



London Borough of Enfield

Report Title	Review of the Housing Allocations Scheme
Report to	Housing Scrutiny Panel
Date of Meeting	22 April 2024
Cabinet Member	Cllr Savva
Executive Director / Director	Joanne Drew
Report Author	Neil Wightman Director of Housing Services (Residents)
Ward(s) affected	N/A
Classification	Public
Reason for exemption	N/A

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To provide an update on the review of the social housing allocations scheme.

2. Main Considerations for the Panel

2.1 The operating environment has changed significantly since the introduction of the current scheme. The Council is planning to review the allocations scheme during 2024/25 to ensure that we maximise the benefits for Enfield residents.

2.2 There are currently 7500 households on the housing needs register. This has grown from 3500 in 2020 when the current allocations scheme was introduced.

2.3 In any given year around 450 properties will become available to let, meaning that households can expect to wait for several years before having sufficient priority to be allocated a property.

2.4 The Housing Allocations Scheme will be reviewed in the light of the increased pressure on both residents and the Council since the introduction of the scheme and will determine the Council's priorities as to which groups of residents will be housed.

3. The purpose of the allocations scheme

3.1 The scheme explains the criteria and procedures for applying for social housing in a local authority. It covers:

- How to register an application and what information is required, such as personal details, household composition, current and previous addresses, and supporting documents.
- Who is eligible to apply for social housing, based on their income, residency, and housing circumstances.
- How the local authority allocates properties to applicants, according to their points, preferences, and availability of suitable properties.
- The assessment of housing needs and preferences of applicants, taking into account factors such as overcrowding, homelessness, medical conditions, and special needs.
- How applicants can bid on properties that match their needs and preferences, using an online system that advertises vacancies and allows applicants to express interest in up to three properties per week.
- The consequences of refusing or accepting an offer, how applicants can review or cancel their application, and what are the reasons for doing so, such as change of circumstances, dissatisfaction with the service, or finding alternative accommodation.
- How the local authority monitors and reviews the social housing scheme, and what are the rights and responsibilities of applicants and tenants.

Relevance to Council Plans and Strategies

4. Review of the housing allocations scheme

4.1 Good homes in well-connected neighbourhoods

The policy is intended to ensure that the Council and residents can make the best use of existing housing, across a wide range of tenures and links to our wider Housing and Good Growth Strategy.

4.2 Sustain strong and healthy communities

The allocations scheme gives far greater priority to households who have disabilities or health needs. This is of particular benefit to families with disabled children.

4.3 Build our local economy to create a thriving place

The policy is an intrinsic part of our Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy. We aim to improve access to safe and affordable housing for all residents through a range of initiatives and strengthen residents' ability to sustain the housing through support and training.

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Appendices

None

Background Papers

Housing Allocations Scheme