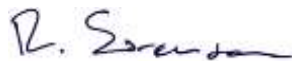



# ENFIELD HOUSING ALLOCATION SCHEME

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## **1. Introduction**

By law, the Council must publish how it intends to make sure that social housing goes to those who need it most. This is set out in an allocations scheme. We allocate accommodation when we:

- select people to be a secure, flexible or introductory tenant of the Council;
- nominate people to be a secure, flexible or introductory tenant of another council;
- nominate a person to be an assured, flexible or introductory tenant of a housing association (legally known as a Registered Providers).

It is designed to give priority for housing to those people that are most in need of help. In looking at need, we want to ensure that we look at the lifetime needs of a household rather than just looking at their immediate situation. In developing the approach, we have two aims:

- To allocate council homes according to the lifetime needs of a household
- To support residents to improve their housing situation without social housing

The allocations policy sets out how we will make sure that housing goes to those who can't meet their own needs. We also need to ensure that existing tenants can benefit from the opportunities created through our regeneration schemes and new housing. We want to make sure that the way in which we allocate homes is fair and transparent and that, as far as possible, we enable residents to have choices over where they live and in what type of housing. The allocations scheme does this in three ways:

- a) it sets out who is eligible to be considered for social housing
- b) it sets out the relative priority given to households with different needs
- c) it sets out how residents can choose which homes they want to live in

### **1.1. What to do if you disagree with our decisions**

#### **Reviews**

Applicants who are unhappy with a decision made under the Allocations Scheme should make a request for a formal review of the decision within 28 days of receipt of notification of the decision. In these cases, the applicant will be invited to make a written submission stating the reasons for their request for a review and the Council will seek any further information it requires, including advice from medical and other specialist advisors. Formal reviews will be conducted by a Review Officer who will notify the applicant of the outcome of the review including the reasons for their decision within 56 days. Where required, the Review Officer may agree to extend the 56-day review period. Any agreement will be agreed in writing with the Applicant.

#### **Complaints**

We aim to provide a high-quality housing assessment and allocation service. However, we recognise that sometimes things go wrong. We are always looking to

improve our services and we use complaints, along with other feedback, to help us to do this.

Complaints may be about delay, lack of response, rudeness, failure to consult or about the standard of service you have received. We encourage people to tell us if they feel we have not treated them fairly or politely, have not done something we should have done, or have done something badly. Making a complaint will not put someone at a disadvantage, now or in the future.

You can complain using any of the following methods:

### **By phone**

- Enfield Council's Customer Services on 020 8379 1000 (Calls may be recorded)
- Textphone - 020 8379 4419

### **In writing**

- Using the complaints form on Enfield Council's website or at a local library or Enfield's Civic Centre
- E-mailing us at [complaints@enfield.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@enfield.gov.uk)
- By letter to: Enfield Council Housing, Civic Centre, Silver Street, Enfield, EN1 3XA

## **1.2. Amendments to this scheme**

To make sure that the allocations scheme is operating fairly and within the law, minor amendments will be agreed by the Director of Housing and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Social Housing to address practical issues or changes made necessary due to further legislation or case law, or to refine the operation of the scheme.

## **1.3. Temporary Suspension of the scheme**

There may be occasions where it becomes necessary to suspend the allocations scheme in order to comply with government guidance (both statutory and non-statutory) or to enable the Council to meet an urgent need. Any decision to suspend the allocations scheme will be taken in accordance with the Council's procedures and constitution. In these circumstances, allocations will be made through the Emergency Panel.

## **2. Who can apply?**

Because of the shortage of social rented housing, joining the housing register is only open to those people who can clearly demonstrate that they meet one of the criteria set out in Section 7.

Anyone aged sixteen or above can apply to join the housing list, unless you are ineligible or disqualified. Applicants will be ineligible if they are:

- A person that the Government says cannot be on the list (this includes people who are subject to immigration control and do not have permission to be in the UK, or whose immigration status does not allow them to benefit from government help). These rules are summarised below.

- Unsuitable to be a tenant because they, or a member of their household who lives with them, have engaged in unacceptable behaviour. This is defined below.

Applicants aged under eighteen will normally be subject to a maximum of 50 points unless they are awarded points by one of the Housing Panels.

## **2.1. Immigration Status**

The Government says that in general we cannot allocate housing to persons who need leave to enter or remain in the UK – and this applies to all persons except British citizens and persons with a right to reside in the UK under European law.

This means that if an applicant is not entitled to access public funds because of their immigration status they will not be able to register for housing. This includes households who:

- are subject to immigration control
- only have a right to reside in the UK because they (or a member of their household) are a jobseeker
- are not habitually resident in the UK
- are not eligible if they are subject to immigration control or they are a person from abroad which the Secretary of State has prescribed as ineligible

This includes people from abroad who are subject to immigration control under the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, and people prescribed as ineligible for an allocation in any regulations made by the Secretary of State unless they are:

- already a secure or introductory tenant of the Council or an assured tenant of housing allocated to them by a Council; or
- in a class prescribed by regulations made by the Secretary of State

## **2.2. Behaviour**

If an applicant, or a member of their household has been involved in unacceptable behaviour, and they have reasonable preference, then they will be restricted to a maximum of 30 points. Applicants without reasonable preference will be removed from the Housing Register. Unacceptable behaviour means behaviour serious enough to make you an unsuitable tenant of the Council or other housing provider.

This includes:

- supplying false or misleading information on their housing application
- paying money or attempting to pay money, to obtain a tenancy with either a Council or a housing association
- deliberately damaging or allowing someone else to damage their home
- subletting any Council or housing association tenancy
- being convicted of, or had legal action taken against them for violence, racial harassment, threatening behaviour, any physical or verbal abuse towards staff and residents in their neighbourhood.

Legal action includes unspent convictions, serving of injunctions, notice of intention to seek possession, court order, or revocation of licence to occupy.

Decisions on unacceptable behaviour will be taken by the Manager of the Allocations Team following recommendations from officers. Appeals will be considered by the Head of Housing Services.

This does not apply to people who suffer from a mental illness, if the behaviour was directly caused by their mental illness. In these circumstances the Council will usually require medical evidence which will be assessed by the Medical Assessment Team.

You will need to demonstrate a positive change in behaviour if you want your application to be reconsidered. We will review your application:

- after 12 months if you supplied false or misleading information on your housing application
- after five years in the other circumstances, provided there has been no repeat occurrence
- or once a conviction becomes spent.

Earlier reviews may be considered on a case by case basis by the Manager of the Allocations Team following recommendations from officers.

### **2.3. Income and Savings**

Applicants will not be eligible to apply if their household income is high enough to afford to rent or buy privately and they are not eligible for reasonable preference.

This will apply if their gross household income is more than 10.5% of the average house price in Enfield (as published by the Land Registry Housing Index). This calculation is based on the minimum entry level for shared ownership in the borough.<sup>1</sup> The income threshold will be set annually based on the figures for March.

Applicants will not be eligible if they have savings or assets over £10,500 and are not entitled to reasonable preference. This is based on the average amount needed for a deposit for a shared ownership property in Enfield. Assets include property or an interest in a property in the UK or elsewhere. If they have recently owned a home, they will be asked for evidence of the sale and details of any capital gained to help decide whether they qualify to be placed on the housing register. We will disregard any lump sum received by a member of the Armed Forces as compensation for an injury or disability sustained on active service.

Applicants who are eligible for reasonable preference and who are subject to the income and savings criteria will not be allocated social rented or London Affordable

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<sup>1</sup> The affordability calculation is based on taking a 25% share of a shared ownership property as the cheapest option after affordable and social rent. Shared ownership properties are around 75% of the average house price in Enfield (currently £440,784) giving an average cost for shared ownership of £330,588. A 25% share is therefore worth £82,647. Including the rental element of shared ownership, a household would need to have gross earnings of £46,282 pa to be able to afford a shared ownership property. This equates to 10.5% of the average house price in the borough. This takes into account the Council's view that households should not have to spend more than 33% of their income on housing.

Rented homes but will be eligible for other tenures. More detail on the types of tenancies available can be found at 3.1.

The following people will be exempt from the income and savings criteria:

- Care leavers
- People who have more bedrooms than you need and are seeking to move to a smaller property
- Existing Enfield Council or Enfield Housing Association tenants who need to move because their circumstances put either their own or other people's lives or health at risk (for instance living in a high-rise block but being unable to manage stairs in an emergency)

Applicants will also be exempt if they are an Enfield Council or Enfield Housing Association tenant and have either:

- been awarded Decant Status
- are under-occupying (have more bedrooms than they need)

Any specific grounds for waiving the income and savings threshold can be considered by the Emergency and Exceptions Panel.

#### **2.4. Local Connection**

Applicants need to have a local connection with Enfield to be considered for housing. A local connection is where they:

- Have lived in Enfield for 3 of the last 5 years; or
- Have been in permanent employment (16 hours or more per week) in Enfield for the previous 3 years; or
- Have a close family member (mother, father, brother, sister, son or daughter) who has lived in Enfield for the previous 3 years; or
- Need to move to Enfield as a registered carer to give care or support to someone who has lived in Enfield for the previous 3 years; or to receive care or support from someone who has lived in Enfield for the previous 3 years. We will require evidence to support your application, normally either that you are in receipt of Carers Allowance or a copy of your Carers Assessment from Enfield Council's social care services.
- Any other case as determined by the Emergency and Exceptions Panel

There are some people who do not need to meet this requirement. They are people who:

- Are Enfield Care Leavers (who may have been placed in care outside the borough)
- Are living in a refuge or other form of safe temporary accommodation in Enfield
- Have been placed by Enfield Council in a refuge or other form of safe temporary accommodation outside of Enfield and had been living in Enfield continuously for at least 3 years immediately prior to moving into the refuge or other form of safe temporary accommodation



- Are receiving care in Enfield who have been referred by Enfield Council into a hospital or residential care home outside of Enfield
- Were placed in supported housing by Enfield Council or the Enfield Primary Care NHS Trust, are continuing to receive services from the Council and/or the Enfield Primary Care NHS Trust and who have been assessed as ready to move on to independent housing
- have an exceptional reason for needing to live in Enfield, because they need medical treatment which is vital to their long-term health and this is only available in Enfield (as determined by the Council's Medical Assessment Service as part of a health and wellbeing assessment)
- are currently serving in the Regular Armed Forces or who were serving in the Regular Forces at any time in the 5 years preceding their application for an allocation of social housing
- bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the Regular Forces where (i) the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease, to be entitled to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their Service spouse or civil partner, and (ii) the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service, have a serious injury, illness or disability resulting (wholly or in part) from service in the reserve forces
- divorced or separated spouses or civil partners of Service personnel who need to move out of accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence
- have been assessed and recommended for housing by Enfield Council's Fostering or Adoption Panels as an approved Foster Parent, an approved family or friend's foster carer or an approved adoptive parent
- are under-occupiers (existing tenants in Enfield Council housing with more bedrooms than they need).
- are existing Enfield Council tenants needing to move because the home they are currently living in is affected by estate regeneration work.
- moved outside the borough into private rented accommodation arranged through Enfield Council's homelessness prevention scheme within the last five years.
- are within one or other of the reasonable preference groups, as set out in Appendix A
- are likely as a result of some personal characteristic to suffer unlawful discrimination if required to establish the full residency requirement. In such a case the Council may, depending on the circumstances, reduce the period of necessary residence or disapply it altogether to avoid any discriminatory effect.

For people placed in accommodation outside of the borough by the Council in meeting its statutory homelessness duties, the time spent in temporary accommodation outside the borough will count towards time spent in Enfield.

## 2.5. Who can be included in the application?

Applicants can only include people who normally live with them as a member of their household on the application. Applicants and any members of their household can only be on one housing application.

Applicants can include the following people on their application if they normally live with them or could reasonably be expected to do so:

- their partner or spouse,
- children (people under 18 years old) dependent on them and/or their partner who live with them more than half of the time (51% or more of the time)
- siblings
- adult sons and daughters
- other adults who are dependent on them

Other adults who give or receive substantial long-term care from the applicant or other members of their household can be included. The person cared for must have care needs confirmed by assessment of adult social care, which cannot be provided by visiting carers. The care needs must be substantial, that is a need for personal care with basic daily activities (dressing, feeding, bathing, toileting), or an inability to live independently as assessed by Enfield Council's Medical Assessment Service.

Applicants cannot include anyone else (other than the above list) who lives with them on the application for rehousing, although they can make their own housing applications. We recommend that applicants carefully consider how many people to include on the application.

Where a household qualifies for the housing register because they are **homeless**, the application can include anyone who we accepted as part of the original homelessness application. For families with children aged 22 or older, we will encourage them to seek alternative independent housing if possible, in order for the household to be able to bid for smaller properties, and so increase the chance of them being rehoused in a reasonable timeframe.

If the applicant is a current Enfield Council or Housing Association tenant in Enfield applying for a transfer, all tenants should be included in the application.

## 3. Properties

### 3.1. Tenure and Rent Levels

The allocations policy covers a range of different tenures and rent levels. The majority of properties are either Social Rent secure tenancies (from the Council) or Affordable Rent assured tenancies at up to 80% of market rent levels (from housing associations). An increasing number of homes are either London Affordable Rent (at similar levels to Social Rent) or London Living Rent (set at a third of median income for the borough).

Different tenure types are aimed at different income levels and there are restrictions in place through the grant regime used to build the homes. Applicants with incomes over 10.5% of the average house price in Enfield will not be allocated Social Rented

or London Affordable Rent homes. The income thresholds for different tenure types are set out below:

Tenure	Minimum Income	Maximum Income
Social Rent	N/A	10.5% of the average house price in Enfield
London Affordable Rent	N/A	
London Living Rent	£25,000	£60,000
Intermediate Rent	£18,100	£90,000
Affordable Rent	N/A	£85,000
Market Rent	N/A	N/A

### 3.2. Size of home

We will work out the size of home suitable for the applicant and their household. Applicants will be able to bid for properties smaller than this (by one bedroom) but not larger. Where an applicant has been awarded points for overcrowding, they will be unable to bid for the same size property as they currently occupy. We calculate the number of bedrooms that a household will need by following the steps below **in order**:

- Step 1: One bedroom for the applicant, and partner/spouse (*if any*)
- Step 2: One bedroom for any additional adult couple
- Step 3: One bedroom for any two additional people of the same sex
- Step 4: One bedroom for any two additional people of the opposite sex aged nine and under
- Step 5: One bedroom for any additional person

This calculation will not be used where there are safeguarding concerns. In these circumstances the size of property will be determined by the Manager of the allocations team following a case conference and recommendations from Adult Social Care or Children’s Services.

### 3.3. Additional Bedrooms

Additional bedrooms will be allowed in the following circumstances (unless the bedroom standard already allows a separate room for the relevant individual):

- sharing with another family member whose care needs or behavioural problems severely affect the applicant’s ability to sleep, which in turn negatively impacts on their employment or mental health. In the case of children, this may also apply to schoolchildren whose ability to study and complete homework is negatively impacted. The Council may require the applicant to obtain supporting evidence from the Council’s Adult Social Care or Children’s Services department
- where grandparents and grandchildren would otherwise be sharing,
- the applicant, or a member of their household (adult or child), need overnight care (and they do not have a carer in your household). This will need to be confirmed as part of an assessment for Health and Wellbeing. As part of the Health and Well-being assessment, applicants will need an assessment or report to show that they need permanent and substantial overnight care on a regular basis. This would include assistance to turn in bed because they cannot do this themselves to reduce the risk of pressure areas, changing of

incontinence aids, liquid feeds. The Council will determine in its sole discretion the type of assessments or reports it requires (for example a Care Act assessment & OT report)

- the applicant, or a member of their household (adult or child), need major medical equipment for the long term, such as home dialysis, equipment for percutaneous external gastrostomy feeding, long term large assistive. This will need to be confirmed as part of their assessment for Health and Wellbeing.

People who are in receipt of formal overnight care (provided by NHS continuing care nurses, visiting agency carers, etc) cannot be considered for an additional bedroom.

Applicants must also be able to demonstrate to the Council they can afford the rent from earned income and/or benefits.

### **3.4. Under Occupiers**

Enfield Council and Enfield Housing Association tenants under-occupying their home, who would normally qualify for one bedroom and are giving up a 3, 4 or 5 bedroom house or flat, may be offered a 2 bedroom home.

#### **3.5.1 Flats above the ground floor**

All council properties require people to be able to self-evacuate their homes, in the event of a fire. This means tenants must be able to leave their flat, without assistance. If an applicant is unable to do this, they must declare this on the application. If they have a mobility problem, we will carry out an assessment known as a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan. This will determine their suitability for housing according to their level of mobility and the support they require.

If an applicant is able to self-evacuate their flat unaided, but has mobility problems, which would mean that they may not be able to use a staircase to evacuate the building, we will carry out a person centred risk assessment to determine the types of property they are suitable for. This is to ensure their safety and the safety of other residents.

We are currently in the process of replacing all of our lifts. Until this programme is completed it is not sensible to allocate properties above the ground floor in some particularly affected blocks to people who cannot manage stairs.

#### **3.5.2 Flats on the ground floor**

To ensure that we make the best use of our housing stock, flats on the ground may be prioritised for those with a medical recommendation for a ground floor property.

### **3.6. Wheelchair-adapted properties**

These properties are for people who have been assessed as requiring a wheelchair adapted home and have been awarded a health and wellbeing need to move following an assessment with the Medical Assessment Officer. The homes we reserve for this group are specifically those which have been adapted to cater for a tenant who requires a wheelchair. All wheelchair-adapted homes are allocated by making a direct offer.

We will carry out a health and wellbeing assessment, which includes an assessment by an Occupational Therapist, to confirm the need for a wheelchair-adapted home.

All wheelchair-adapted homes are allocated by making a direct offer. When an adapted property becomes available, we will consider whether it is appropriate for applicants in the following order of preference:

- a) Applicants with a high health and wellbeing need
- b) Former Armed Services or Reserved Services personnel who have a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service and need a home which is wheelchair-adapted
- c) Existing social or affordable rented tenants who need a transfer or need to be housed because they are currently living on an estate which is to be rebuilt/regenerated and who are a wheelchair-user
- d) All other applicants assessed as having a health and wellbeing need to move and requiring a wheelchair-adapted home.

Within each of these four categories, the household with the earliest health and wellbeing assessment which concluded a wheelchair-adapted home was needed will be given highest priority and first considered for the direct offer. The applicant with the highest level of priority will not always be the applicant offered the property that has become available, as an adapted property will only be offered to an applicant for whom the property meets their requirements.

### **3.7. Specialised Housing**

This covers housing for specific groups either provided or commissioned by the Council. It includes retirement housing (sheltered) and extra care schemes as well as schemes developed for people with specific needs. Applicants will be assessed for both their housing and support needs. The decision to award points rests with the Joint Assessment Panel. Full details of how priority is calculated are detailed at Appendix F.

#### **3.7.1. Retirement Living**

To be eligible for retirement homes, applicants or their partner must be over 60 years of age, or over 55 if registered disabled, and in need of housing support. Applicants should be able to live independently, with the provision of housing support, but not be in need of 24 hour care. They should be able, and prepared, to live within a close community without presenting unmanageable risks to themselves and others.

All homes to people in this group are allocated by making a direct offer.

### **3.7.2. Extra Care Housing**

Extra care housing is specialist assisted living designed for people aged over 65. These schemes have a dedicated care and support team available 24 hours a day for help with personal care and housing support. To qualify, in addition to the criteria set out in this Scheme generally, applicants must be aged 65 or over; have substantial or critical community care needs; and be assessed by adult social care as needing of the extra care services provided by the scheme.

All homes to people in this group are allocated by making a direct offer following a nomination from Adult Social Care.

### **3.7.3. Specialised Housing**

The Council provides specialised housing for residents with specific needs. This accommodation is provided both in partnership with local housing associations and through the Council's new build programme. All homes to people requiring Specialised Housing are by direct offer following a nomination from Adult Social Care.

### **3.8. What happens if I don't bid?**

We expect everyone who has been given priority to bid, to make bids for a home when suitable homes become available. If an applicant does not place any bids, we will contact them to find out why.

If they are eligible for a 1 or 2 bedroom home, we will contact them if they have not placed any bids over the last three months. If they are eligible for a larger property, we will contact them if they have not placed any bids over the last six months. This reflects the fact that there are few larger properties available.

If an applicant is not bidding, they will be offered help and support by the Council which includes:

- help with finding out whether a home being advertised is suitable for their needs
- help with placing a bid
- understanding their expectations about the kind of council or housing association home they are looking for and the availability of these homes
- advice on alternative housing options

If they still do not place any bids, we will remove them from the register after six months and cancel the application.

For homeless households who applied before November 2012 and are living in temporary accommodation, we will make one direct offer of accommodation. Households choosing to move into the private rented sector will be able to continue to bid through Home Connections. This is because we need to minimise the amount of time households spend in temporary accommodation and minimise the cost of temporary accommodation to the Council.

If we cancel an application because an applicant has not been bidding, they will be unable to apply again for 2 years.

### **3.9 Withdrawing a property after it has been advertised on Home Connections**

In certain circumstances we may have to withdraw a home from the CBL system after it has been advertised and bids received or even after an offer has been made to an applicant. These circumstances are as follows:

- It is needed for a household in emergency and exceptional priority requiring an urgent move.
- It has been incorrectly advertised.

A home or offer may be withdrawn at any point prior to the applicant signing the tenancy agreement. This is to ensure that we make the best use of all housing stock to meet the needs of applicants on the Housing Register.

## **4. What happens next?**

The Housing Allocations Team will start shortlisting successful bidders after the deadline for bidding has closed.

We will contact the bidder who has the highest level of points to invite them to view the property. Where two or more people bid who have the same level of points, the offer will be made to the household who has the oldest current application on the Housing Register.

The viewing must take place within the timescale given. Viewings may be offered either in person or virtually through pre-recorded video or via a real time video link. If an applicant is not able access any of these, or needs help to view a property, they must let the Allocations Team know. If they do not do this, they will be treated as having refused the property.

If an applicant accepts the property, they will be given advice on moving in and their application on the housing register will be closed. If the property is refused it will be offered to the next bidder with the highest priority.

All offers will be conditional on providing further information or supporting evidence in order that we can then check the points awarded. Applicants should gather all documents required in advance to avoid losing an offer of a home.

We will confirm:

- the property meets the applicant's needs in terms of size and assessed need
- they are eligible to be made an offer
- their priority for housing.

To do this, we may contact individuals or organisations whose details have been provided on the application, as well as any other relevant parties whose details come to light during our enquiries.

If you do not provide the information required within the timeframes requested, then the offer may be withdrawn, and the application may be cancelled. If this happens, the household would need to reapply to join the housing register.

Where appropriate, any information provided may be shared with partner housing associations (registered housing providers or registered social landlords).

An offer will be withdrawn if fraudulent information is uncovered.

#### **4.1. Sensitive Lettings**

We will sometimes use a sensitive lettings approach to decide how to let properties. Examples of where this approach could be applied to the allocation of properties are set out below:

- a. an outgoing tenant has caused a serious nuisance
- b. there has been a high level of recorded incidents of harassment/nuisance in a block or part of an estate.
- c. there is a high concentration of vulnerable households in a block, estate or area who may be susceptible to exploitation

Where a vacant property has been identified as being covered by the sensitive lettings approach, applicants will not be considered if:

- they have a history of causing nuisance or anti-social behaviour.
- there is a risk that your health or social needs could have a serious negative impact on the local community.

We will conduct regular reviews of our approach to sensitive lettings to ensure that it is being used effectively and fairly.

#### **4.2. Local Lettings Policies**

The Council may also decide to apply a local lettings policy to a particular area or development.

Local lettings policies will be reviewed regularly to make sure that we continue to give priority in our allocations to the groups the law says we must give priority to.

#### **4.3. Estate Regeneration & Development Schemes**

As part of our commitment to ensure that local residents are able to benefit from our new build and estate regeneration programmes, priority for new properties may be given to existing Council secure tenants living within a defined local area in the following order:

- a. Secure tenants of Enfield Council who have been awarded Decant Status
- b. Secure tenants of Enfield Council who are under occupying their home and are seeking to move to a smaller property
- c. Secure tenants of Enfield Council with housing need
- d. Secure tenants of Enfield Council without housing need
- e. Secure tenants of Enfield Council from elsewhere



The policy will apply to all new build properties let for the first time. Subsequent lets will be through the normal allocations scheme.

#### **4.4. Sustainable Neighbourhoods**

The Director of Housing and Regeneration can set up local lettings plans to help the Council deliver on its priorities, tackle social issues and create sustainable neighbourhoods. To do this, it may give priority to different groups of applicants who may not have priority in the wider allocation scheme, give additional priority to certain groups of applicants that are already owed some priority or vary how the Council assesses bedroom need.

#### **5. Direct Offers**

A direct offer is where we match a household to a suitable home and make an offer without anyone bidding for that property. Direct Offers are designed to help people to find a home if they need to do so urgently or have been unable to find a home themselves. The Council is only able to make a direct offer if a suitable home, which meets the household's need, becomes available.

The following households will be made a direct offer to support them to move into their new home more quickly. These households will be made one reasonable offer:

- Households who applied as homeless before 9<sup>th</sup> November 2012 and are living in temporary accommodation.
- People who have been assessed by the rough sleeper's panel
- People with a high health and wellbeing need or an urgent need to move
- People referred through Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements

The following people will be made up to two direct offers of a suitable home:

- People applying for older persons housing

There is no limit on the number of offers that the following people will be made because it is in the Council's (and other residents') interest that they move.

- Existing Enfield Council or Enfield Housing Association tenants who are under-occupying their home
- Individuals who are unable to self-evacuate their home, without assistance or utilise stairs to evacuate a building

Exceptions to the Allocation Policy, and appeals against decisions made, will be decided by the Emergency and Exceptions Panel. Exceptional reasons include:

- the lease of the home currently occupied is about to come to an end and no other housing options are available
- the household has assessed disability needs requiring an urgent move
- financial hardship.

When making a direct offer, we will take into account any recommendations made in a health and wellbeing assessment and occupational therapy assessment, and the area and type of home the applicant has expressed a preference to live in. However, offers will be made based on the housing that becomes available, and it is not

always possible to meet all the preferences that the applicant has. Refusing a direct offer of a home on the grounds that it is not in the area of preference will not be accepted as a reason.

## **6. Reciprocal arrangements with housing associations on direct offers**

In exceptional circumstances the Council may agree to assist housing association tenants on a reciprocal basis by making the housing association tenant one direct offer of suitable alternative accommodation. If the direct offer is unreasonably refused the reciprocal arrangement concerned will be cancelled.

Enfield Council expects housing associations to respond to the exceptional and emergency needs of their tenants by using their own housing stock. All reciprocal arrangements are agreed on a discretionary basis and the Council retains the right to decline a request.

Reciprocal arrangements are only agreed when there is no material loss to the Council in terms of available housing stock. A reciprocal offer in most cases means that the Council will expect back a property of equal or larger size than the home offered. The home must also be comparable in terms of quality and type.

In exceptional circumstances, the Council may agree to accept two smaller homes in exchange for a larger home of the same number of bedrooms. This will only be considered where there is no other re-housing option available to the applicant and where there is a strong welfare reason to support the request.

The Council expects to receive back the replacement home within twelve months of the housing association tenant's start date for their new tenancy.

The housing association concerned will be required to provide a written commitment to the terms of the reciprocal, as agreed by Enfield Council.

## **7. Other Arrangements**

Enfield Council works with a range of other housing providers to meet the needs of residents. As part of this we participate in schemes where we are able to nominate Enfield residents for housing in other boroughs. In exchange, Enfield Council will accept nominations from other boroughs for accommodation in Enfield who are signatories to the reciprocal arrangements. An example of a scheme of this nature is housingmoves – the Pan-London Mobility Scheme for London. Approval for Enfield Council joining reciprocal schemes will rest with the Director of Housing and Regeneration, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing.

## **8. What happens if I refuse an offer of a home?**

In most circumstances, we will cancel the application and will not make any further offers of accommodation if an applicant refuses, or are deemed to have refused, two offers of a home allocated through either the choice-based lettings website or through a direct offer.

In some circumstances, the action will be taken after one offer of accommodation is made and refused. This includes the following circumstances:

- Where we have agreed a transfer of an existing social or affordable rented tenant for Exceptional and Emergency reasons
- Enfield New Generation Scheme applicants
- Applicants have been awarded a high or medium health and wellbeing priority (and no other housing circumstances apply)
- The applicants are living in the private rented sector or with family or friends lacking 3+ bedrooms or lacking 2 bedrooms
- Applicants living in temporary accommodation

For applicants with Decant Status who refuse two offers of a social or affordable rented home, if those 2 offers were made through bidding, we will make a direct offer of accommodation as a third and final offer. Following the final offer of accommodation, they will be given the option of moving into one of the new properties on the existing estate once the regeneration work is complete. As a last resort, a Possession Order will be sought to protect the Council's and other tenants' interests in ensuring the estate regeneration programme is not held up.

For people needing an adapted home, the Council will try to meet all needs possible through assisting with adaptations to suitable homes. However, we may require applicants to make compromises. For example, a suitable home may not always be in the area of the borough which the applicant would prefer to live in. We will not cancel applications after two refusals, if they are demonstrating flexibility on the area of the borough in which they will live. If they do not compromise on the area of choice, then the application will be cancelled after 2 offers have been made.

If an application is cancelled, the applicant will have to make their own arrangements to find a suitable home. If we cancel an application after they have refused an offer of a home, they will be unable to apply again for 2 years.

## **9. The Points System**

We use a points system for assessing applications for council and housing association homes. People who qualify for our housing register will be awarded points to measure their housing priority by their circumstances.

Due to the severe shortage of housing in Enfield, only applicants with 100 points or more are eligible to bid. This figure will be reviewed periodically and, depending on the supply of housing, may be increased or reduced. The maximum number of points within the scheme is 1000.

Full details on how we determine the points awarded for different people are set out below. A summary table can be found in Appendix A.

### **9.1. Homeless or Threatened with Homelessness**

Given the extreme shortage of social rented housing, the immediate solution for households becoming homeless is the private rented sector. The allocation scheme reflects this and is intended to improve the opportunities for households in the private rented sector to access social housing. The Council is committed to ensuring that residents have access to a high quality, affordable private rented sector. We will work with households at risk of becoming homeless to try and prevent them from

losing their home and assist residents to access the private rented sector and support them in sustaining their tenancies.

Points are only given to those people who are (or would have been) owed the main homelessness duty under homelessness law by Enfield Council. This means that they are:

- eligible for housing assistance, and
- became homeless through no fault of their own (unintentionally homeless), and
- are in one of the priority-need groups

If they do not have a local connection to Enfield (see Section 2.4) and are not one of the people exempt, we will assess their situation and refer them to the relevant local authority.

Households who chose to move into a private rented sector tenancy outside the borough will not be subject to the local connection criteria and will therefore retain their priority for five years.

#### **9.1.1. If you are threatened with homelessness**

Applicants who have been assessed as being threatened with homelessness are eligible for 200 points if they sustain their existing home for 6 months. An additional 100 points will be awarded if they sustain the tenancy for a further 6 months and they will increase their points by 10% each year on the anniversary of the application to the Housing Register.

#### **9.1.2. If you became homeless before 9<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

Households who became homeless before 9<sup>th</sup> November 2012 are entitled to be made an offer of social housing. This will be through one direct offer of suitable accommodation. However, if the household moves into the private rented sector, they will increase their points to 750 and be able to choose which properties to bid on through the choice-based lettings system.

#### **9.1.3. If you became homeless after 9<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

Households who became homeless after 9<sup>th</sup> November 2012 will be given 200 points. They can increase their points by choosing to move into a private rented sector tenancy and sustaining this for six months. They will gain 50 points at the start of the tenancy and after six months in their new home will gain an additional 50 points. They will also increase their points by 10% each year on the anniversary of the start of the tenancy. We will help applicants to identify suitable properties to rent and offer training and support to help them to sustain their tenancy.

For applicants who choose to remain in temporary accommodation the Council will make a suitable offer of private rented accommodation. This will end our duty towards them, and they will no longer qualify for social rented housing.

Reference will be made as appropriate to the Council's Placement policy for temporary accommodation and private rented sector offers.

## **9.2. Applicants Living in Insanitary or Unsuitable Housing**

When determining whether a private rented sector home is unsuitable, we will use the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and Part X (10) Housing Act 1985 when assessing eligibility for this priority. We will consider whether the private rented sector property could be made suitable through repairs or adaptations, and whether or not the household could afford alternative suitable accommodation in the private rented sector.

## **9.3. Overcrowded Applicants**

We will assess the number of bedrooms a household needs, and we will compare this with the number of rooms that are currently available for the sole use of the household and which could be used as bedrooms in their existing accommodation. We will count any rooms other than bathrooms, toilets, kitchens and utility rooms as a bedroom. This will exclude one living room per property. This means any additional rooms such as a second living room/ dining room will be counted as a bedroom. We use this information to determine whether the household is overcrowded, and the level of overcrowding. The Council reserves the right to decide how households can make best use of the rooms available to them and to change their application accordingly.

## **9.4. Health and Wellbeing**

Health and wellbeing priority will be considered where the applicant, or a member of their household, has a long-term health and wellbeing issue which is being affected by their current housing. Health and wellbeing priority will not be considered where this is a temporary health or common wellbeing issue, such as pregnancy; asthma; a common cold; flu; cough; or a medical condition which would be resolved such as a broken leg. People who need to recover from the effects of violence or threats of violence, or physical, emotional or sexual abuse will be considered under the wellbeing category.

If an applicant wants to be assessed for health and wellbeing points they need to complete a health and wellbeing self-assessment. We will carry out a health and well-being assessment based on the medical evidence provided. This will be done by either the Council's Medical Assessment Officer, or we will arrange for an approved medical professional to review the information. We may request supporting evidence from professionals involved in any treatment. Applicants should not ask their GP or anyone else to write to us. We will use the information provided by relevant professionals as part of our holistic assessment. The Medical Officer will make the final recommendation on health and wellbeing priority for housing allocation.

We will reassess health and wellbeing need if an applicant's circumstances have changed significantly since they were last assessed, for example if they have been diagnosed with a new health problem, or their independence has reduced.

Details of how we assess health and wellbeing needs is set out in Appendix B.

## **9.5. Need to move to a particular locality**

### **9.5.1. Under Occupation**

The Council is committed to making the best use of our housing stock to meet the needs of as many of our residents as possible. Residents who want to move to a smaller property will therefore get a high priority for a transfer. The Council offers a range of incentives to encourage people to move to a smaller home.

### **9.6. Regeneration Programme**

The Council has an extensive regeneration programme. Wherever possible replacement homes will be built before the demolition of existing homes. This means that in principle tenants should not need to move more than once. However, we recognise that the disruption and inconvenience caused may mean that residents want to move before construction of the new homes is complete.

Where there is a need to move to enable demolition or major works, residents will be awarded Decant Status. This status will give tenants 800 points. Where they are looking to move to a replacement block this will be by direct offer. Where they are looking to move off the estate, allocations will be through choice-based lettings.

Tenants required to move off the estate whilst works are ongoing will retain the right to return at the point where properties are being let for the first time.

### **9.7. Panel Assessments and Referrals**

Applicants may be awarded points by one of the specialist panels. Details of these panels can be found in Appendix B.

The specific areas considered by Panels are:

#### ***Care leavers***

Single people who are under 25 and leaving Enfield Council's care will be awarded 800 points and they are not entitled to additional health and well-being points.

#### ***Households and people with disabilities or health needs***

Where a member of the household has been diagnosed with either a mental health illness; learning disability; physical disability; sensory impairment or long-term condition and they:

- will receive support from social care services; or
- could be in need of social care services in the absence of settled accommodation; and

have a significant need for a social tenancy because their current housing circumstances are having a severe negative impact on their health condition and wellbeing.

These households will be awarded 700 points and they are not entitled to additional health and well-being points.

### ***Moving on from supported housing***

People with support needs currently living in supported accommodation with whom Enfield Council have a move on agreement and have been assessed as needing an independent home.

These people will be awarded 650 points and they are not entitled to additional health and well-being points.

### ***Emergency and Exceptional need to move***

This is where someone has an emergency and exceptional priority and requires an urgent move. This could include households under the National Witness Mobility Scheme; Council Tenants needing to move because where they are living puts their own or others lives at risk; Enfield child protection cases; or households fleeing domestic violence who have been referred by Enfield MARRAC as being at the highest levels of risk, who are assessed as having an exceptional reason for requiring a social or affordable rented home and no other housing solutions are available.

These applicants will be awarded 1000 points and are made a direct offer because of the urgency of their circumstances.

### ***People referred through Enfield's established Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)***

These people will be awarded 650 points and will be made a direct offer.

## **9.8. Enfield Council Transfers for Exceptional and Emergency Reasons**

Enfield Council tenants may be considered for an Exceptional or Emergency Transfer known internally as 'Management Transfers' in the following circumstances:

- Child abuse from within the family or within the neighbourhood
- Threat of violence or actual violence
- Rape or assault within the home or immediate locality
- Unnatural death (suicide or murder within the home)
- Irretrievable breakdown in the relationship with neighbours
- Threat of or actual gang violence where this is confirmed after a full investigation with police reports and all available legal remedies have been exhausted.
- Where the tenant's circumstances put either their own or other people's lives or health at risk (for instance living in a high-rise block but being unable to manage stairs in an emergency)

Urgent moves in these circumstances will be considered and agreed by the Head of Housing Services or the Principle Housing Neighbourhood Manager. The decision will be based on an investigation undertaken by housing management staff to gather evidence of the reason for needing to move urgently and any health and well-being assessment available.

We will usually make one offer of a similar type of home to that currently occupied to applicants approved for a transfer for an exceptional or emergency reason unless moving from the type of accommodation is the reason for the move. For example, a tenant who is living in a high-rise flat will be offered an alternative high-rise flat. The senior officer agreeing the move should use their discretion to alleviate severe overcrowding at the same time.

## **9.9. Additional Preference Groups**

Applicants will be entitled to additional points if they meet the requirements set out below. Additional preference points are not available to homeless applicants.

### **9.9.1. Armed Forces**

An additional 50 points will be awarded to people who are either:

- a former member of the regular armed forces;
- a member of the regular or reserve forces who is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability related to their service; or
- a bereaved spouse or civil partner who must leave forces accommodation following their partner's death in service.

### **9.9.2. Exceptions and Special Applications**

There may be exceptional circumstances giving rise to a housing need not described or anticipated by this scheme. The Emergency and Exceptions Panel (EEP) will consider these cases. The panel is chaired by the manager of Enfield Council's Assessments and Allocations Team. Appeals against Panel decisions will be heard by a Head of Service from within Housing and Regeneration who has not been previously involved.

The Panel has the powers to take the following action in exceptional circumstances regarding an applicant, where the applicant's housing needs justify this course of action:

- Increase the points awarded to applicants
- Award a direct offer to an applicant

## **9.10. Reducing the level of housing priority**

Health and Well-being priority can be reduced if there is evidence that your health has improved substantially.

People on the housing register will have their priority for housing reduced to zero points if they have rent arrears and owe more than eight times the weekly accommodation charge; or they have not maintained a repayment agreement for 6 months. Their application will become inactive until the arrears are cleared or an agreement to repay them has been maintained for 6 months.

Exceptions to this will be considered on a case by case basis, for example where the case for housing is urgent or it is in the Council's interest for the applicant to move from their current home (for example, households whose Council home they are currently living in is affected by estate regeneration work, households under occupying their existing Enfield Council home who are moving to a smaller property,



or tenants who's circumstances put either their own or others' lives at risk) or where an applicant has suffered unavoidable debt, such as having to pay for funeral costs. This decision will be taken by the Emergency and Exceptions Panel (EEP).

### **9.11. Removing People from the Housing Register**

We will remove applicants from the housing register if:

- they have been housed in a council or housing association property since making their application
- they are a homeless applicant who became homeless after November 2012 and have been made an offer of a private rented home
- their circumstances have changed, and a new application needs to be completed
- they no longer require housing
- they had a change in their immigration status and are no longer eligible to be on the housing register
- they are not eligible because they are a person prescribed by the Secretary of State in regulations as ineligible, as set out in Section 2.1
- they have not been bidding on properties (see Section 5.4)
- they have refused direct offers of suitable accommodation (see Section 5.5)

## Appendix A: Points Summary Table

Applicants will qualify for the housing register if they meet one of the criteria set out below. Applicants may meet more than one of the criteria set out under each of the groups, in which case, they will be put in whichever category would award them the highest level of points. Applicants will not be awarded points from more than one of the below boxes at any one time. The maximum number of points available is 1000.						
		Who is eligible?				
		Enfield Council Tenants	*Enfield Housing Association Tenants	Private rent tenants	Applicants owed the main homelessness duty	Other applicants
	<b>Reasonable Preference Group</b>					
<b>1.</b>	<b>Homeless or threatened with homelessness</b> The main homelessness duty means that applicants are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eligible for housing assistance and</li> <li>• Became homeless through no fault of their own (unintentionally homeless) and</li> <li>• In one of the priority-need groups and</li> <li>• Have a local connection to Enfield or no local connection elsewhere</li> </ul>					
1.1	Applicants who are homeless or threatened with homelessness are eligible for points for up to 56 days prior to losing their accommodation and for four months afterwards (no longer than six months in total). Applicants will be eligible for these points if they have no accommodation that they can reasonably occupy.  During this period applicants are offered advice on how best to meet their housing needs.		50	50	50	50
1.2	Homeless applicant who was, or would have been, owed a main homelessness duty under the homelessness legislation, and has been assisted by the Council to retain their home and has sustained their existing tenancy for six months.			200	200	
1.3	Homeless applicant who was, or would have been, owed a main homelessness duty under the homelessness legislation, has been assisted by the Council to retain their home and has sustained their existing tenancy for twelve months.  These applicants are entitled to a 10% uplift in points on each anniversary of the application.			300	300	
1.4	Applicants who became homeless prior to November 2012 and are owed the main homelessness duty by Enfield Council.  These applicants are given <b>one</b> direct offer of accommodation.				650	
1.5	Homeless applicant owed a full homelessness duty who became homeless prior to November 2012 and has moved into private rented accommodation.  These applicants can bid through the choice-based lettings system.			750		
1.6	Applicants who became homeless after November 2012 and are owed the main homelessness duty by Enfield Council.				200	
1.7	Applicants who became homeless after 2012 who were or would have been owed the main homelessness duty by Enfield Council and have moved into the private rented sector and as a result, we have discharged our duty.			250		

1.8	Homeless applicant who was, or would have been, owed a main homelessness duty under the homelessness legislation, who applied after November 2012, has moved into private rented accommodation and sustained the tenancy for 6 months  These applicants are entitled to a 10% uplift in points on each anniversary of the move			300		
1.9	Applicant is intentionally homeless but in priority need and the Council is providing temporary accommodation for a set period to give the applicant a reasonable opportunity of securing alternative accommodation.  Applicant is removed from the register at the end of this period.		50	50	50	50
1.10	Non- priority need applicants will be awarded points for up to a maximum of 6 months. If there should be a change in circumstances resulting in additional points being awarded, the non-priority points will be removed.		50	50	50	50
1.11	Homeless applicants who are owed a homelessness duty by another borough but have been placed in temporary accommodation in Enfield		50	50	50	50
1.12	Applicant is sleeping rough and been assessed by the Rough Sleepers Panel as being able to sustain permanent accommodation.  These applicants are made direct offers					650
<b>2.</b>	<b>Insanitary of unsuitable housing</b>					
2.1	Applicant who shares facilities (including bath/shower, toilet and food storage/preparation area if they are not provided with meals) with other people who are not on the housing application and they have dependent children or a pregnant woman living as part of the household (these points are not available for tenants, or in some cases owners, of homes with self-contained facilities)	50	50	50		
2.2	Applicant is a private sector tenant renting a property where a move is desirable as their housing situation could seriously affect their health and wellbeing. The Council will assess the case and determine whether: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>there are significant hazards in your property, and/or</li> <li>the property is uninhabitable, and/or</li> <li>they are living in conditions that the Council should be able to improve through informal or formal enforcement activity</li> </ul>			50		
2.3	Applicant is a private sector tenant renting a property and they have an urgent need to move because there is an immediate threat to their health and wellbeing. The Council will assess the case and determine whether: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>there are significant hazards in the property, and/or</li> <li>the property is uninhabitable, and/or</li> <li>they are living in conditions that the Council is unable to improve through informal or formal enforcement activity</li> </ul>			300		
<b>3.</b>	<b>Overcrowding</b> Applicants current home is too small for them					
3.1	1 bedroom lacking	200	200	0		
3.2	2 bedrooms lacking	550	550	150		150
3.3	3 or more bedrooms lacking	600	600	250		250
3.4	No bedroom lacking	0	0	0		
<b>4.</b>	<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>					
4.1	Applicant has a high health and wellbeing need  These applicants are made one direct offer	1000	1000	1000		1000
<b>5</b>	<b>Need to move to a particular locality</b>					
5.1	Applicant is an existing Enfield Council or Enfield Housing Association tenant and their current home is too big for them: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3+ bedrooms too big</li> <li>2 bedrooms too big</li> <li>1 bedroom too big</li> </ul> These applicants are made direct offers.	900 850 825	900 850 825			

5.2	Applicants in an existing Enfield Council Tenant whose home is part of an agreed estate regeneration scheme and/or who have been awarded Decant Status.	800				
5.3	Applicant has a legal right to succeed to an Enfield-owned social or affordable rented home which is larger than required; or has no legal right but we would owe them a full homelessness duty if they were evicted. We require the applicant to move to smaller accommodation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicant is releasing a home with 3 or more bedrooms</li> <li>Applicant is releasing a 2-bedroom home</li> </ul> <p>These applicants are made direct offers.</p>	800 700				
5.4	Applicant is a single person under 25 leaving Enfield Council's care					800
5.5	Applicant is approved by Enfield's Fostering and Adoption Panel to be a foster parent, family or friend's foster carer or adoptive parent ( <b>for a home of 3 or more bedrooms</b> )	800	800	800		
5.6	Applicant or member of the household has been diagnosed with either a mental health illness; learning disability; physical disability, sensory impairment or long-term condition. The individual: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>will receive support from social care services; or</li> <li>could be in need of social care services in the absence of settled accommodation; and</li> <li>has a significant need for a social tenancy because their current housing circumstances are having a severe negative impact on their health condition and wellbeing.</li> </ul>	700	700	700		700
5.7	Enfield Council employee whose social or affordable rented home goes with their job and the Council has agreed to move them to an alternative social or affordable rented home because of ill health or retirement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>if releasing a 3-bedroom home or home occupied is needed for another employee</li> <li>otherwise</li> </ul>	750 650				
5.8	Applicants with support needs currently living in supported accommodation where Enfield Council has a move on agreement, who have been assessed as needing an independent home.	650	650	650		650
5.9	Applicants referred through Enfield's established Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) <i>These applicants are made a direct offer.</i>	650	650	650		650
5.10	New Generation Scheme applicants for studio or one-bedroom homes: Single people and couples without children living with their parents in an Enfield Council home meeting the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>aged between 25 and 60</li> <li>have lived with parent(s) continuously for at least 3 years and</li> <li>the parent(s) has lived in a council property owned by Enfield for at least 3 years</li> <li>the accommodation in which the applicant is living is overcrowded.</li> </ul>	450				
5.11	Key workers Enfield's Key Workers are people in professions that are important to maintaining local services, particularly in health, education and community safety.  Key Workers can purchase homes at a below market level price. A key worker can apply for Council or housing association homes in Enfield provided their main place of work is in Enfield.  Applicants who have sufficient finances to resolve their housing need by renting or buying in the intermediate housing sector (e.g. below market rent or shared ownership) or the private sector will be given information and advice on alternative housing options.	300	300	300		300
<b>6.</b>	<b>Emergency and Exceptional</b>					
6.1	Applicant has an emergency and exceptional priority and requires an urgent move. This could include households under the National Witness	1000	1000	1000		1000

<p>Mobility Scheme; Council Tenants; Enfield child protection cases; or households fleeing domestic violence who have been referred by Enfield MARRAC as being at the highest levels of risk, who are assessed as having an exceptional reason for requiring a social or affordable rented home and no other housing solutions are available.</p> <p>These applicants are made a direct offer.</p>					
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### Additional Preference Groups

<p>Applicants are eligible for additional points dependent on their circumstances. Additional preference points will only be awarded in addition to points gained through the Reasonable Preference categories. Health and Wellbeing points are not available to applicants who have points awarded as being Homeless or Threatened with Homelessness.</p>		Who is eligible?				
		Enfield Council Tenants	*Enfield Housing Association Tenants	Private rent tenants	Applicants owed the main homelessness duty	Other applicants
<b>7.</b>	<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>					
7.1	Medium Health and Wellbeing need	150	150	150		150
7.2	Low Health and Wellbeing need	50	50	50		50
<b>8.</b>	<b>Armed Forces</b>					
8.1	<p>The applicant is either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A former member of the regular armed forces</li> <li>• A member of the regular or reserve forces who is suffering from serious injury, illness or disability related to their service</li> <li>• A bereaved spouse or civil partner who has had to leave forces accommodation following their partners death in service</li> </ul>	50	50	50		50

\*When referring to Enfield Housing Associations this is limited to the Housing Associations that have tenants living in Enfield and Enfield Council have a nomination agreement in place.

## **Appendix B – Health and Wellbeing Assessments**

### **Detail considered as part of a health and wellbeing assessment**

During the assessment, the Medical Assessment Officer will consider:

- how and to what extent the applicant's current living conditions may affect their illness, disability or wellbeing;
- the applicant's housing need;
- how the health or wellbeing issue affects the applicant or member of the household;
- the severity of the health or wellbeing issue and how long it has lasted;
- the cumulative effect on the whole household where there is more than one person in the applicant's household with a severe illness or disability;
- past health issues and the extent to which the applicant's symptoms have been controlled or improved by treatment;
- the availability of 'in-situ' solutions such as aids and adaptations to enable the applicant to continue living in their present home;
- the need for 'in-situ' solutions such as aids and adaptations in any future home;
- Nil health and wellbeing points will be given if the applicant or a member of their household is waiting for the outcome of a medical condition if it's unclear how they will be affected in the long term.
- the applicant's financial and other resources, including whether they are entitled to disability benefits. Applicants will not receive an automatic award of health and wellbeing priority if they are receiving disability benefits.

The Medical Assessment Officer may recommend a particular type of home that is suitable for the applicant based on the assessment.

We will inform the applicant of the outcome of their health and wellbeing assessment in writing. If no health and wellbeing points are awarded, we will inform the applicant to refer to the Council's website for other housing options available to them.

### **Poor quality homes and disrepair**

Where there is disrepair and the applicant states that the health and wellbeing issue is related to the poor state of repair of the property then we will expect the property owner, landlord or Agent to remedy the disrepair.

We are committed to improving poor quality housing, whatever the tenure. Our Private Sector Housing Team can arrange property inspections, and the council website offers advice and support to owners and landlords on how to make homes safer. Where necessary, we will take enforcement action. This may include issuing a statutory notice ordering the landlord to undertake the work to repair the home. Where the landlord does not carry out the repairs, we may carry out the works in default or take action to prosecute the landlord.

## Applicants who move into unsuitable housing and request housing assistance from Enfield Council

Applicants with a pre-existing medical condition who move from suitable housing into accommodation that does not meet their needs will be expected to find their own longer-term housing solution, including in the private rented sector. The provision in this Allocations Scheme is designed to prevent applicants from deliberately worsening their housing conditions to take advantage of the health and wellbeing criteria to enhance their housing priority. In these cases, no health and wellbeing priority will be awarded. Applicants are expected to refer to the Council's website for help and advice in finding somewhere else to live.

### Level of health and wellbeing priority

Where we assess that the applicant does have a health and wellbeing need, we will award either high, medium or low health and wellbeing priority, depending on their circumstances.

High	<p>This is where the applicant has an urgent need to move, because current living conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• put the applicant's life at risk if they do not move, or</li> <li>• cause the applicant to be completely housebound and they would regain substantial independence if an alternative property were made available, including needing a wheelchair-adapted home because the applicant is a wheelchair user, or</li> <li>• put the lives of others at risk (for instance they are unable to self-evacuate from a building in the event of a fire)</li> </ul> <p>In some circumstances, applicants will also be awarded a high level of points if medical treatment vital to the long-term or life-long health of the applicant is only available in Enfield.</p> <p>Applicants with high health and wellbeing priority do not need to meet the requirements of the Reasonable Preference criteria.</p>
Medium	<p>An applicant's need to move is less urgent and not life threatening but their living conditions are unsuitable and if left unresolved, their quality of life will deteriorate. Applicants assessed as having a medium level of priority are eligible for additional points provided that they meet one of the other Reasonable Preference criteria.</p>
Low	<p>The applicant's living conditions cause them difficulty in carrying out their daily activities, but this is neither life threatening nor would greater harm or progression of the illness be caused if they did not move. Applicants assessed as having a low level of priority are eligible for additional points provided that they meet one of the other Reasonable Preference criteria.</p>

No award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The applicant's current housing situation has no adverse impact on the health issues presented, or</li><li>• a move would offer no improvement; or a solution, other than moving into a social or affordable rented home is available, such as the adaptation of their current home, or a move to an appropriate private rented home.</li></ul>
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## Appendix C – Who makes decisions?

Type of decision and / or assessment	Who makes the decision
Determining eligibility and qualification for a Council or housing association home	Enfield's Housing Assessment and Allocations Service:  Officer level
Deciding that an application should be cancelled	Enfield's Housing Assessment and Allocations Service:  Officer level
Assessing and prioritising housing applications	Enfield's Housing Assessment and Allocations Service:  Officer level
Assessing the size of home needed by an applicant	Enfield's Housing Assessment and Allocations Service:  Officer level
Agreeing an extra bedroom for an applicant based on their assessed need.	Enfield's Housing Assessment and Allocations Service:  Manager level (PO grade and above)
Deciding to accept someone not in the immediate family on an application	Enfield's Housing Assessment and Allocations Service:  Manager level (PO grade and above)
Awarding health and wellbeing priority based on assessed need	Enfield's Housing Assessment and Allocations Service:  Manager level (PO grade and above) following advice from the medical assessment team
Decision that an applicant has an emergency and exceptional priority and requires an urgent move (excluding management transfers for existing Enfield Council tenants)	Enfield's Housing Assessment and Allocations Service:  Manager level (PO grade and above)
Decision that an applicant has an emergency and exceptional priority (for existing Enfield Council tenants)	Enfield's Housing Assessment and Allocations Service:

	Manager level (PO grade and above)
Requires an urgent move - management transfers for existing Enfield Council tenants	Head of Housing Services or Principal Neighbourhood Manager
Assessing housing and support needs – people with mental health problems	Medical Assessment Team will assess and make a decision as to whether the case is referred to the Adult Social Care Panel
Assessing housing and support needs – people with learning difficulties	Adult Social Care Panel
Deciding which Council and housing association homes are to be let by direct offer or through the choice-based lettings scheme	Enfield's Housing Assessment and Allocations Service: Manager level (PO grade and above)
Shortlisting applicants who have bid for vacant Council or housing association homes via the choice based letting system	Enfield's Housing Assessment and Allocations Service: Officer level
<p>Conducting a review of a decision we have made on an applicant's case</p> <p>The council will usually deal with reviews of homelessness and housing allocation decisions internally. However, we may sometimes ask an external organisation to conduct the review on our behalf. The council will ensure that any contractual arrangements with an outside organisation is taken in accordance with the council's constitution and applicable law.</p>	<p>Enfield's Housing Assessment and Allocations Service:</p> <p>Review Officer</p> <p>or</p> <p>Manager level (PO grade and above) will approve where the review has been carried out by an external party.</p>
Deciding where and when local lettings plans will be put in place and agreeing the content of letting plans	Director of Housing and Regeneration with the approval of Cabinet Member for Housing
Determining the points threshold for applicants to be able to bid on homes	Director of Housing and Regeneration with the approval of Cabinet Member for Housing

Appeals against Panel decisions.	A Head of Service (HOS1 or above) will determine appeals against Panel decisions.
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## Appendix D – Enfield’s Housing Panels

Some Allocations points are awarded by a Housing Panel. There are several Housing Panels covering different types of referral route. The Panels are:

### 1. Adult Social Care

Considers referrals where the household is receiving, or may be in need of, support from Adult Social Care. The Criteria for the award of points are set out in Appendix A, sections 5.6 and 5.8.

### 2. Children and Family Services

Considers referrals where the household is receiving, or may be in need of, support from Children and Family Services, or where a referral has been made from the Fostering and Adoption Panel. The Criteria for the award of points are set out in Appendix A, sections 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6.

### 3. Specialist Housing

Considers referrals from Adult Social Care for Extra Care or Specialist Housing to assess suitability for an offer.

### 4. Rough Sleepers

Considers referrals from the Enfield Council’s Rough Sleepers Team. The Criteria for the award of points are set out in Appendix A, sections 1.12 and 5.8.

### 5. Housing Options Transfer Panel

Considers referrals from the Neighbourhoods Team for transfers. The Criteria for the award of points are set out in Appendix A sections 3, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.10,6.1.

In addition, the panel can exercise their discretion to offer a tenancy where there is no statutory right to succeed to a secure tenancy following the death of the tenant. This discretion can only be applied in one of the following three circumstances and, provided they are eligible to join the housing register:

1. Where a spouse or civil partner cannot succeed because of a prior succession and s/he lived with the tenant at the time of death and the property was their only, or principal home.
2. Where an adult child has resided with their parent for a minimum of ten years prior to the tenant’s death and has never held their own tenancy. The 10 years residence must have been continuous, save for any exclusion contained within the Allocations Scheme on residential qualification.
3. Where a carer is in receipt of carers allowance or where we have a been provided with a copy of a carer’s assessment from Enfield Social Services, and the carer left their own social tenancy to care for the disabled tenant. There must

be clear evidence that they have relinquished their previous tenancy. An offer of 1 bed flat will be made.

## **6. Emergency and Exceptions Panel**

No Allocations Policy can cover every eventuality. The Emergency and Exceptions Panel considers whether the nature of the application is so exceptional or urgent that the existing scheme should not be applied. In these circumstances the Panel has the power to award points to enable a direct offer to be made.

### **Terms of Reference**

Each Panel will consist of one chair and at least two other Senior Officers. The Emergency and Exceptions Panel must be Chaired by one of the Heads of Service set out below. Attendance at Panels may vary according to the nature of the cases being considered. Additional sub Panels may be set up to consider specialist areas, but all Panels must comply with the terms of reference set out below.

### **Chair**

Head of Housing Advisory Service or  
Assessments and Allocations Team Leader or  
Head of Outreach, Head of Sustainable Housing or Head of Service Development or  
Head of Housing Services

### **Panel Members**

Representatives from the nominating service as appropriate  
Representatives from Housing Services as appropriate  
Representatives from the Housing Advisory Service

### **Quoracy and Meetings**

To be quorate the Panel must include a chair and two other officers. Panel meetings may be held in person or remotely. Meetings will be minuted and decisions recorded in the minutes.

### **Criteria**

Apart from the Emergency and Exceptions Panel, the criteria for the award of points is set out in the allocations scheme. The role of each panel is to ensure that the criteria is being correctly applied to applicants.

### **Referrals**

The Panels will consider referrals directly from an applicant, or from any support agency, any statutory agency, any voluntary agency, a Housing Officer, any Officer from the Homelessness and Housing Options team, and/or, from the customer's medical representatives. Referrals must be in writing.

### **Meetings**

At the Panel meeting, the Panel will consider the referral letter and the customer's file, plus a printout of an applicant's records to ensure a transparent and equitable decision is made on all cases. It is important that written material is considered at the meeting but the applicant and or their representative can be asked to attend. If further information or clarification is required, then no decision on that case will be made and the case will be deferred, and additional written material sought to allow a correct decision to be made.

## **Decisions**

Minutes will be produced of each Panel meeting. The applicant will be advised within ten working days in writing of the outcome of the Panel's decision.

Where a Panel believes that although the applicant does not meet the criteria for awarding points, but they should still be awarded priority, a referral should be made to the Emergency and Exceptional Panel for consideration.

Applicants have a right to request an appeal against a Panel decision. A request for an appeal must be made before the end of the period of 28 days beginning with the day on which the applicant is notified of the Panel decision or such longer period as we may in writing allow. Appeals will be undertaken by a Head of Service within the Housing Advisory Service.

## **Emergency and Exceptions Panel Criteria**

The criteria (one or more must apply) for emergency awards are:

- a) Likelihood of admission to residential care of a family member if re-housing is not made
- b) Likelihood of a child being accommodated by the local authority if re-housing is not made
- c) Discharge from hospital or residential care is required and is prevented by the housing situation
- d) A child experiencing abuse needs to be moved away from the perpetrator
- e) The applicant, or member of their household, is at serious risk of harm either to themselves or to other people in their present accommodation
- f) The housing application does not fall within a single priority need group and could possibly fall into two priority needs groups.

In addition, the one or more of the following conditions also must be met:

- a) The applicant has severe financial hardship
- b) The applicant's wellbeing is seriously affected by their housing situation
- c) The applicant cannot reasonably be expected to find accommodation for him or herself.

The Panel has discretion to award points outside of the above criteria in the following circumstances:

- a) Households under the National Witness Mobility Scheme
- b) Enfield child protection cases
- c) Households fleeing domestic violence who have been referred by Enfield MARRAC as being at the highest levels of risk

## Appendix E – Specialised Housing

All allocations to specialised housing are by direct offer.

### Retirement Homes (Sheltered Housing)

To be eligible for retirement homes, you or your partner must be over 60 years of age, or over 55 if registered disabled, and in need of housing support. You should be able to live independently, with the provision of housing support, but not be in need of 24-hour care. You should be able, and prepared, to live within a close community without presenting unmanageable risks to yourself or others.

If you express an interest in sheltered housing whilst making or updating an application for housing, this information will be passed to our Older Persons Team.

They will:

- Contact you to find out some more information about you and may visit you at home to complete a questionnaire with you.
- Present a report to the Joint Assessment Panel; the report will include details of any person(s) or agency providing you with support.
- Take account of the Panel's recommendation and decide if you are eligible to bid for retirement housing and can be awarded retirement housing points from the table below.
- If you are not accepted by the Sheltered Housing Panel, then you will be given details on how to appeal that decision in the outcome letter, though you may still be able to bid for general needs housing.

Your assessed housing need will be used in the same way as for general needs housing, but we will also consider your need for support.

Your support needs will be assessed against the following table. You can be awarded support points for more than one criterion.

Criteria	Support Points	How do we assess?
Social inclusion	3	We will consider how difficult it is for you to be involved or get out and about in your local community.
Age over 75 years or 80 years plus	3 4	We will award additional points relating to your age
Being in receipt of a care package	4	We will consider any formal care package you are receiving.
Safeguarding risk	5	We will consider any identified safeguarding concerns

Your overall priority for retirement housing is a combination of your housing need and your support need and is calculated by multiplying your housing needs points by your support points.

### **Extra Care Schemes**

Extra care housing is specialist assisted living designed for people aged over 65. These schemes have a dedicated care and support team available 24 hours a day for help with personal care and housing support. To qualify, in addition to the criteria set out in this Scheme generally, you must be aged 65 or over; have substantial or critical community care needs; and be assessed by adult social care as needing of the extra care services provided by the scheme.

### **Other Specialised Housing**

The Council provides a range of specialised housing for residents with specific needs. This accommodation is provided both in partnership with local housing associations and through the Council's new build programme. All homes to people requiring Specialised Housing are by direct offer following a nomination from Adult Social Care.