

Appendix 2 - Allocations Policy Changes

Current allocations policy	Proposed allocations policy	Survey responses / comments
<p>Local Connection:</p> <p>No current restrictions on local connection as we operate an open waiting list. However banding is driven by whether you have a connection to a District or not.</p> <p>This means we register households from outside the partnership who have no likelihood of being rehoused by us.</p>	<p>Local Connection:</p> <p>Applicants must have a 2 year local connection to the Home Choice Plus Partnership area, have a close family member who has resided here for 5 years, have resided 3 out of the last 5 years or have been in permanent paid employment in the Partnership area for six months.</p> <p>Those applicants who have a local connection to Bromsgrove, under the 1996 Housing Act, will still have a higher banding than those without a connection to the district. This will ensure those applicants with a connection to Bromsgrove will have preference over those without. There will be some exceptions to the local connection qualification criteria, for example ex service personnel.</p> <p>Persons with no local connection to the Partnership: Applicants who do not have a 2 year local connection to the Partnership will not be eligible to join Home Choice Plus. The exceptions to the local connection criteria are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Households accepted as homeless and one of the Local Authorities has 	<p>79% of respondents were in favour of this change.</p> <p>In addition, in order to assist with the allocation of rural housing under exception site policy, it has been agreed to include those applicants who have previously resided for 3 out of the last five years in the partnership area.</p>

	<p>accepted a full duty to them under the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by Homelessness Act 2002) which has not yet been discharged.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the Local Authorities are satisfied that the applicant needs to live in the area to provide on-going, regular and significant care and support to a relative and friend who lives in the area and their application is supported by the local Adult or Childrens Services team. • One of the Local Authorities (or its agent) have agreed to rehouse the applicant under a reciprocal agreement with their current landlord or local authority • Rehousing or relocation into the Local Authority area is accepted by the Local Authority (or its agent) as being essential due to public protection issues or for other exceptional reasons. <p>In addition, Members of the UK armed forces stationed abroad will be considered as living in the United Kingdom for the purposes of applying for social housing</p>	
<p>No Housing Need: The current waiting list is open to all</p>	<p>No Housing Need: Where an applicant is deemed to have no</p>	<p>61% of respondents supported this change. Of those that didn't, many were asking for groups to be included that</p>

<p>regardless of whether they have a housing need or not. This means we register a large number of people who aren't assessed as having a housing need.</p>	<p>housing need they will not be eligible to join the housing register. Exceptions to this will be existing tenants requesting a transfer, those requiring sheltered housing or applicants who would like to apply for shared ownership properties.</p>	<p>already are and wont be affected by the change.</p> <p>As these households will not be allowed to register we will need to ensure they are aware of their rights to request a review of the decision and ensure they can access Housing Options. We will deliver this through access to the Enhanced Housing Options system and the bdht housing options service.</p>
<p>Reduced Banding:</p> <p>Households with an income, of more than £60,000 will be placed into the reduced banding.</p>	<p>Reduced Banding:</p> <p>Households with an income, of more than £35,000 will be placed into the reduced banding unless they are in receipt of means tested benefits. This will ensure those applicants who do not have the means to access housing in the private sector will have preference.</p>	<p>75% of respondents supported this change</p> <p>The financial resources of an armed forces applicant will be disregarded where it is a lump sum that was received as compensation for an injury or disability sustained on active service.</p>
<p>Bedroom Standard:</p> <p>The current policy says that a family are overcrowded if they have two children that are sharing of opposite sex, when the older child reaches 8</p>	<p>Bedroom Standard:</p> <p>The proposed policy says that a family are overcrowded if they have two children that are sharing of opposite sex, when the older child reaches 10</p>	<p>52% of respondents were in favour of this change. Although this was a lower % in support the partnership believe the bedroom standard needs to be aligned with the way that housing benefit assessments of a household's bedroom requirements are made. This will prevent applicants being affected by the spare room subsidy as soon as they are</p>

		rehoused. If there are some exceptional circumstances around requiring an additional bedroom these may be taken into consideration.
<p>Applicants in Employment</p> <p>Not currently recognised</p>	<p>Applicants in employment</p> <p>Where applicants meet the required hours in employment for working tax credits thresholds and have been in employment for six out of the last nine months.</p>	58% of respondents supported this change.
<p>Applicants Volunteering</p> <p>Not currently recognised</p>	<p>Applicants volunteering</p> <p>Applicants volunteering for a minimum of 20 hours per month and for a continuous period of at least six months, at the point of application, at review and the same at the point of offer will be given additional preference. Volunteering must be for a not for profit organisation registered with the charity commission or otherwise recognised by the Local Authority (or their agent).</p>	41% of respondents supported this change and 40% opposed. We feel that supporting volunteers is still important and would wish to carry on with this policy change.
<p>Applicants in Education and Training</p> <p>Not currently recognised</p>	<p>Applicants in Education and Training</p> <p>This applies to applicants, who have been studying or training, which includes attending higher and further education or by accessing a vocational course of study or engaging in a programme of work related courses. This must be for a continuous period of at least six</p>	40% of respondents supported this change and 42% opposed. The partnership agreed that by supporting applicants who are in education and training they will encourage applicants to improve their employability and therefore supports central and local government policies to help to tackle worklessness.

	<p>months, up to the point of application and the same at point of offer. Training which is compulsory in order to qualify for out of work benefits will not be taken into account in awarding this additional preference.</p>	
<p>Applicants who are full time carers</p> <p>Not currently recognised.</p>	<p>Applicants who are full time carers</p> <p>This applies to applicants who are unable to satisfy the criteria outlined above, but who care for someone on a full time basis for a period of six months (due to disability or frailty) will also qualify for the additional preference.</p>	<p>68% of respondents supported this change.</p>
<p>Severely Disabled Applicants Who are Unable to Participate in any of these Activities</p> <p>Not currently recognised.</p>	<p>Severely Disabled Applicants Who are Unable to Participate in any of these Activities</p> <p>Applicants who have a severe disability (e.g. are awarded the support element of Employment Support Allowance or higher rate Disability Living Allowance / Personal Independence Payment) and cannot participate in community contribution activities will be awarded additional waiting time.</p>	<p>77% of respondents supported this change.</p>
<p>Bronze and Bronze Plus</p> <p>Currently applicants can remain on the waiting list for two years without bidding</p>	<p>Bronze and Bronze Plus</p> <p>Applicants can remain on the waiting list for one year without bidding</p>	<p>75% of respondents supported this change.</p>