

Housing Allocations Policy comparison document

Brief table detailing the changes between the two policies

Allocations Policy 2013	Allocations Policy 2020	Rationale for change
Residency local connection established through current and five years continuous residence.	Residency local connection criteria established through current residence and have lived in TRDC five out of six years (excluding time spent in temporary accommodation).	To allow customers who have moved out of the district for a period of up to but no more than one year in a six year period to establish a residency local connection. Examples could include temporarily moving due to employment or to look after family members living in another local authority area.
Family local connection where an immediate family member (parents, adult children, adult siblings) is currently resident and has continuously been a resident within the district for at least ten years.	Family local connection where an immediate family member (parents, adult children, adult siblings) is currently resident and has continuously been a resident within the district for at least ten years. The customer must have a relationship with that family member and a need for their support, at the point of application and point of offer of any accommodation.	To take into consideration the nature of a family association and the specific need for a customer to move to the district to be near family support. The current policy simply stipulates that a customer must have a family connection, regardless of the nature of a relationship nor whether there is a need or not to move into the district.
Employment local connection established through being employed in the district for a minimum of 24 hours per week for at least the last 12 months.	Removal of employment local connection criteria. Inclusion of 'Right to Move'. Customers with a 'Right to Move' are exempt from the local connection qualifying criteria. This includes customers who need to move to the district to take up employment or an offer of employment who would suffer hardship if they do not do so.	There is no statutory requirement to include an employment local connection. This is now covered by the 'Right to Move'. The 'Right to Move' is statutory guidance from the Government. This incorporates the need for a customer being required to move to the district for employment purposes to avoid financial hardship.
No specific exemption to the local connection qualifying criteria for victims of domestic abuse.	Victims of domestic abuse are exempt from the local connection qualifying criteria.	This is in accordance with Government guidance, recognising that victims of domestic abuse may need to

5. Appendix 1

		move areas to ensure they are free from risk of harm.
<p>The following groups of people are exempt from the local connection qualifying criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a person having serviced in the Regular Forces; • a bereaved spouse or civil partner of someone service in the Regular Forces where the bereaved spouse or civil partner is no longer entitled to reside in military accommodation due and the death of their spouse or partner was whole or partly attributable to their service; • a person who is an existing or former member of the Reserve Forces and are suffering from a serious injury or illness which is wholly or partly attributable to their service. 	<p>The following groups of people are exempt from the local connection qualifying criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a member or former member of the Regular Armed Forces and the application is made within five years of discharge (includes bereaved spouses and civil partners leaving service family accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of their partner); • a divorced or separated spouse or civil partner of a Regular Armed Forces member who need to move out of accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence due to relationship breakdown; • an adult child of a serving Regular Armed Forces member who is no longer able to remain in the family accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence. 	<p>To reflect new Government guidance to ensure that estranged spouses, civil partners and adult children of serving personnel are not disadvantaged when applying for social housing.</p> <p>Members or former members of the Armed Forces who lived in the district for 12 months immediately prior to enlisting will continue to be awarded a minimum Band C priority.</p>
<p>Customers who did not meet the local connection criteria and registered prior to January 2013 could remain on the Housing Register prioritised in Band D.</p>	<p>Only customers with a local connection as defined in Housing Allocations Policy 2020 qualify to remain on the Housing Register.</p>	<p>To remove a 'two-tier' system on the Housing Register, of one set of rules applying to customers who applied to join the Housing Register before the local connection qualifying criteria was introduced (2013) and another set of rules for customers who applied after.</p>
<p>Worker priority (12 months band start date backdate) is awarded to customers who are currently employed for at least 24 hours a week and have been for 12 months.</p>	<p>Worker priority remains, but working priority also awarded to customers who are unable to work due to illness or disability.</p>	<p>To ensure customers who are unable to work due to an illness or disability are not disadvantaged by the worker priority.</p>

5. Appendix 1

<p>A couple making a joint application, their combined employment is 24 hours a week to be eligible for 12 month back date.</p>	<p>A couple making a joint application, their combined employment is 37 hours a week to be eligible for 12 month back date.</p>	<p>To acknowledge a couple who are both able to work will have greater capacity to work the equivalent of one full time job (37 hours) than a single person. This is particularly the case for customers who have caring or childcare responsibilities.</p>
<p>An unborn child is not considered part of a customer's household.</p>	<p>An unborn child will be considered as part of a customer's household four weeks prior to estimated due date.</p>	<p>In most cases a Registered Provider will not accept a nomination if a customer is expecting a new child where this would change the size of the property they need. This change acknowledges this, allowing a customer to bid for the property size they will need once an unborn child is born.</p>
<p>Customers with a gross income of over £35,000 are considered to have financial means to resolve their own housing need.</p>	<p>Customers with a gross income of over £60,000 are considered to have financial means to resolve their own housing need.</p>	<p>To reflect the increasing property prices and typical private rented sector rent charge in the district.</p> <p>In July 2020 the median rent charge for a three bedroom property is approximately £1,500. It is recommended that a household should spend no more than 30% of their gross income on rent. To afford a typical three bedroom property and resolve their own housing need, a household would need a minimum gross income of £60,000 pa.</p>
<p>Housing Register applications are verified at the point of application and the point of offer. A customer must provide all relevant documentation prior to being made live on the Housing Register.</p>	<p>Housing Register applications are verified at the point of offer. Customers are requested to provide relevant documentation at the point of application, but this is not checked until a customer is nominated for a property.</p>	<p>Due to the high demand for social housing, most customers who make an application to join the Housing Register will not be successful in bidding for a property. This change will improve officer efficiency, by officers only verifying those who are nominated to a Registered Provider for an offer, rather than all customers applying to join the Housing Register.</p>

5. Appendix 1

<p>Non-dependent children living with a customer are considered part of a customer's household.</p>	<p>Non dependent children are not considered part of a customer's household unless they are unable to live independently due to care or support needs.</p>	<p>A non-dependent child is typically considered a child who is over the age of 18 and no longer in secondary education (including sixth-form or college).</p> <p>This change will allow the Council to make best use of the social housing stock in the district.</p> <p>Non-dependent children who are unable to live independently due to care or support needs will continue to be part of a customer's household.</p>
<p>Properties are advertised through Herts Choice Homes.</p>	<p>The Council is no longer part of Herts Choice Homes Consortium. Properties are advertised through Home Connections.</p>	<p>The Herts Choice Homes Consortium disbanded in 2018. The Council changed the housing software system used to administer lettings.</p>
<p>Certain groups of social housing tenants living in a property smaller than their housing need are awarded a five year backdate to their band start date.</p>	<p>No additional priority awarded to these groups of social housing tenants.</p>	<p>Additional priority is currently given to certain groups of social housing tenants over customers in exactly the same housing situation but renting in the private rented sector.</p> <p>These groups of people typically include social housing tenants who have been awarded priority due to living in 'over-crowded' housing.</p> <p>The housing need of customers in either tenure (social housing and private rented housing) does not differ. Removing the additional priority ensures the banding scheme reflects this.</p>
<p>Banding system changes</p>	<p>Applicants living in accommodation and a hazard awareness notice has been served awarded Band D.</p>	<p>To recognise a customer is living in a property where a health and safety issue has been identified and raised with the landlord.</p>

5. Appendix 1

	<p>Customers owed a Prevention Duty awarded Band D.</p> <p>Customers owed a Relief Duty with a priority need awarded Band C.</p> <p>Customers owed a Relief Duty without a priority need awarded Band D.</p>	<p>New priority has been introduced to incorporate the new Prevent and Relief duties introduced in the Homelessness Reduction Act.</p>
<p>Composite needs not recognised by the banding scheme.</p>	<p>The introduction of composite needs. One composite need must be medical priority.</p>	<p>Composite needs recognises that a customer may have two separate housing needs of 'equal priority' which can result in having an overall greater housing need than another customer with just one housing need.</p> <p>For example a customer could be awarded Band C medical priority and Band C overcrowding priority. The current policy would award Band C priority; however composite needs recognises they have an overall greater priority and they would instead be awarded Band B priority.</p> <p>Customers with two separate Band D (including medical) needs will be awarded Band C. Customers with two separate Band C (including medical) needs will be awarded Band B.</p> <p>However customers with two separate Band B needs will not be awarded Band A. Customers in Band A typically have such an urgent need to move that the highest possible priority is awarded. This would not be applicable to customers with two separate Band B needs.</p>