



**Report Reference Number: PR/19/15**

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<b>To:</b>	Policy Review
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**Title: North Yorkshire Choice Based Lettings (Allocations Policy)**

**Summary:**

The North Yorkshire HomeChoice Policy is our allocations policy. This is the policy we use to allocate our council owned housing and links to the wider sub-regional Housing Strategy and Tenancy Strategy, the Homelessness Strategy and our own Tenancy Policy.

The allocations policy is delivered in partnership with other local authorities and registered providers across North Yorkshire and is focused on meeting housing need, making the best use of stock and supporting sustainable tenancies.

This report considers the objectives of the policy and provides an update for members demonstrating how these are being met.

**Recommendations:**

That Policy Review consider and comment on the report.

**Reasons for recommendation:**

To provide the Policy Review Committee with information relating to the Allocation Policy.

## **1. Introduction and background**

- 1.1 In 2011, Selby District Council adopted a new housing allocations policy and scheme called 'North Yorkshire HomeChoice', a shared allocations scheme that operates across all the North Yorkshire Authorities (except Harrogate), City of York Council and includes the main Registered Providers operating in the area.
- 1.2 North Yorkshire HomeChoice is a Choice Based Lettings scheme that works by the public advertisement of all available social housing vacancies, allowing applicants to select the home they are interested in through a bidding process.
- 1.3 **Key elements of the existing allocations scheme are:**
  - A single unified 'housing register' that covers the whole partnership area.
  - A single policy for determining eligibility to the register and/or determining the level of priority of applicants.
  - Prioritisation of bids for advertised properties on the basis of priority banding.
  - Bids for properties are ranked in order of housing need (e.g. priority banding); local connection to the partnership area; household size and time waiting on the register.
- 1.4 The current code of guidance on allocations, 'Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities in England,' was issued on 29 June 2012. It encourages authorities to make use of the flexibilities afforded by the Localism Act 2011 to ensure that social homes go to people who need them the most. The biggest change was to ensure that social housing is only allocated to 'qualifying persons' and housing authorities were given the power to determine what classes of persons are or are not qualified to be allocated housing. Full details are available in Appendix (i)
- 1.5 The choice-based lettings model of allocating social housing remains the most commonly used system but as demand outstrips supply there is increasing pressure on allocation systems that are designed to decide who gets access to this limited resource. Although as a Local Authority we must comply with some broad nationally set rules, it is up to us to decide who qualifies to join the waiting list and how much priority they get.
- 1.6 The Policy contains details of who qualifies and who is determined not to qualify for North Yorkshire HomeChoice. A full list of who does not qualify is available in Appendix (ii) and includes applicants who have no local connection to the partnership area, those found guilty of unacceptable behaviour and anyone with current rent arrears.
- 1.7 The Policy restricts access to the housing register to those people who have a recognised local connection to the partnership area. A local connection is defined by s.199 Housing Act 1996 because of normal residence of their own choice, employment, family or special circumstances.

- 1.8 Applicants have their housing application assessed and are allocated a band in accordance with their assessed housing need. Bands in order of priority are: Emergency, Gold, Silver and Bronze. Full details of the banding are available in Appendix (iii).
- 1.9 In 2012 the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) was invited by the North Yorkshire Home Choice partners to undertake an evaluation of the impact of the North Yorkshire Home Choice Policy following its first year of operation. This evaluation was funded by JRF and undertaken by the University of Birmingham.
- Overall their findings were very positive:
- Applicants welcome the increased choice offered by the scheme.
  - Applicants found the new system more open and transparent than the old 'points based' systems.
  - Applicants find the system provides more information about properties and lettings.
  - Applicants who were successfully housed found the allocations system fair and easy to understand.
- 1.10 In 2019, a Selby District Council survey, jointly developed with the SDC Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Panel, found that 87% of new tenants were either very or fairly satisfied with North Yorkshire HomeChoice and the service they received through this process.

## **2. The aims and objectives**

The Policy sets out the key aims and objectives of the partnership and has due regard to the Tenancy Policy which commits to targeting resources to those in greatest need, improve access to home ownership, make best use of stock, support tenants into work through signposting and maintaining sustainable communities.

The report reviews the aims and objectives of the North Yorkshire HomeChoice Allocations Policy below.

### **2.1 To meet legal requirements**

In its role as a Local Housing Authority the Council has a legal duty to have an allocation policy that determines how lettings of social housing within the district are undertaken and it is a requirement that reasonable preference is given to certain categories of applicants and these are:

- People who are homeless.
- People occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions.
- People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to disability.

- People who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the housing authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others).

The priority bandings offered by North Yorkshire HomeChoice reflect the reasonable preference requirements.

The current code of guidance on allocations, 'Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities in England,' was issued on 29 June 2012. The guidance encourages authorities to make use of the flexibilities afforded by the Localism Act 2011 and Local Authorities must have due regard to this guidance when framing their policies. In 2013 the North Yorkshire Home Choice Policy was reviewed and some of those flexibilities were introduced.

Some of the key policy changes introduced at this time included:

- An income/savings cap.
- A restriction on homeowners joining the register.
- Applications limited to those with a local connection to the partnership area (with the exception of Military personnel and those owed a duty under homelessness legislation).
- The flexibility to restrict bids for rural settlements to those with a local connection to the parish.
- A size criteria was introduced, meaning that applicants were only able to bid on properties that met their assessed bedroom need, and not one bedroom more.
- Applicants who had deliberately worsened their circumstances could be disqualified for 12 months.

## **2.2 To develop a common approach in allocating social housing through a shared housing register.**

The introduction of North Yorkshire HomeChoice in 2011 came about partly as a result of government recommendations that local authorities should develop and adopt sub-regional allocation schemes.

North Yorkshire HomeChoice is overseen by a Board and an Operational group both made up of representatives from the partner organisations. This provides a strong governance structure that ensures that Policy implementation is consistent and transparent.

City of York Council currently act as the lead partner for North Yorkshire HomeChoice and act as the 'host' for the partnership. The post of CBL coordinator is employed by City of York Council but is jointly funded by the partnership and undertakes work on behalf of the North Yorkshire HomeChoice partnership. This post administrates the scheme, manages the review process, manages any training needs and supports staff across the partnership area.

The current costs associated with North Yorkshire HomeChoice are split equally between the partner agencies including the cost of the Civica IT system. This system will link directly to our new Housing Management IT system and this will create efficiencies in how we work.

If Selby District Council were no longer part of North Yorkshire HomeChoice a new stand-alone allocations system would need to be procured and this would have financial implications.

100% of the properties of registered provider partner landlords are being advertised through NYHC, which is higher than the percentages offered through nomination agreements, increasing the supply of social housing across the district and providing more options for applicants. All properties are advertised at the same time each week and each week there is a wide range of properties available to bid on.

It is important that applicants and the wider community understand how social housing is allocated and they can see that the allocation system is fair and the authority is complying with its allocation scheme. The North Yorkshire HomeChoice portal allows us to publish information relating to bids and allocations centrally.

### **2.3 Make the housing process accessible, transparent, fair and easy to use**

Prior to the introduction of North Yorkshire HomeChoice, Selby District Council operated a points based allocations system. Choice Based Lettings puts an onus on the applicant to seek out a suitable property and in doing so encourages proactive engagement.

Simple bandings are easier to understand than the points systems of previous schemes, and priorities are linked to easily understood concepts, such as health needs, time in band, overcrowding etc

To help applicants place a bid, information on who is eligible to apply is included in the adverts, and the system restricts bidding outside of this.

North Yorkshire HomeChoice is available on-line but support is available to those who struggle to access the system; including weekly newsletters and an automated bidding process.

To ensure transparency, data is readily available for customers as to the outcome of each advert, demonstrating the level of demand and the priority of the successful applicant. This can help us to manage customer expectations and encourages applicants to explore other options.

### **2.4 Prevent homelessness and reduce placement in temporary accommodation**

People who are homeless are given reasonable preference and awarded priority banding within the current allocations policy, in line with legislation.

Homelessness legislation has changed and the Homelessness Reduction Act requires applicants to take steps to prevent or relieve their homelessness and the onus North Yorkshire HomeChoice puts on applicants to make their own housing choices, supports this.

Once an applicant is owed a main homeless duty a direct offer of housing can be made which allows a planned and swift move on from temporary accommodation.

Priority banding is also awarded to applicants who have gone through a period of intensive resettlement, when their support provider can evidence they have developed the skills required for independent living.

## 2.5 **Make effective use of available housing stock and provide greater choice by extending mobility across partner local authority boundaries**

### Effective use of housing stock

Since 2013, new rules aimed at making better use of stock and improving mobility levels in the social housing sector were implemented that cut the entitlement to housing benefit for social housing tenants deemed to have a 'spare' bedroom. The measure meant that working age people living in social housing who are entitled to housing benefit would only be entitled to help based on the household composition and the size of accommodation they are considered to need. The North Yorkshire Home Choice Policy allows applicants to bid on properties that match their assessed needs; the table below shows household composition and property eligibility.

	Bedsit / Studio	1 bedroom flat / maisonette / house	1 bedroom bungalow	2 bedroom flat / maisonette / house	2 bedroom bungalow	3 bedroom flat / maisonette / house	4 bedroom house	5+ bedroom house
One adult.	✓	✓	✓					
Two adults*		✓	✓					
Three adults*				✓	✓			
One / Two adults with one child				✓	✓			
One / Two adults with 2 children under 10 regardless of sex				✓	✓			
One / Two adults with 2 children/adolescents of the same sex up to the age of 20				✓	✓			
One / Two adults with 2 children/adolescents of the same sex one 21 plus						✓		
One / Two adults with 3 children						✓		
One / Two adults with 4 children						✓	✓	
One / Two adults with 5+ children							✓	✓

This approach ensures that Selby District Council are making the best use of their stock and, alongside the financial assistance of the Tenants Transfer Incentive Scheme offered by SDC, ensures those who are underoccupying properties are prioritised to downsize to something more manageable.

Allocating properties in this way also takes account of affordability to tenants, ensuring they are not impacted by legislative changes, such as the removal of the Spare Room Subsidy or higher rents. This, in turn, reduces the financial risk to Selby District Council.

One of the challenges of this approach is that it can impact negatively on the sustainability of some tenancies, as families outgrow their property, resulting in overcrowding. This is mitigated to a certain extent by the priority banding awarded to tenants who are overcrowded within the North Yorkshire HomeChoice Allocations Policy, and also the Good Tenant Scheme which awards priority to those who have sustained and not breached their tenancy for a period of three years.

### Mobility

One of the benefits of the sub-regional partnership is the ability to apply for housing across the wider partnership area. This has allowed Selby applicants to move out of the district to take up job opportunities and be closer to friends and family. Migration can be a cause of concern and there can be a perception that local applicants are missing out on housing opportunities due to high levels of inward migration.

In response to this issue a number of changes were put into place in 2013 including a restriction on eligibility to join the register to households without any local connection to the partnership area. The flexibility to restrict lettings for small rural settlements to those with a specific connection to the parish was also introduced.

Since July 2019, all Selby District Council properties in towns and villages across Selby district (with the exception of Selby and Tadcaster) have been let using the rural restriction described above. This approach awards cascading priority to those with a connection to the parish followed by the connection to the wider partnership area.

S106's and Local Lettings Initiatives operate using a similar cascading priority, with the latter put in place for all social/affordable rent new build properties across the district that are advertised through North Yorkshire HomeChoice, including those of registered provider partner landlords and Selby and District Housing Trust.

This approach means that Selby District Council are meeting housing need at a local level, which is particularly important in rural areas where there is often a shortage of social and affordable housing for people to access. However, a by product of this blanket approach to prioritising local people is that less priority is given to those with high housing need across the district and

partnership. This situation is likely to be exacerbated for single person households requiring one bedroom, as stock is limited across the district.

On the whole, the use of a rural restriction in letting properties is well received by local residents, particularly in areas of high demand and where there is a low supply of social housing. However, there have been applicants who are homeless, or in hospital and unable to return home (Emergency band) who, as a result of not having a local connection, have not been successful in securing accommodation where previously they would have been.

Data is currently being collected regarding properties allocated under the rural restriction criteria and a full analysis will take place when 6 months of data is available. However, when considering some wider allocation figures over a 12 month period (1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 -1<sup>st</sup> October 2019), there is strong evidence that, through North Yorkshire HomeChoice, Selby District Council housing is predominately being let to residents of Selby district regardless of the rural restriction.

Of the 267 tenants housed within this period, 82% had a local connection to Selby district, with 70% living in district immediately prior to the move. Furthermore, 43% of the overall number had a local connection to the specific parish, with 39% living in the parish immediately prior to moving.

The figures demonstrate that the majority of Selby District allocations are to those with a local connection to Selby District and that the allocations policy is able to meet the housing need of those with a specific connection to the Selby District. Out of the 46 applicants that were housed in the Selby district and had a local connection to the wider partnership area, 39 were from York.

City of York Council have made the decision to leave the partnership and this will reduce Selby's net migration significantly as York applicants will no longer be eligible to apply for North Yorkshire HomeChoice without a local connection to the remaining partnership area

## **2.6 Provide information about the availability of homes to enable applicants to make realistic choices about their housing options**

Nationally, some Council's, using the new flexibilities created by the Localism Act, have chosen to limit access to their housing registers to any household with no recognised need and are removing the bronze banding (or equivalent). The bronze category is considered the category for those without a 'housing need' and for a lot of those applicants there is little or no chance of receiving a successful allocation of housing. However, as demand varies across the partnership area, a decision was made in 2013 to retain this.

Across Selby District our lowest demand properties are bungalows, three-bed houses and first floor flats and between October 2018 and October 2019 31% of allocations were to applicants in the bronze band.



#### Number of current active applicants

Selby	Emergency	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
Number of applicants	3	54	339	276	672

The benefits of Choice Based Lettings can include greater customer choice, and the onus is on the applicant to seek out suitable properties – rather than the landlord targeting potential tenants. Choice Based Lettings can raise unrealistic expectations in high demand areas therefore retaining the bronze band and allowing applicants without a housing need to bid for properties provides us the opportunity to let lower demand stock and prevents hard to let properties remaining empty.

#### **2.7 Encourage and support, balanced, sustainable communities where people choose to live**

Local letting initiatives may be introduced by partners to respond to local housing need and demand within a specific build or area. They are used to ensure best management of housing stock and to support rural areas with regards to demand and affordability and ensuring balanced sustainable communities. There are currently 17 local lettings initiatives active in the Selby district and these all include cascading criteria with priority going to applicants from the immediate parish and then wider district.

North Yorkshire Home Choice advertises council and partner housing association properties for rent and shared ownership properties for sale. There are currently 34 landlords participating in the North Yorkshire Home Choice Scheme giving applicants a wide choice of housing options which can increase interest in social housing among new groups of eligible customers who haven't previously considered the tenure. This is useful for providers who have low levels of demand.

On occasions we need to address specific issues in an area and may advertise a property as a 'sensitive let'. This allows us to bypass applicants at the top of the list so as to avoid a lifestyle clash. It is important that sensitive lettings are objective and clearly evidence based to enable us to communicate the reason for the approach to applicants and the wider community.

#### **2.8 Advertise available properties providing the opportunity to make informed choices and actively find a home**

The Choice Based Lettings system offers much more choice for applicants than the previous points based system did and now applicants are much more active participants in the allocations system.

Information about property demand, the chances of a successful bid and eligibility criteria is readily available. The outcome of the process is published to show the level of demand for a property and the priority of the successful applicant to help the applicant make an informed choice.

### **3. Alternative Options Considered**

None

### **4. Implications**

#### **4.1 Legal Implications**

This report is providing information only therefore there are no specific legal implications associated with this report.

#### **4.2 Financial Implications**

This report is providing information only therefore there are no specific financial implications associated with this report.

#### **4.3 Policy and Risk Implications**

This report provides information to allow the Policy Review Committee to provide comments. At this stage there are no further policy or risk implications.

### **5. Conclusion**

The Council's Allocations Policy meets the national Code of Guidance on allocations. The Policy is choice-based which remains the most commonly used system nationally. The Policy is supported by tenants as evidenced by the survey jointly developed by the Council and the Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Panel which found 87% of new tenants were satisfied with the HomeChoice service and process.

The Policy meets legal requirements; has a common approach; is accessible; transparent and easy to use. It helps the Council to prevent homelessness and makes effective use of Council housing stock.

### **6. Background Documents**

['Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities in England.'](#)

[North Yorkshire HomeChoice Policy](#)

## **7. Appendices**

Appendix (i) – Guidance from the Allocation of accommodation

Appendix (ii) – North Yorkshire Home Choice eligibility and qualification

Appendix (iii) – Assessing Housing need

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## **Appendix (i)**

### **Guidance from the 'Allocation of accommodation'**

The guidance states that an allocation policy must:

- Determine priorities between applicants
- Set out operational procedures for letting property
- Have regard for homelessness strategies and tenancy strategies

#### **Key requirements include:**

- Authorities have to consider each application and whether or not they qualify. They may only allocate accommodation to people who are defined as 'qualifying persons.'
- In framing qualification criteria, authorities will need to have regard to their duties under the equalities legislation, as well as give priority to people in reasonable preference categories.
- Councils should consult with housing associations with which they have nomination agreements over new schemes or major changes in policy
- A summary of the allocation scheme must be published.

#### **Reasonable preference must be given to the following categories of people:**

- People who are homeless within the meaning of Part 7 of the 1996 Act (including those who are intentionally homeless and those not in priority need).
- People who are owed specific homeless duties by any housing authority under section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) of the 1996 Act.
- People occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions.
- People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability.
- People who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the housing authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship.

#### **The guidance also states:**

- Authorities should avoid allocating social housing to people who already own their own homes. Where they do so, this should only be in exceptional circumstances.
- Authorities are required to have an allocation scheme for determining priorities, and they must allocate in accordance with that scheme.
- Authorities should consider the importance of giving tenants who under-occupy their accommodation appropriate priority for a transfer.
- Authorities are also strongly encouraged to take into account the needs of all serving or former Service personnel when framing their allocation schemes, and to give sympathetic consideration to the housing needs of family members of serving or former Service personnel who may themselves have

been disadvantaged by the requirements of military service and, in particular, the need to move from base to base.

- An allocation scheme must be framed so as to give applicants the right to be informed of certain decisions and the right to review certain decisions.
- At the end of 2018, supplementary guidance was also issued to councils in England concerning the allocation of social housing to victims of domestic violence. The key recommendation is that local authorities should exempt from local connection qualification requirements those living in a refuge or 'other form of safe temporary accommodation' in their district, who have escaped domestic abuse in another council area.

## **Appendix (ii)**

### **North Yorkshire Home Choice eligibility and qualification**

An applicant may be ineligible for an allocation of accommodation under s.160ZA (2) or (4) Part 6 Housing Act 1996.

Persons from abroad may not be allocated accommodation under Part 6 if he or she is a person from abroad who is ineligible for an allocation under s.160ZA of the 1996 Act.

- A person subject to immigration control- such a person is not eligible for an allocation of accommodation unless he or she comes within a class prescribed in regulations made by the Secretary of State (s.160ZA(2))
- A person from abroad other than a person subject to immigration control regulations may provide for other descriptions of persons from abroad who, although not subject to immigration control, are to be treated as ineligible for an allocation of accommodation (s.160ZA(4))
- A person subject to immigration control that would make them ineligible for an allocation of housing and/or where the Secretary of State may by regulations prescribe other classes of persons from abroad ineligible for an allocation of housing.
- Applicants who do not have recourse to public funds or who cannot prove they have recourse to public funds or those not habitually resident
- Some applicants subject to Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) may not qualify to join the register where the risk is deemed too high via a MAPPA meeting. Applicants who have been assessed, approved and accepted as qualifying by a senior manager of the relevant partner local authority may be restricted to a specific local authority or area or subject to a direct let and any property offer will be subject to approval by the necessary agencies.

Eligibility will be confirmed at the point of application, during the housing process and at the point of offer. Where there has been a change in legislation or change in circumstances and a person is found to be no longer eligible for social housing and/or the housing register the application will be closed

### **Persons who may not qualify include those:**

- Applicants aged 16 and 17 years who do not meet the following criteria;
  - they are a looked after child under section 20 Children's Act 1989 or are care leavers with a relevant support package and Trustee and are ready for independent living as agreed with Social Services and confirmed by the Local Authority Housing department, OR

- they must have an appropriate support package in the area they wish to live to enable them to sustain their residency and they must have an identified trustee who can hold any tenancy on their behalf until the age of 18. Trustees can be a person or an organization, and will not have a financial liability.
- Persons or a member of the household that has been found guilty of unacceptable behavior serious enough to make them an unsuitable tenant
- Persons or members of the household with a record of anti-social behaviour issues that have caused or likely to cause serious nuisance and annoyance to neighbours or visitors, such as drug dealing, noise nuisance, violence or intimidation, domestic violence or acts of racism, breach of tenancy or using a property for illegal or immoral purposes. Please refer to appendix 2 for more information.
- Who have current rent arrears either to a social housing provider or private landlord. Who are currently in breach their tenancy conditions and their landlord has started formal action
- Who have a history of substantial rent arrears and/or breaches of tenancy and there is no evidence of a change in behaviour
- Who have outstanding housing related debt where no acceptable repayment arrangement has been made
- Tenants on an introductory/starter/demoted tenancy
- Who have no local connection to the partnership area,
- Who own their own home or reside with a household member who is a home owner whether they reside in it or not and who are not in housing need
- Who have a combined household income and/or savings of £60,000 or over and/or who have significant capital assets which would enable them to meet their own housing need
- Who have deliberately worsened their housing circumstances with the intent of increasing priority
- Who knowingly or recklessly give false information and/or knowingly withhold information
- Who refuse 3 suitable property offers following bidding or a single direct offer of accommodation
- disqualified applicants or members of their household during the period of disqualification
- Persons subject to MAPPA where the risk is deemed too high
- Households within the first year of a social housing tenancy/new property/mutual exchange unless there is a key change in circumstances which makes the current property unsuitable to remain in and the move is assessed, supported and approved by a senior manager.
- Applicants assessed as needing support to hold and maintain a tenancy and no support in place

In certain defined circumstances the qualification criteria may not apply, these include; Homeless applicants owed a main duty under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996, (as amended Homeless Reduction Act 2017), accepted households under MAPPA, the National Witness Protection Scheme, and persons fleeing domestic violence or hate crime. These cases will be individually assessed and where supported and approved by a Senior Housing Manager may be considered as qualifying for the housing register. Restrictions may be applied and these can include bidding restrictions on the property and/or area of choice an accepted applicant can bid on and/or a single direct offer of accommodation which can be into social, housing association or private rented landlord accommodation



## **Appendix (iii)**

### **Assessing housing need**

Applicants will be assessed and given a priority band in accordance with the following categories of housing need:

#### **Emergency band**

This band is intended to meet the needs of applicants in extreme circumstances only; it will only contain a small number of applicants at any one time and is subject to a time limit.

- Applicants unable to return to their home from hospital because their current home is permanently unsuitable.
- Applicants unable to access key facilities in their home without **major** adaptation works
- 

#### **Gold band**

- Care leavers at point of leaving care home or supported housing with an agreed support package relevant to offer, and are ready for independent living.
- Applicants who need to move on from an approved accommodation based supported housing programme and the agency supporting them has provided evidence that their programme of support is complete and that they are able to live independently, either with or without support (Resettlement category)
- Applicants presently under-occupying a home owned by a local authority or housing association that is situated within the partnership area. They are moving to a property with at least two fewer bedrooms.
- Applicants who are a statutory homeless household under part 7 of the 1996 Housing Act who is owed the full duty. Applicants will only be able to bid for a
- property in the Local Authority area which has accepted the duty to
- house
- Applicants who are overcrowded and require two more bedrooms to relieve the overcrowding
- Applicants who are at risk of homelessness and in priority need
- Applicants with a serious and enduring illness whose health and/or well-being is significantly compromised by their home or its environment, as assessed by the relevant trained Housing Officer. (Bids made on this basis must secure a direct health gain as a result of a move).
- Applicants who need to move to a specific locality so that proven hardship can be prevented. Applicants can only bid to a local authority area with close proximity/accessible to a family member or employment.

#### **Silver band**

- Applicants who have a health or well-being issue, which will be removed or improved by a move as assessed by the relevant, trained Housing Officer.

- (Bids made on this basis of priority must secure a health gain).
- Applicants who are homeless under part 7 of the 1996 Housing Act or are at risk of homelessness and meet potentially homeless criteria, but are not in priority need
- Applicants who are overcrowded and require one more bedroom to relieve the overcrowding.
- Applicants whose home permanently lacks basic amenities, not due to the failure of the applicant.
- Applicants who share bathroom and/or kitchen facilities with separate households of people who will not be moving with them.
- Applicants who are presently under-occupying a home owned by a local authority or housing association that is situated within the partnership area and who will move to a property with one less bedroom.
- Applicants who are intentionally homeless under Part 7 1996 Housing Act.
- Applicants placed in temporary accommodation under Housing Act 1996 and pending a decision.
- Applications from foster carers, those approved to adopt, or those persons being assessed for approval to foster or adopt, who need to move to a larger home in order to accommodate a looked after child or a child who was previously looked after by a local authority child

### **Bronze band**

- All other applicants.