not decided to refer to another authority under sec. 198)</p>	Homeseeker in temporary accommodation has obtained employment, and is experiencing severe financial hardship;
		Social Welfare Panel	<p>Exceptional circumstances and /or multiple needs which warrants emergency priority which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • severe medical or disability reasons

Band A	Tenants	Homeseekers	Defining Features of Applicant
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • severe harassment • severe violence • severe disrepair
	Urgent Priority for the Council (Council Interest)	Urgent Priority for the Council (Council Interest)	<p>Closing Order issued (i.e. Properties unfit for human habitation as advised by Environmental Health where there is no alternative measure to render the property fit) or Similar duty where emergency re-housing is essential .e.g. CPO to enable site clearance for a road widening scheme</p> <p>Where agreement has been reached to provide permanent accommodation on recommendation by Social Services under the quota arrangements</p>
	Under occupation and succession		<p>Tenant is willing to move to smaller property under Incentive Scheme. These tenants may be exempted from minimum occupation criteria.</p> <p>Underoccupiers who have succeeded to the tenancy, where the Council can obtain possession by offering alternative accommodation, will be required to secure accommodation within three months of succession. If they fail to do this they may be made one offer only in line with current policy.</p>
		Other unauthorised occupants (non-statutory successors) agreed for rehousing	<p>Unauthorised occupants needing more than one bedroom and giving up only one bedroom for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • non-statutory successors, not in priority need who lived with the deceased tenant for >20 years, • former carers of deceased tenants, • gay partners of deceased tenants, (who would have qualified for succession if they had been heterosexual) • those in priority need

Band B	Tenants	Home-Seekers	Defining Features Of Applicant
High Priority		<p>Homeless households owed the main duty by Ealing* under sec.193 of the 1996 Act or sec.65 of the 1985 Act except those adequately housed with an assured shorthold or non-secure tenancy</p> <p>(*Provided that Ealing has not decided to refer to another authority under sec. 198)</p>	Landlord requires property back and/or their needs can no longer be met unless they are offered permanent accommodation.
	Statutory Overcrowding or Court Order		Statutory overcrowding as defined in Part X of Housing Act 1985, or Court Order to re-house.
	Urgent management transfers not in Band A		Agreed by Housing Management for urgent management transfer. Such transfers will be to properties of the same size and type
	Permanent Decants		Where property is required because of lease expiry or for essential works & tenant will not be returning (e.g. development schemes)
	Urgent Medical (incl. Mental health) hardship	Urgent Medical (incl. Mental health) hardship	<p>Band B status for medical need will only be given where an applicant's or a member of the household's current housing conditions are having a major adverse effect on their medical condition.</p> <p>It will not apply where the effect of housing conditions on health is comparatively moderate, slight or variable.</p>

Band B	Tenants	Home-Seekers	Defining Features Of Applicant
	Social Welfare Panel Severe Social/Priority hardship	Social Welfare Panel Severe Social/Priority hardship	<p>Urgent need to move agreed by Social Welfare panel Welfare agency referrals (Police, Social Services) eg</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child protection reasons • persistent harassment of a serious but not life threatening nature <p>Urgent need to move due to severe social hardship agreed by Social/Welfare Panel eg</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to give or receive care or support • multiple needs <p>Homeseecker in temporary accommodation has obtained employment, and is experiencing financial hardship;</p>
	Unauthorised occupants (non-statutory successors) agreed for rehousing		Unauthorised occupants, approved for move to same sized accommodation but who cannot for other reasons remain in their present accommodation
		Move-on quotas to Release supported housing	Approved for independent living by Gateway or Social Services – if choice not exercised one offer only.
		Move-on quotas to Young People leaving care	Approved for move on by Social Services Young People Leaving Care Team – priority given for a time limited period – if choice not exercised one offer only
		Move-on quotas to Ex-tenant discharged from institution	Where a commitment has been made in order to get such tenants to relinquish an RSL or LA tenancy on entering the institution – if choice not exercised one offer only.
		Move-on Quotas	Other move on Quotas as agreed with partner organisation – priority given for a time limited period – if choice not exercised one offer only

Band C	Tenants	Home-Seekers	Defining Features Of Applicant
Identified Need Reasonable preference		<p>Homeless not included in Bands A or B</p> <p>Homeless households owed the main duty by Ealing* under sec.193 of the 1996 Act or sec.65 of the 1985 Act except those adequately housed with an assured shorthold or non-secure tenancy</p> <p>Other ex- homeless households occupying accommodation secured under Part VII Sec 193 (2).</p>	<p>People who are owed a homeless duty making own arrangements, or accommodated in B&B, or in Hostel.</p> <p>Homeless within the meaning of part VII of the Housing Act 1996 or</p> <p>People who are owed a homeless duty, who are occupying temporary accommodation provided under the Housing Act 1996 Part VII Section 193(2) or Households who were owed a homeless duty and have occupied temporary accommodation secured under Housing Act 1996 Part VII Section , and who have subsequently accepted a qualifying offer allowing them to remain in private sector accommodation after the duty has ceased.</p>
	Unsatisfactory housing conditions	Unsatisfactory housing conditions	<p>i) Overcrowding</p> <p>Households who do not have the following minimum provision: Co-habiting couples - 1 bedroom Each independent adult (21yrs +) - 1 bedroom. However siblings of the same sex who are 21+ and living as part of a larger household, will be expected to share Children of opposite sex where at least one child is aged over 10 years should not have to share a bedroom Two children of the same sex - 1 bedroom</p> <p>N.B For this purpose: Second reception room will generally be deemed as available for use as a bedroom. Box rooms which could reasonably be used by a child will count as a single bedroom Single persons occupying studio flats will not be deemed overcrowded</p> <p>ii) Insanitary conditions that cannot be addressed by Environmental Health action, including lacking one or more of the following:</p>

Band C	Tenants	Home-Seekers	Defining Features Of Applicant
			(a) Food preparation facilities (i.e. sink and space for a cooker) (b) Inside WC (c) Bathing and personal washing facilities. iii) Other Unsatisfactory Housing Conditions; e.g. substantial disrepair (as assessed by Environmental Health or other appropriate officer)
	Other under occupiers		Agreed move to smaller accommodation but requiring 2 bed + and relinquishing only one bedroom
	Medical (incl. Mental health) hardship	Medical (incl. Mental health) hardship	Band C status for medical need will be given where an applicant's or member of the household's current housing conditions are having an adverse effect on their medical condition which creates a particular need for them to move.
	Elderly approved for Sheltered	Elderly approved for Sheltered	Homeseekers over the age of 60 needing sheltered accommodation
	Social welfare hardship	Social welfare hardship	Accommodation required to assist Social Services in delivering a Care Plan or to relieve other social/welfare hardship as agreed between Social Services and Housing
		Identified Housing Need	Housing Moves (Mobility)

Band D No priority Status	All other registered transfers	All others on housing register not included in Bands A, B or C	Clients attracting Band D status have demonstrated no housing need and will not be able to bid actively.
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APPENDIX B

Review Procedure

This appendix sets out the procedure for reviewing the following decisions:-

1. Not to put an applicant on the Housing Register, or to remove someone from the Housing Register, other than at his/her request.
2. Exclude a homeseeker or tenant from membership of Locata, or to terminate a homeseeker's or tenant's membership of Locata.
3. Ineligibility for an offer.
4. Ex-service tenants who have refused two reasonable offers.
5. Other decisions relating to the Housing Register / Allocations Scheme including Banding and priority dates.
6. To suspend an applicant from the Housing Register due to refusal of 3 or more offers.

These reviews will be carried out by an officer senior to the officer making the original decision; or in all other cases by a panel of three officers, selected from the following, who are all senior to the officers making the relevant decision and who were not involved in the decision.

- Head of Housing Solutions
- Head of Allocation and Accommodation
- Head of Business Support
- Representative from Legal Services

The composition of the Review Panel is at the discretion of the Head of Housing Solutions or the Head of Allocations and Accommodation.

1. An applicant who has not been put on the register, or who has been removed from the register, other than at his own request.

The applicant must be notified of the decision and the reasons for it. He/she will be advised of their right to request a review of the decision. A request for a review must be made within 21, days from the day which notification was received, of the authority's decision.

Social Services will be informed of the decision if they have been involved or it is considered appropriate.

2. Exclude a homeseeker or tenant from membership of Locata or to terminate a homeseeker's or tenant's membership of Locata.
- Homeseekers/ex-members must be notified in writing the reasons for exclusion/termination of membership, and that they have a right to ask for a review of the decision

- A fresh application will be considered if the applicant was ineligible due to being subject to immigration control, and their immigration status has changed
- Homeseekers/ex-members who have been excluded from membership on grounds of serious anti-social behaviour must demonstrate good behaviour, for a minimum period of 12 months, before a fresh application will be considered
- Homeseekers or any member of their household who knowingly gave false/misleading information or withheld information will not have a fresh application considered for a minimum period of 12 months
- Homeseekers who have assaulted a member of staff must demonstrate good behaviour for a minimum period of 12 months before a fresh application will be considered.

3. Ineligibility for an offer

Members who are ineligible for an offer, at the time they bid for a property, will be notified in writing the reasons for ineligibility. They will be advised that they will remain in their priority Bands, and date appropriate to their housing circumstances, but they will not be made an offer until they apply to their local authority for a review of the decision.

The local authority, in reviewing the decision, will determine whether the ineligibility should continue to apply. For example; the member has paid off rent arrears, remedied damage, legal action has been withdrawn or can prove that a local connection has been established.

4. The Review Panel

- a. Member/Applicant, who has requested a decision review, has 21 days to submit, to the Council, any written representations they wish to be taken into account. The Applicant/Member will be sent a copy of the review procedure.
- b. The applicant/member will also be notified that, if no written representations are received within the stated period, the authority will make a decision on the review based on the facts as known to them.
- c. The Review Panel will carry out the review based on the facts as known to them, including any written representations received within the stated period. Further enquiries may be made of the applicant/member about information they have provided.
- d. If the Panel considers that the applicant/member will be placed at a disadvantage, if the review is considered solely on written representations, the applicant/member will be invited to an oral hearing. Such a hearing will be informal, and will be arranged at a mutually convenient date and time. In fixing the date, the Panel will take into account the need to tell the applicant/member of the decision within 56 days.
- e. The applicant/member must be notified of the Panel's decision of the review, in writing, within 56 days of the date the authority received notification of his/her request for a review. A longer time may be agreed, in writing with the applicant/member, if more time is necessary to obtain or confirm information. If the decision is to confirm the original decision, the applicant will be given reasons for the decision.
- f. If the Panel considers it is unlikely that the review decision will be made within 56 days, the Council will seek the applicant's/member's agreement to an extension of the period.

5. Ex-service tenants who have refused two reasonable offers

- a. Ex-service tenants who have refused two reasonable offers will be notified in writing that no further offers will be made and that their case will be referred to a councillor's panel.
- b. A report with all the details of offers made will be referred to the Tenants and Lessees Panel, or other appropriate panels, for a decision.
- c. The Panel's decision will be notified to the ex-service tenant.
- d. The appropriate human resources department must be kept informed at all stages.

6. Other decisions relating to the Housing Register / Allocations Scheme.

If an applicant requests a review of a decision, not included above, this should be referred to the Head of Housing Allocations and Accommodation.

Final