

Housing Allocations Scheme review

Housing Scrutiny Committee
December 2024

Background

- Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 requires all local housing authorities publish a scheme.
- Reasonable preference is prescribed and gives priority to those in greatest housing need.
- 7,000 households are on the housing register, with approximately 450 council and housing association lettings per annum.
- Available accommodation is either general needs or later living (sheltered) and may either be our own housing stock or nominations to a housing association.
- The last review of Enfield's allocation scheme took place in 2021, this update has regard to the change in our national homelessness placement policy and reinforcing the principle that housing allocations are needs based to maximise the best use of our stock. The look and principles of the scheme remain the same.
- The changes are mainly low risk in terms of the wider impact on allocations generally and low risk of legal challenge but still requires statutory consultation which will be 3 months
- There will be an annual review of lettings published on the website.

Residence qualification

7,179 applicants on the housing register as at 30.06.24

<p>The current residence qualification requires the resident to have lived in Enfield for three out of five years. We propose to change this time to five years. This puts us in line with most other London Local authorities (although an increasing number have a ten- year qualification).</p>	<p>The proposal strengthens the commitment to support local Enfield residents, but also simplifies the Scheme and makes it easier to administer</p>	<p>Low risk</p> <p>The proposal will only initially apply to new applicants and then to all applicants following one year of implementation</p>
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Homeless households

Priority for households who need to live in the borough and remove households from the housing register who have resettled outside the borough

2,544 (35%) housing applicants are homeless and living in temporary accommodation	We propose to give higher priority to homeless families who need to live in or near to Enfield	Low risk 300 families (4.2%) who have been assessed as needing to live in or near Enfield. Will be managed through the allocations Panel
	We propose to prioritise families who have been living in temporary accommodation in Enfield for more than 10 years	Low risk 120 families (1.7%) who have been living in TA in Enfield for more than 10 years . Will be managed through the allocations Panel

Homeless households

Priority for households who need to live in the borough and remove households who have resettled outside the borough

Housing applicants who are homeless households who have moved to the private rented sector (PRS) 22% (1,585 of all applicants)	We currently award additional priority (prevention points) to households moving to the private rented sector. We propose to end this' as these households are housed in suitable accommodation	Large number of applicants affected so a medium risk We propose individuals have up to two years transitional protection. No prevention points allocated post implementation date
Homeless households moved to the PRS out of borough (120 applicants)	We propose to remove these from the housing needs register as they no longer have a local connection and are suitably housed in another local authority..	Low risk Transitional protection will be given for those who moved prior to the implementation date

Overcrowded households

Additional priority for severely overcrowded council tenants

1.4% (99 households) are severely overcrowded with dependent children and lack 2 or more bedrooms.	We propose to increase the priority of this group which will increase their likelihood of securing larger available accommodation	Low risk Relatively low impact Due to small numbers will be managed through the Allocations Panel
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Later living accommodation (sheltered)

Introducing CBL and de-designating blocks / floors

It takes longer to let this accommodation, and some buildings are less appropriate for older people due to design and number of floors and an absence of a lift.	We propose to include later living accommodation in Choice Based lettings, with assisted bidding where required.	Low risk
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Suggested change to the Allocations Scheme	Current number of households on the Housing Needs Register	Potential number of households impacted by the proposed change	Additional information
Increase residence qualification to 5 years	3,231 applicants have been in their current address for 5 or more years.	No impact to these households	Transitional protection will be given to those households at the date of implementation who have between 3 and 5 years local connection. New housing register applicants following implementation will need to show 5 years local connection
Homeless households awarded additional points who need to live in borough	300	Difficult to quantify but likely to be 50-100 being made an offer	This depends on the number of lettings per year.
Homeless households who have been in TA for 10 or more years	120		
Council tenants overcrowded by 2 or more rooms	99	Mor allocations and priority for those who are severely overcrowded	Cases will be decided at panel on an individual basis.
Ending homeless points to households in the private rented sector	1585	1585 households affected but a very small proportion get housed. The policy shift and managing expectations outweighs the impact	Transitional arrangements apply. This will result in an additional 50 properties per year available for letting
Removing homeless households who have moved out of Enfield from the housing register	341	341 households affected with very little impact.	This will result in an additional 6 properties available for letting.
Including sheltered housing in Choice Based Lettings (CBL)	139	139 applicants will be able to bid for these properties on CBL	

London Borough's local connection comparison

Borough	LC # Yrs	Policy Date	Policy Link				
Barnet		501.10.2023	Barnet				
Haringey		3 Sep-15	Haringey				
Waltham Forest		5 Feb-21	W/Forest				
Harrow	*5	Mar-23	Harrow	If less than 5 yrs placed in lowest band			
Brent		5 Mar-22	Brent				
Camden	5 out of 7	Aug-18	Camden				
Islington		5 2024	Islington				
Hackney		3 May-24	Hackney				
Redbridge		5 Mar-25	Redbridge	In Consultation			
Hillingdon		10 Jul-21	Hillingdon				
Ealing		5 Jan-23	Ealing				
Hammersmith & Fulham		5 Jan-21	Hammersmith & Fulham				
Kensington & Chelsea		3 2023	Kensington & Chelsea				
Westminster		3 Feb-24	Westminster				
Tower Hamlets		3 Nov-20	Tower Hamlets				
Newham		3 Feb-22	Newham				
Barking & Dagenham		3 May-20	Barking & Dagenham				
Havering		6 2021	Havering				
Hounslow		5 Apr-18	Hounslow				
Richmond Upon Thames	*3	Feb-17	Richmond Upon Thames	If less than 3 yrs placed in lowest band			
Wandsworth	*3	Feb-17	Wandsworth	If less than 3 yrs placed in lowest band			
Lambeth		2 2024	Lambeth				
Southwark		5 Nov-13	Southwark				
Lewisham		5 Oct-22	Lewisham				
Greenwich		5 Mar-22	Greenwich				
Bexley		5 2021	Bexley				
Kingston Upon Thames		5 Apr-24	Kingston Upon Thames				
Merton		1 Aug-12	Merton				
Sutton		2 Dec-19	Sutton				
Croydon		3 Oct-19	Croydon				
Bromley		5 2023	Bromley				

Timetable

- Publish Portfolio KD report to approve consultation
- Three months consultation begins
- Informal Cabinet – November 2024
- Cabinet - February or March 2025