Letting Social Rented Homes in Enfield

Enfield's Housing Allocation Scheme

There is a severe shortage of council and housing association homes in Enfield. We have over 4,000 single people and families on our housing register. Last year, just 550 homes became available to rent. Most of those on the housing register are unlikely to be successful in finding a social rented home in the foreseeable future. To address this, we need to help prevent more people becoming homeless, continue to support tenants to find settled homes in the private rented sector and ensure efficient practice in how the small number of social rented homes in Enfield are allocated and managed.

We need to ensure that social rented housing goes to those who need it most.

This questionnaire asks for your views on changes we're proposing to make to our Scheme. This includes changes about:

- Eligibility for joining the housing register
- How different applicants on the register are prioritised
- How we assess the type and size of home applicants require
- The bidding process and direct offers of accommodation.

This survey summarises the main changes we are proposing to the Housing Allocation Scheme. There are more detailed procedural changes set out in the new draft Scheme. For full details, please refer to the draft of the new proposed Scheme available on the Council website www.enfield.gov.uk/consultations.

The closing date for responses is Friday 8th September 2017

Please return to: CREST Enfield Council Civic Centre, B-Block South, Sliver Street Enfield EN1 3XA

www.enfield.gov.uk



Section 1: Eligibility for joining the housing register

Having a local connection to be eligible to apply for social rented housing

In our existing Housing Allocation Scheme, applicants can join the register without a local connection, but are given a higher priority if they have lived in Enfield for 2 years or if they have lived in Enfield for 10 of the last 15 years. We are proposing that applicants will need a local connection of at least the previous 3 years in order to be on the register.

To demonstrate a local connection, applicants will need to show that they have:

- Lived in Enfield for the previous 3 years; or
- Been in permanent employment (16 hours or more per week) in Enfield for the previous 3 years; **or**

• A close family member (normally mother, father, brother, sister, son or daughter) who has lived in Enfield for the previous 3 years

For applicants who do not qualify for the housing register, advice on alternative housing options will be offered.

Some people will be exempt from having to have a local connection. This is explained in Section 3.4 of the Scheme.

Q1 What do you think the minimum time period for having a local connection should be? **PLEASE SELECT NO MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE**



Household income, assets and savings

In our existing Housing Allocation Scheme, if an applicant or their partner own a property or a share in their property, or have enough assets (\pounds 50,000 savings) or income (\pounds 70,000 - household with children or \pounds 40,000 - single person or couple without children) to meet their own housing need, they will be ineligible to apply for housing.

We are reviewing what these income and assets thresholds should be.

Q2 To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should only allow people to join our housing register if they have a low income and low levels of assets or savings?

Strongly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly disagree
Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Don't know

Key Workers

In our existing Housing Allocation Scheme, being a key worker allows an applicant to join the housing register, provided they meet the local connection criteria and their immigration status, previous behaviour, or level of income, savings or assets do not make them ineligible to join.

'Key worker' refers to a public sector employee who is considered to provide an essential service, for example an NHS health worker. There is no statutory duty to give key workers priority for social rented homes and they are eligible for other affordable housing such as low cost home ownership.

Q3 Which of the following, if any, best describes your view? PLEASE SELECT NO MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE

Key workers should be allowed to join the housing register

Key workers should not be allowed to join the housing register. Rather key workers should be given advice and information on accessing other affordable housing, such as low cost home ownership



Don't know/not sure

Minimum age required to hold a social rented tenancy

In our existing Housing Allocation Scheme, anyone aged 16 or over who meets the eligibility criteria can apply to the Council to join the Housing Register. We are proposing that instead, the minimum age required to hold a social tenancy will be 18 years, except in exceptional circumstances. Applicants in exceptional circumstances aged 16 and 17 will require a rent guarantor before being allowed to sign for the tenancy of a property.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the minimum age required to hold a Q4 social tenancy should be 18 years, except in exceptional circumstances?

Strongly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly disagree
Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Don't know

Intentionally homeless applicants

Being intentionally homeless means that the applicant is homeless because they left accommodation that they could of stayed in.

In our existing Housing Allocation Scheme, applicants who are intentionally homeless can remain on the housing register after we cease to owe them any legal duty to provide accommodation.

We are now proposing that these applicants will be removed from the register after our legal duty to provide accommodation has ended.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that intentionally homeless applicants will $\mathbf{O5}$ be removed from the register after our legal duty to provide accommodation has ended?



Strongly agree



Neither agree nor disagree



Strongly disagree



Tend to agree



Tend to disagree



Don't know

Section 1: Eligibility for joining the housing register

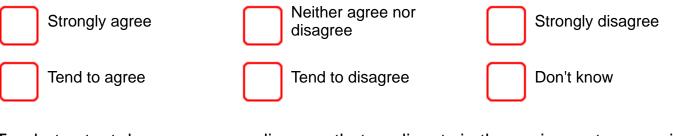
New Generation Scheme

Currently, single people and couples without children living with their parents in an Enfield Council home are eligible to bid for their own studio or one bedroom home if they meet all of the following criteria:

- Are aged between 25 and 60
- Have lived with parent(s) continuously for at least three years
- The parent(s) has lived in a Council property owned by Enfield for at least three years
- The applicant is in employment

In addition to the above, we are proposing that they must also be living in overcrowded accommodation in order to be eligible to bid for their own home.

Q6 To what extent do you agree or disagree that single people and couples without children living with their parents in an Enfield Council home should be eligible to bid for their own studio or one bedroom home if they meet the criteria above?



Q7 To what extent do you agree or disagree that applicants in these circumstances will need to be living in overcrowded accommodation in order to be able to bid for their own home?



Strongly agree



Neither agree nor disagree



Strongly disagree



Tend to agree

Tend to disagree

Don't know

Q8 At what age do you think applicants in these circumstances should be able to bid for their own home? **PLEASE SELECT NO MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE**



Section 2: How different applicants on the register are prioritised

The minimum number of hours an applicant should work to be considered a priority

In some circumstances, applicants are awarded a higher level of points if they, or their partner, are in employment. In our existing Housing Allocation Scheme, we consider someone to be in employment if they have a permanent contract; work as a temporary member of staff; or if they are selfemployed. Applicants will only qualify if the worker has been employed for 6 out of the last 12 months. In addition to this, we are now proposing that the worker must also work for a minimum number of hours each week.

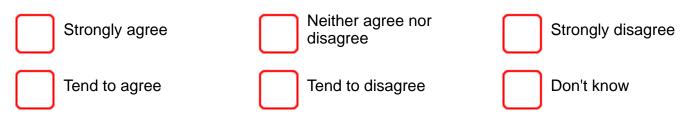
Q9 To what extent do you agree or disagree that to be awarded additional priority for being in employment, the applicant or their partner must work for a minimum of 16 hours per week?

Strongly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly disagree
Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Don't know

Prioritising applicants in different circumstances

We are proposing to make some changes to how we prioritise applicants on the housing register. This will mean some people will have a higher priority in the future than they do now, and some people will have a lower priority.

Q10 To what extent do you agree or disagree that applicants living in an Enfield Council home that is too big for them, but who are willing to move to a smaller home, should be given high priority?



Section 2: How different applicants on the register are prioritised

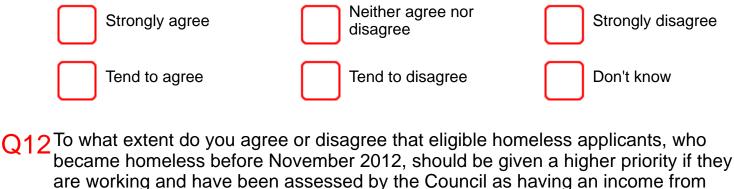
Prioritising applicants in different circumstances - continued

Q11 To what extend do you agree that tenants living in a private rented home should be given the same level of priority as council or housing association tenants in the following circumstances:

The applicant needs to move because their current living conditions:

put their life at risk if they do not move, or

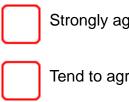
 cause them to be completely housebound and a new home would allow them to regain their independence.



work which is not enough to make rent payments?

Strongly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly disagree
Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Don't know

Q13 To what extent do you agree or disagree that young people leaving local authority care should be given a high priority?



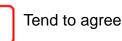
Strongly agree



Neither agree nor disagree



Strongly disagree

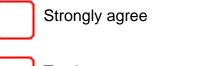




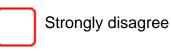
Tend to disagree

Don't know

Q14 To what extent do you agree or disagree that in **exceptional circumstances**, homeless applicants should be given higher priority if they do not have enough income to pay their current rent as a result of having their benefits reduced, and they are unable to work?



Neither agree nor disagree





Tend to agree



Tend to disagree

Don't know

Section 2: How different applicants on the register are prioritised

Prioritising applicants in different circumstances - continued

- Q15 To what extent do you agree or disagree that applicants should be given a high priority if they have been diagnosed with either a mental health illness; learning disability; physical disability, sensory impairment or long term illness/condition and they:
 - receive support from adult social care; or
 - could be in need of adult social care services without settled accommodation; and

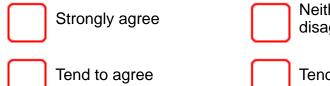
 have a significant need for a social tenancy because their current accommodation is having a severe negative impact on their health and wellbeing?



Allocating points to homeless applicants who became homeless after November 2012

The Localism Act 2011 introduced changes to the way councils can provide accommodation for homeless people. This means we can offer suitable accommodation into the private rented sector to any household who became homeless after November 2012. In our current scheme, we state that households in these circumstances who have been assessed as unsuitable for a private rented tenancy will be given higher priority than other households in the same circumstances. We are proposing to no longer award higher priority to these households.

Q16 To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should no longer award higher priority to homeless applicants who are assessed as unsuitable for a private rented tenancy?



Neither agree nor disagree



Strongly disagree





Tend to disagree

Don't know

Section 3: How we assess the type and size of home applicants require

Allocating an additional bedroom for full time carers

In the existing Housing Allocation Scheme, an additional room is agreed if someone in the household needs a full-time carer and, in exceptional circumstances, if someone needs an **occasional** carer to stay overnight. Given the severe shortage of larger homes, we are proposing that the requirement for an additional room will only be agreed if permanent and substantial overnight care is needed.

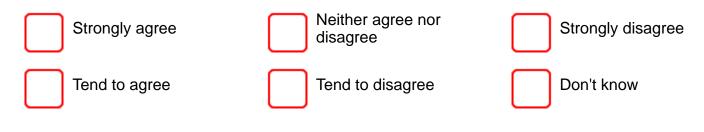
Q17 To what extent do you agree or disagree that an additional room should only be agreed for a carer, if the carer is needed full time for permanent and substantial overnight care?

Strongly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly disagree
Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Don't know

Assessing overcrowding

There is an acute shortage of larger social rented homes in Enfield. In our existing Scheme, we do not specify how we assess levels of overcrowding in private rented sector homes. We are proposing to clarify in the new Scheme that any rooms other than bathrooms, toilets, kitchens and utility rooms will be counted as bedrooms when deciding whether an applicant in the private rented sector is living in an overcrowded home.

Q18 To what extent do you agree or disagree that any room other than the bathroom, toilet, self-contained kitchen and utility room should be counted as a bedroom for tenants living in the private sector?



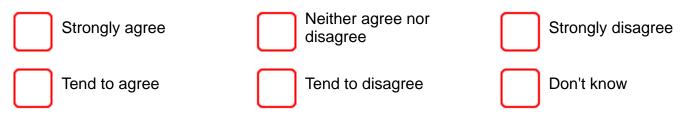
Section 3: How we assess the type and size of home applicants require

How we allocate wheelchair adapted homes

We want to help people with disabilities access a home that is suitable for their particular needs. In our existing Allocation Scheme, we describe these applicants as 'Mobility Applicants'. However, the homes we reserve for this group are specifically wheelchair adapted homes. We therefore propose to clarify how we describe this group, from 'Mobility Group' to 'Applicants requiring wheelchair adapted homes.' We will only place people in this group if they require a wheelchair adapted property.

Applicants with mobility needs as a result of a disability but who are not wheelchair users, will be able to bid on level access homes or properties all on one level which are made available to their group. They may also be awarded health and wellbeing points, depending on their specific needs.

Q19 To what extent do you agree or disagree that wheelchair adapted homes should be reserved for wheelchair users only?



Bidding for homes with gardens

In our existing Allocation Scheme, only families with children under 15 years old can bid for properties with gardens. This prevents other large households who do not have children under 15 from bidding on the small number of larger homes that become available, which tend to have gardens. We are therefore removing this condition.

Q20 If you have any comments on this change, let us know. PLEASE USE THE SPACE BELOW

Section 4: The bidding process and direct offers of accommodation

Needing a minimum level of points in order to bid

Like many councils, our homes are allocated through a choice based lettings system. This means that applicants on our housing register are required to make 'bids' on properties that they are eligible for.

In our existing Housing Allocation Scheme, all applicants on the register can bid for a home. We are proposing that instead, households with lower levels of housing needs, with the lowest level of points, will not be able to bid for a home. This is so we can better manage the limited supply of social rented homes and better manage the expectations of applicants. Demand for social rented homes greatly exceeds the number of homes available in Enfield. Households with lower levels of priority are unlikely to be successful in bidding for a social rented home.

Q21 To what extent do you agree or disagree that only people with higher levels of housing needs should be able to bid for a social rented home?

Strongly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly disagree
Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Don't know

Section 4: The bidding process and direct offers of accommodation

How we work with applicants who do not make bids

Like many councils, our homes are allocated through a choice based lettings system. This means that applicants on our housing register are required to make 'bids' on properties that they are eligible for. With our existing Housing Allocation Scheme, applicants remain on the housing register even if they are not actively bidding for a home. Instead, we are proposing to remove applicants from the housing register if they do not bid for a home over a 12 month period. We are proposing to place homeless applicants on an 'autobidding' system if they do not make any bids over a three month period. This means our choice based lettings online system will generate suitable offers for homeless applicants who are not bidding.

This is because we need to minimise the amount of time households spend in temporary accommodation and minimise the cost of this to the Council.

Applicants will be sent two letters and contacted by phone to inform them that action will be taken if they do not bid.

Q22 Do you agree that applicants, excluding exceptional cases, should be removed from the register if they do not make any bids over a 12 month period and do not respond to Council communications?

Strongly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly disagree
Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Don't know
	ou think we should introduce ary accommodation, if they h NO MORE THAN ONE RESI	naven't made any bids for a
3 Months 6 Mor	ths 9 Months	12 Don't Months know
	of a home, how long do you t w application for the housi	think they should be
2 years 5 ye	ars 10 years	Don't Other
If 'Other', please specify		

Section 4: The bidding process and direct offers of accommodation

Decreasing the number of direct offers made to succession cases before applying for a possession order

If someone inherits a tenancy of a social rented home and the home is too large for their needs, we will take steps to provide alternative accommodation. In our existing Housing Allocation Scheme, we make two direct offers of accommodation before a third and final offer is made to these types of applicants. If all three offers are turned down, we then apply for a possession order. In order to free up much-needed larger Council properties more quickly, we are proposing to reduce the number of direct offers made in these circumstances from a total of three offers, down to two.

Q25 If someone inherits a tenancy for a home that is bigger than they need, how many offers of an alternative home do you think they should be given, before the Council applies for a possession order? PLEASE SELECT NO MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE



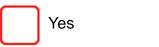
Any other comments or feedback on the allocation of homes in Enfield

Q26 If you have any comments or proposals on how the Council should allocate housing or on how information on the allocation of homes in Enfield could be made clearer, let us know. PLEASE USE THE SPACE BELOW

Future conversations on housing in Enfield

Over the coming months, we will be talking to people across the borough about the challenges and opportunities of meeting the needs of a growing population in Enfield.

Would you be willing to be contacted by the Council to take part in housing events, surveys and other engagement activities?





Please note your personal information would be held in the strictest confidence.

The information you provide will only be used for the purpose stated.

To enable us to contact you please provide your name and contact details:

Your name:

Your email:

Your home address (if email cannot be provided)

Section 5: About you

To help us further analyse and understand the data, please answer the following questions. This information <u>will not be used</u> to identify individuals. All data we collect will be treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Do you receive either Counc	il Tax Support a	and/or Housing	Benefit?
I receive both	I receive Ho Benefit	ousing	None - I do not receive either
I receive Council Tax Support			Prefer not to say
Which of these activities bes	t describes what	at you are doin	g at present?
Employed full-time			d and available for work
Employed part-time		•	nment supported training (e.g. Modern Apprenticeship/
Self-employed (full or part tir	ne)	0	y sick/disabled
Fully retired			
Partially retired		Looking after Looking after	er the nome
C Student		Doing some	thing else
		Prefer not to	o say
How old are you?			
Under 18 years of age	35 - 44		61-64
18 - 24	45 - 54		Over 65 years of age
25 - 34	55 - 60		Prefer not to say
Are you male or female?			
Male	Transgende	r	Prefer not to say
Female	Prefer to se	lf-describe	
If you prefer to self-describe, plea details below	se provide		
Are your day-to-day activities has lasted, or is expected to			problem or disability which
Yes, limited a	s, limited a	🖳 No	Prefer not to

say

little

lot

How would you describe your ethnic origin?

English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish /	Kurdish	Bangladeshi
British	Gypsy / Irish Traveller	🔵 Sri Lankan
	Romany	Chinese
Greek	Other Eastern European	Caribbean
Greek Cypriot	White and Black African	Ghanaian
Turkish	White and Black	Somali
Turkish Cypriot	White and Asian	Nigerian
Italian	Mixed European	Arab
Russian		Prefer not to say
Polish	\Box	
If 'Other', please specify	Pakistani	
What is your religion?		
No religion	Buddhist	Muslim
Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant	Buddhist	│ Muslim │ Sikh
Christian (including Church of	\Box	\cup
Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian	Hindu	Sikh
Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)	Hindu Jewish	Sikh
Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)	Hindu Jewish	Sikh
Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)	Hindu Jewish	Sikh
Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations) If 'Other', please specify How would you describe yo	 Hindu Jewish Dur sexuality? 	Sikh Prefer not to say
 Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations) If 'Other', please specify How would you describe you Heterosexual Gay man 	 Hindu Jewish Our sexuality? Gay woman / lesbian Bisexual 	Sikh Prefer not to say
 Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations) If 'Other', please specify How would you describe you Heterosexual Gay man How did you hear about this 	 Hindu Jewish Our sexuality? Gay woman / lesbian Bisexual s survey?	 Sikh Prefer not to say Prefer not to say
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 Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations) If 'Other', please specify How would you describe you Heterosexual Gay man How did you hear about this Advert on computer, 	 Hindu Jewish Dur sexuality? Gay woman / lesbian Bisexual s survey? Housing News 	 Sikh Prefer not to say Prefer not to say Leaflet Enfield Council website
 Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations) If 'Other', please specify How would you describe you Heterosexual Gay man How did you hear about thi Advert on computer, tablet or phone 	 Hindu Jewish Our sexuality? Gay woman / lesbian Bisexual s survey? Housing News newsletter 	 Sikh Prefer not to say Prefer not to say Leaflet
 Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations) If 'Other', please specify How would you describe you Heterosexual Gay man How did you hear about thi Advert on computer, tablet or phone Social media 	 Hindu Jewish Dur sexuality? Gay woman / lesbian Bisexual s survey? Housing News newsletter Our Enfield magazine 	 Sikh Prefer not to say Prefer not to say Leaflet Enfield Council website Letter/email

Thank you for taking the time to tell us your views

