

## AGENDA ITEM NO.6

**SCRUTINY PANEL – SERVICE DELIVERY  
& RESOURCES**

**1 APRIL 2003**

**CABINET**

**17 APRIL 2003**

### **REVIEW OF THE HOUSING REGISTER AND NOMINATIONS POLICY (Report by the Head of Housing Services)**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek approval for the adoption of a revised Housing Register and Nominations Policy.

#### **2. INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 As demand for social housing increases within the District it is important that the Council ensures that those residents in greatest housing need continue to be prioritised for this accommodation. It is good practice to ensure that the Council's policies continue to meet this objective by periodic review.
- 2.2 The last major review of the Council's Housing Register and Nominations policy took place in 1997, although some minor amendments have been made since that time. The review of this policy was previously put on hold pending changes in legislation that would potentially affect how Council's administer their Registers and allocate housing. This legislation is now in place and it is, therefore, timely to complete this review to ensure that the Council's policy meets the requirements of the legislation.

#### **3. SUPPORTING/BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 As part of the review process, officers consulted members, and sought volunteers for the review process. Councillors Baker, Banerjee, Barnes, Chandler, Elliot, Hansard, Powell and Reynolds volunteered and were involved in two meetings that considered who should be awarded preference for housing through the Council's policy, and recommendations were made on suggested amendments to the policy and points system.
- 3.2 The proposed policy document (attached) has been reformatted and proposed amendments have been shaded. In addition, the points system, which is appendix 2 of the policy, has been completely reviewed and revised as appropriate.
- 3.3 The review considered three areas of the policy; firstly, who should be accepted onto the Register; secondly, the various types of housing need and their priority for assistance with housing through the Register; and thirdly, the policy relating to matching different households to property types and sizes.

## **Acceptance onto the Register**

- 3.4 The legislation prescribes household types that ineligible to be considered for housing through the Council's Register. Changes are required to the existing policy relating to households that do not meet the local connection criteria. The new legislation does not allow the Council to exclude households from the Register that have no local connection criteria with the District. The legislation does, however, allow additional 'preference' for housing to be provided for people that have a local connection, as defined in the Act. In reality this means that all households that are not excluded from the Register by legislation, which mainly includes those that are subject to immigration control, are eligible to be included on the Register but can be offered less priority than those that meet the defined local connection criteria.
- 3.5 The policy relating to the acceptance rules of who will be considered on the Register otherwise remain unchanged.

## **Priority Household Groups**

- 3.6 As mentioned in 3.4 above, households that meet the defined local connection criteria may be offered additional preference for housing and the policy includes a statement to this affect. This means that households that have a local connection will be considered for housing before those households that do not meet this criteria. This is in effect what happens under the current policy whereby low demand properties may be offered to applicants through the HOMES Mobility scheme who have no local connection with the District.
- 3.7 The local connection criteria that the Council applies must be brought in line with that defined by legislation. This will mean that households that do not currently live in the District but have done so for 6 out of the last 12 months, or 3 out of the last 5 years will meet this criteria, whereas currently policy states that ex-residents of the district must have lived here previously for 5 or more years. The policy must also be extended to include those households that have immediate family members that have been resident in the District for 5 years or more. Under current policy there is no provision for this.
- 3.8 The new legislation also slightly amends the household groups that must be awarded what is termed 'reasonable preference' for housing. The Council's current points system has factors included within it that awards varying levels of priority to these household groups and, therefore, no significant changes are required.
- 3.9 The members involved in the process reviewed the level of priority awarded to the various housing need factors. This exercise included considering examples of actual cases on the Register, the number of points they could accrue through the points system and the relative priority this gave applicants for housing.
- 3.10 Members felt that there were two areas where the current policy required reviewing, these being the levels of priority awarded to households living in overcrowded conditions, and those households under occupying Housing Association properties and wishing to move to smaller accommodation.

- 3.11 With regard to households living in overcrowded properties, it was considered that the current policy does not give sufficient priority to Housing Association tenants to enable a move to larger accommodation.
- 3.12 The revised policy, therefore, recommends a different system of calculating overcrowding that allows households to accrue a significant number of points over a period of time, in order to increase their chances of an offer of housing.
- 3.13 The revised policy also recommends a higher level of priority for those Housing Association tenants that currently under occupy family sized accommodation and wish to move to a smaller property.

#### **Nominations Policy For Matching Household Sizes To Property Types And Sizes**

- 3.14 Members recommended that the current policy remain, with one exception. This related to Housing Association tenants moving from family sized accommodation to smaller accommodation. Some tenants are under-occupying three or four bedroom properties as a result of children growing up and leaving home. It was recommended that these tenants be permitted to be considered for two-bedroom accommodation, recognising that this may result in a single person or couple under occupying the property. This would potentially facilitate a better use of the housing stock, with three and four bedroom accommodation then being released for younger families and so help resolve their housing need.

#### **4. IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The recommended amendments to the existing policy will undoubtedly affect the way in which the priority of the majority of households on the Register is assessed. The objective of this review is to ensure that those households in greatest need are assisted with housing and the suggested changes in policy will place a much greater emphasis on assisting families living in overcrowded conditions than has previously been the case.
- 4.2 Given that the demand for housing through the Register far exceeds supply, it is important to remember that there will continue to be a large number of people that the Council is unable to assist with housing. Changing the priority system will potentially alter the households that the Council assists through the Register and whereas some households may see their level of priority increase under this system, others will see their relative priority decrease. The affect of changes in this policy will be explained to applicants on the Register and each will receive an update on the new level of priority they are awarded.
- 4.3 Implementing this change in policy will involve each applicant on the Register reapplying, and providing additional information, in order that their priority may be assessed. This will be a major administrative task but the timing of this review means that it may also be tied into the planned upgrade of the Saffron IT system. This will allow, as part

of the migration to this upgrade, the necessary advanced IT preparation for implementing any changes to the Council's policy.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1 This review of the Housing Register policy is required in order to ensure that the Council assists those households in greatest need of housing, and so that the policy is brought in line with new legislation.
- 5.2 Officers and members have reviewed the policy and made recommendations for change.
- 5.3 A consultation exercise has commenced with applicants on the Register and the major housing stakeholders within the District. Government guidance recommends that the Council consultation on major changes to the Register policy, and that this be over a twelve-week period. Any comments received by the date of the Scrutiny Panel meeting will be reported verbally at the meeting.
- 5.4 As with the introduction of any new or revised policy, it is important to monitor and review its success in achieving its objectives. If the proposals are approved a follow up report will be provided to Cabinet.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 The Scrutiny Panel is requested to consider the revisions to policy prior to its submission to the Cabinet.
- 6.2 That Cabinet endorse and adopt the revised Housing Register and Nominations Policy, subject to the consideration of comments from the Scrutiny Panel and the satisfactory conclusion of ongoing consultation.
- 6.3 That the revised policy comes into effect following satisfactory completion of the consultation process and the necessary changes to computer software and associated procedures and processes.
- 6.4 That the affect of this policy change be monitored and a report be provided to Cabinet, following twelve months of implementation, or sooner if necessary, so that that the success of the amendments may be reviewed.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002)  
Allocation of Accommodation: Code of Guidance for local housing  
authorities – November 2002  
Huntingdonshire District Council's Housing Register & Nominations  
Policy – Included as an attachment to this report**

<b>Contact</b>	<b>Jon Collen</b>	<b>☎ 01480 388220</b>
<b>Officers:</b>	<b>Housing Needs &amp; Resources Manager</b>	
	<b>Steve Plant</b>	<b>☎ 01480 388240</b>
	<b>Head of Housing Services</b>	

**Huntingdonshire District Council**

# **Housing Register & Nominations**

## **Policy & Procedures**

## **Contents**

- 1. Eligibility for Housing**
- 2. Nominations to Housing Associations**
- 3. Households Given Priority for Housing**
- 4. The Policy on Choice and Refusals of Properties**
- 5. Checking, Reviewing, Deferring and Cancelling Applications**
- 6. Exceptional Circumstances**
- 7. The Review Procedure**
- 8. The Applicant's Declaration**

## **Appendices**

- 1. Nominations Policy on Property Types and Sizes**
- 2. The Points System**
- 3. Housing Association Properties by Type and Size in Each Area of the District**
- 4. The Nominations Policy Relating to Households Accepted as Homeless Under the Terms of the Homelessness Legislation**

## **1 Eligibility for Housing**

- 1.1 The Council maintains a Housing Register of households wishing to access rented Housing Association properties in the Huntingdonshire District. The Council has agreements with its Housing Association partners that allow it to nominate households from its Register to vacant properties owned by the Housing Associations.
- 1.2 The Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) states who is eligible to be considered for housing through the Housing Register. This legislation also explains who the Council must give 'reasonable preference' to through its allocation scheme and allows the Council to apply further discretionary policies as to who may not be considered for an offer of housing. These are explained later in this document.
- 1.3 The Council will consider each application individually, and applying the policy outlined in this document, advise each applicant:
  - a) whether they are eligible to have their name added to the Register (see section 1.4 below); and if so
  - b) whether they are eligible to be considered for a nomination to a Housing Association property (see section 2); and if so
  - c) what type and size of property they are likely to be considered for (see Appendix 1); and
  - d) what their level of priority their application has been awarded (see section 3 and Appendix 2).
- 1.4 The legislation explains that certain categories are not eligible to be considered for an offer of housing and these are;
  - a) certain people subject to immigration control who do not have access to public funds, such as state benefits and housing; and
  - b) certain people, that although not subject to immigration control, are not considered to be 'habitually resident' in the UK.
- 1.5 Applications from people that fall into one of these categories will not be accepted onto the Housing Register, as the legislation states that they are ineligible to be considered for housing, provided by the Council or through a Housing Association.
- 1.6 All other applications, from anyone 18 years or over, will be accepted onto the Register, and the Council will then consider, and advise, whether the applicant will be eligible to be considered for a nomination to a Housing Association property. The categories of households that may not be eligible to be nominated to a Housing Association property are explained in the next section.
- 1.7 Where an application is made by a tenant of a Housing Association property in the District, and the tenancy is in joint names with another person, the issues around what will happen to the tenancy will need to be resolved before the Register application will be actively considered. This situation may arise, for example, where there is a relationship breakdown and it is recommended that anyone in this situation seek advice from the Council before giving up any rights they may have to the tenancy.

- 1.8 Applications from 16 and 17 year olds will be considered on an individual basis. Under normal circumstances, applications from this age of person will be through a referral from Social Services. Anyone of this age faced with housing difficulties, either known to Social Services or not, should initially contact the Council to discuss their individual circumstances, so that all options, including those through the Housing Register, may be discussed.

## **2 Nominations to Housing Associations**

- 2.1 Once accepted onto the Housing Register, the individual circumstances of each application are then considered, to determine whether they are eligible to be considered for a nomination to a Housing Association property.

- 2.2 Households in the following situations will not be considered for a nomination through the Council's Register:

- a) existing tenants of a Council or Housing Association who have rent arrears, or former tenants of a Council or Housing Association that still have rent arrears from their former tenancy. Applicants applying to the Register that are in either of these situations will need to pay the arrears in full, or reach an agreement to repay the arrears, demonstrate that they are keeping to this agreement and show that their arrears are reducing;

- b) where the Council is satisfied that an applicant, or a member of their household, is guilty of unacceptable behaviour that would make them unsuitable to be a tenant. The legislation outlines the test that must be applied to reach this decision and this will be discussed with each individual where this is felt to be the case. Applicants that fall within this category will only be considered for a nomination if there has been a considerable lapse in time and/or the applicant can show their circumstances or behaviour have changed;

- c) where the Council assesses that the applicant has sufficient financial resources to meet their own housing need by alternative options, either in the private sector or through low cost homeownership initiatives offered by certain Housing Associations. When making this assessment, the Council will consider the financial position of the whole household included on the application, including that of a partner, if the applicant has one. When making this assessment the Council will consider:

- i) levels of income;
- ii) any savings or investments;
- iii) in the case of an owner or part-owner of property, any equity that may be released in order to resolve their own housing need.

These applicants may, however, be considered for nominations to properties where there is no demand from applicants that do not have the financial resources to meet their own needs. The Council operates a waiting list for low cost homeownership initiatives, such as Shared Ownership properties, and applicants will be advised of the alternative options for housing that this may offer.



- 2.3 Applicants that are considered to fall within either category 2.2 a) or b), will have their applications deferred until such time that they become eligible to be considered through the Council's nomination scheme.
- 2.4 Applicants who are already tenants of another Council or Housing Association will only be actively considered for a nomination to another property once they have held their tenancy for a minimum of 12 months, unless there has been an unforeseen change in their circumstances.
- 2.5 The Council uses a points system to decide applicants' priority for housing (see paragraph 3.1 and Appendix 2). This considers the current living circumstances of each applicant and awards a level of points based on those circumstances.
- 2.6 Applicants with the greatest need, and, therefore, highest level of points, will normally receive first consideration for accommodation appropriate to their needs. Where two or more competing applicants have the same level of priority, the length of time on the Register will be used to determine the order for consideration.
- 2.7 There are two exceptions to policy where applicants may be considered out of points order, in order to make best use of the stock available. These are:
- a) where a property has adaptations that meet the specific needs of a Register applicant; and
  - b) where assisting an existing Housing Association tenant with a move would free up a property that would meet the needs of another priority Register applicant.
- 2.8 The type and size of property that each applicant is considered for will be determined by the eligibility criteria given in Appendix 1. This policy is based upon household size. Exceptions to this policy may be made to allow under occupation in certain circumstances, for example, where there is no demand for specific properties from households that would normally be offered that size of property. A further exception will be made where Housing Association tenants in the District wish to transfer from family sized accommodation to smaller accommodation. For example, a Housing Association tenant of a three-bedroom house, whose children have grown up and left home, may be considered for a transfer to two-bedroom accommodation.
- 2.9 An applicant may include anyone that may be reasonably expected to live with them as part of their application. Where an applicant has access to children from a previous relationship, the children will only be considered as part of that household if they are resident with the applicant for the majority of the time. The high level of demand for family sized accommodation from households where children are permanent members of the household means that family sized accommodation must be prioritised for these families.

### **3 Households Given Priority for Housing**

- 3.1 The legislation that the Council must follow when maintaining its Housing Register and deciding whom to prioritise for housing gives categories of households that must be given 'reasonable preference'. This means that these households should be awarded a level of priority that gives them a 'head start'

for housing over other households that do not live in these circumstances. This priority is awarded through the Council's points system and is explained in full in Appendix 2 of this document. The Council's points system has been devised so that each of the circumstances where 'reasonable preference' should be given is reflected in one of the factors upon which points are awarded.

3.2 The Council is also able to give preference to households that have a local connection with the Huntingdonshire District. Therefore, under normal circumstances, nominations to Housing Association vacancies will be made to households that meet one or more of the local connection criteria. An applicant will have a local connection with the District where:

- a) they live or work in the District on their date of application (in cases of an employment connection, this must not be of a casual nature); or
- b) they have lived in the District for 6 out of the last 12 months, or 3 out of the last 5 years; or
- c) they are an ex-resident of the District and previously lived here for 5 years or longer; or
- d) they have family associations in the District. Family associations are defined as parents, **adult** children, or brothers or sisters who have been resident in the District for a period of 5 years at the date of application; or
- e) there are special circumstances which the Council considers give rise to a local connection with the District.

3.3 The above criteria will be considered whether they apply to the applicant or the applicant's partner, if they are included as part of the application.

3.4 When considering these local connection criteria, residence in the District only includes residence of the applicant's choice. This does not include, for example, time serving in the armed forces or being detained in prison.

3.5 Although applicants that do not meet any of the above criteria may be accepted onto the Housing Register, they will normally only be considered for a nomination to a Housing Association property after those applicants that meet at least one of these local connection criteria.

## 4 The Policy on Choice and Refusals of Properties

4.1 The Council's nominations policy explains the property sizes that different household sizes will normally be considered for. This is included as Appendix 1 in this document. It is intended to make sure that the best use is made of the different sizes of properties available to the Council through the Housing Associations.

4.2 The Council will advise applicants what size of property they are most likely to be considered for but applicants are otherwise able to express as much choice as they wish in terms of the different property types and the areas of the District that they wish to be housed in.

4.3 An exception to this area of the policy relates to households accepted as homeless that have not been housed within a certain period of time of the

Council accepting a duty to help under the terms of the homelessness legislation. Where this is the case, households are required to be more flexible in terms of what they wish to be considered for, after a period of time has passed. This policy is included as Appendix 4 in this document and will be explained in full to households accepted as homeless, so that they are aware of how this operates.

- 4.4 As not every area of the District has Housing Association properties, and some areas may only have properties of a certain size, the table in Appendix 3 should help applicants select areas of choice where they are sure there are properties of the size that they require.
- 4.5 Register applicants are also able to choose to refuse an offer of accommodation if they do not feel able to accept it, without their application being affected in any way. However, if an applicant refuses two suitable offers of accommodation in areas that the applicant has chosen, within a twelve month period, then their application will be deferred for a period of twelve months. The applicant will not be considered for further nominations within that time, but will continue to accrue points, if applicable, in that time.
- 4.6 An exception to the policy relating to the number of nominations that an applicant may receive applies to households accepted as homeless under the terms of the homelessness legislation. These households will be made one suitable offer, which if refused will end the Council's duties under the terms of the homelessness legislation. Households accepted as homeless will be informed of the policy in this area so that they are aware of the possible consequences of refusing a suitable offer through the Register.

## **5 Checking, Reviewing, Deferring and Cancelling Applications**

### **Checking applications**

- 5.1 Each application accepted on to the Register will be investigated and the applicant required to provide certain information to verify their circumstances. Under normal circumstances, each applicant will be visited at their home address as part of the verification process. Applications will only be awarded the relevant priority under the points system after their circumstances have been verified.

### **Reviewing applications**

- 5.2 Each Register application is reviewed on the anniversary of when it was first included on the Register. At this time the Council will write to the applicant to enquire whether they still wish to be considered on the Register and to request confirmation that there has been no change in their circumstances or the information that they previously gave on their application form. If there has been any change, the applicant should contact the Council to discuss whether this would affect their Register application, and complete a new application form if necessary. Where there has been no change, the applicant should complete and return the slip that they received with their review letter, to confirm that this is the case. Where the applicant does not respond to the review letter and

subsequent reminder that will be sent, their application will be cancelled and the applicant notified.

- 5.3 It is the applicant's responsibility to inform the Council of any change in their circumstances or the information provided on the application form, as this may affect the priority awarded to their application. The applicant must do this as soon as possible after any changes take place.

### **Deferring applications**

5.4 Applications may be deferred in the following situations:

- a) an applicant refuses two suitable offers of properties through the Register in any twelve month period. These applications will be deferred for twelve months;
- b) an applicant deliberately worsens their housing circumstances, for example by deliberately moving from one property to another, thereby worsening their housing situation. These applications may be deferred for two years.
- c) an applicant that has been found to have made themselves homeless intentionally. This would apply to applications investigated under the terms of the homelessness legislation and being found to have become homeless intentionally. These applications may be deferred for two years.

5.5 Deferred applicants will continue to accrue points, where applicable, during the deferral period.

### **Cancelling applications**

5.6 Applications will be cancelled for one or more of the following reasons:

- a) the applicant is nominated for, and accepts, an offer of an assured tenancy through a Housing Association;
- b) the applicant requests that it be cancelled;
- c) the applicant is no longer eligible for housing;
- d) the applicant fails to return a renewal slip; or
- e) the applicant is found to have made a false or deliberately misleading statement in connection with their application.

## **6 Exceptional Circumstances**

6.1 In cases where the circumstances of an individual application are felt so exceptional, and are not covered by any of the existing policy provisions, the Head of Housing Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, has the discretionary power to award priority for housing.

## 7 The Review Procedure

7.1 Under the terms of the legislation relating to the Housing Register, applicants have the following rights about decisions which are taken in respect of their application:

- a) the right to be notified in writing of the decision not to be given any preference for a nomination because of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make them unsuitable to be a tenant;
- b) the right, on request, to be informed of any decision about the facts of their case which has been taken into account in considering whether to make a nomination; and
- c) the right, on request, to review a decision mentioned in a) or b) above. The applicant also has the right to be informed of the review decision and the reasons for reaching it.

7.2 The Council's policy also gives applicants the right to request a review of a decision to defer their Register application (see section 5.4). Where not previously involved in the decision to defer an application, the Housing Needs and Resources Manager will carry out these reviews. Alternatively another senior officer not previously involved in the original decision may carry out the review. Where a review is requested by an applicant, the Council will endeavour to complete the review within 56 days, providing the applicant with written details of the decision reached on review.

7.3 Register applicants that have also been accepted as homeless, under the terms of the homelessness legislation, have the right to request a review of the suitability of an offer that they receive through the Housing Register. (see paragraph 4.6).

## 8 The Applicant's Declaration

- 8.1 The Housing Register form includes a declaration that the applicant, and joint applicant if there is one, must sign. Un-signed applications will not be considered. By signing this declaration the applicant is confirming that the information they have provided is correct, and that they agree to provide the Council with updated information should their circumstances change.
- 8.2 Applicants are required to sign this declaration as it is an offence for anyone seeking help with housing through the Register to:
- a) knowingly or recklessly give false information; or
  - b) knowingly withhold information, which the Council has reasonably required the applicant to give.
- 8.3 A person found guilty of this offence is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale (currently £5000) and if a person is awarded housing through the Register and is then found to have provided false information, the property may also be repossessed through the Court.

# Appendix 1

## Eligibility Criteria For Property Types & Sizes

PROPERTY TYPE	MOST LIKELY HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION
Studio Flat, Ground Floor	Single Person or 1 OAP
Studio Flat, First Floor	Single Person or 1 OAP
1 Bed 1 Person House	Single Person
1 Bed 2 Person Flat Ground Floor	Single Person, Couple or 1/2 OAP's
1 Bed 2 Person First Floor and above	Single Person, Couple
1 Bed 2 Person House	Single Person or 2 Adults (Partners)
2 Bed Ground Floor Flat/Maisonette	1/2 Adults + 1 Child (or pregnancy) or 2 Adults 2 OAP's
2 Bed First Floor Flat + above/Maisonette	1/2 Adults + 1 Child over 10 years 2 Adults
2 Bed House	1/2 Adults + 1 Child (or pregnancy)
3 Bed Ground Floor Flat	1/2 Adults + 2 Children (or pregnancy)
3 Bed First Floor Flat + above	1/2 Adults + 1 Children over 10 years
3 Bed House	1/2 Adults + 2/3 Children or 1/2 Adults + 1/2 Children + pregnancy
4 Bed House	1/2 Adults + 4 or more Children or 1/2 Adults + 1/2 Adults + 2/3 Children
Studio Bungalow	1 OAP or disabled
1 Bed Bungalow	1/2 OAP's or disabled person
2 Bed Bungalow	1/2 OAP's or disabled person
3 Bed Bungalow	Disabled Family 1/2 Adults + 2/3 Children or 1/2 Children + Pregnancy
<b>SHELTERED ACCOMMODATION</b>	
Studio Bungalow	1 OAP or younger person in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
1 Bed Bungalow	1/2 OAP's or younger person (people) in receipt of DLA
Studio Flat	1 OAP or younger person in receipt of DLA
1 Bed Flat	1/2 OAP's or younger person (people) in receipt of DLA
2 Bed Flat	1/2 OAP's or younger person (people) in receipt of DLA
	<b>Note:</b>
	1. Ground floor flats and bungalows, and specially adapted properties - priority will be given to OAP's, or to applicants with medical needs or disabilities.

## Appendix 2

## The Points System

Points are awarded for the following reasons:

### A. Where your present home is unsatisfactory

Category	Comments/Notes	Level of points awarded
<b>1. Lacks facilities:</b> a. No kitchen or cooking facilities b. No separate kitchen area c. No bath or shower d. No inside WC e. No heating f. No cold water g. No hot water	a. where no kitchen or cooking facilities available b. eg microwave or stove in bedsit (not awarded for kitchenette combined with living room/bedsit) e. Heating includes radiators and storage heaters – points will be awarded where less than 50% of the living rooms and bedrooms are heated f. Does not include temporary breaks in supply g. Does not include temporary breaks in supply	a. 20 points b. 5 points c. 20 points d. 20 points e. 5 points f. 20 points g. 20 points
<b>2. Sharing facilities</b> a. Living room b. Kitchen/cooking facilities c. Bathroom d. WC	Sharing facilities with other people that will <b>not</b> be rehoused with you  Points awarded for each of these facilities that are shared	a. 5 points b. 10 points c. 10 points d. 10 points
<b>3. Condition of property</b> a. Statutorily unfit b. Demolition or closing order c. Poor condition of the property	a. For reasons other than those mentioned in the Lacking Facilities section above. Where action can be taken to bring the property into fitness these points may then be removed c. General poor repair of the property An assessment by Environmental Health may be required before considering whether to award these points and, where appropriate, advice and/or action to remedy these defects will be offered	a. 250 points b. 250 points c. 5 points



<p><b>4. Overcrowding</b></p>	<p>If your home is too small</p>	
<p>Who is considered to need their own bedroom?</p>	<p>This considers who needs their own bedroom and the size of the bedrooms available. We consider that a separate bedroom is needed for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A single person aged 16 years or over</li> <li>b. A couple or single parent</li> <li>c. Each child aged 8 years and over who would otherwise have to share</li> <li>d. Someone that needs their own bedroom on medical grounds</li> </ul>	
<p>What about the size of the rooms?</p>	<p>Points will be awarded for each person above the above room size standards</p> <p>Points will be awarded where children of the opposite sex still have to share a bedroom because there is no other alternative. These points will be awarded on the eldest child's 6<sup>th</sup> birthday, and on each of the eldest child's subsequent birthdays where they still have to share with a sibling of the opposite sex. If this situation has existed prior to the date of application on the Register, those years will not be considered in the award of points</p> <p>We then consider the sizes of the bedrooms available in the property. Where an applicant shares a property with immediate family members, the overcrowding assessment will consider how that extended family may make best use of the bedroom space available to them, not necessarily how the bedrooms are actually used. The following room sizes can sleep the number of people stated below (People aged 8 years and over are counted as one person, children below 8 years count as ½ a person). We also count second living rooms that may be used as a bedroom in this calculation.</p> <p>Rooms measuring less than 50ft square do not count  Rooms 50-70ft square = ½ person  Rooms 71-90ft square = 1 person (or two ½ people)  Rooms 91-110ft square = 1 ½ persons  Rooms over 110ft square = 2 persons</p> <p>Points will be awarded for each person above the above room size standards</p>	<p>25 points</p> <p>40 points on the eldest child's 6<sup>th</sup> birthday and on each subsequent birthday (to a maximum of 200 points)</p>
<p>What if children still have to share a bedroom with their parents?</p>	<p>Rooms measuring less than 50ft square do not count  Rooms 50-70ft square = ½ person  Rooms 71-90ft square = 1 person (or two ½ people)  Rooms 91-110ft square = 1 ½ persons  Rooms over 110ft square = 2 persons</p> <p>Points will be awarded for each person above the above room size standards</p> <p>Finally, we consider whether children <b>have</b> to share a bedroom with their parent(s) because there are no other bedrooms available. These points will be awarded for each complete year that you have had to share a bedroom with your child following the date of your application. If this situation has existed prior to the date of application on the Register, those years will not be considered in the award of points.</p>	<p>10 points</p> <p>50 points for each year that you have to share following the date of your application (to a maximum of 150 points)</p>

<b>5. Under-occupation of Housing Association properties within the District</b>	If you are a Housing Association tenant of a property within the District and your home is too large. Points awarded for each bedroom that you no longer need and are willing to give up by transferring to a smaller property	250 points for each bedroom given up
<b>6. Flats above ground floor</b>	These points will be awarded where a household with one or more children, or where a person included on the application is expecting their first child, lives in a flat or maisonette above ground floor.	5 points

<b>B. Where your home is not suitable because of medical reason</b>		
<b>1. Medical Factors</b>	<p>If you, or anyone included as part of your application, has a medical condition that is affected by your current home you can complete a medical self-assessment form. This will be assessed to see whether you should be awarded extra priority to be offered housing that will help improve your situation.</p> <p>Medical priority will only be awarded where it can be shown that there is a direct link between your housing situation and the medical condition.</p>	<p>0-100 points depending upon seriousness of the medical condition and how it is affected by your current housing</p> <p>250 points for exceptional medical circumstances where an urgent move is needed on medical grounds</p>
<b>C. Where you do not have a permanent home</b>		
<b>1. Threatened with eviction</b>		
a. Eviction from a privately rented property lodgings	a. Where you are privately renting or lodging and have received a valid notice to leave. If your landlord is trying to evict you because of something you have done, such as behaved in an anti-social way, or have failed to do, such as pay your rent, then you will not be awarded these points.	a. 50 points
b. Received a Possession Order from the Court	b. If the Court has awarded your landlord a Possession Order to evict you for a reason other than you doing something, or not doing something, (as explained in a. above) then you will be awarded extra points at this stage These points will be removed once you have been evicted from the property and your circumstances reassessed based on where you are then living	b. 50 extra points in addition to those awarded in a. above
<b>2. Statutorily homeless</b>	<p>Where the Council has investigated the reasons for your homelessness, under the terms of the homelessness legislation, and has accepted a responsibility to help you with rehousing. If awarded these points you will not be awarded others under section A above.</p> <p>If you are homeless and are unsure whether you come under this category please contact the Housing Needs Section for further advice</p>	250 points
<b>3. Residents at Kings Ripton Court or Paines Mill Foyer</b>	Awarded where a resident of these schemes is ready to move to a permanent property of their own. This will be subject to the Council and the support staff that have worked with the applicant agreeing that the person is ready to move to their own permanent home	250 points

<b>4. Leaving care or supported accommodation</b>	Where someone leaving Social Services care or other supported accommodation is ready to move to a permanent home of their own. This will be subject to the Council, Social Services, and the landlord of the supported accommodation, agreeing that the applicant is ready to move to their own home	250 points
<b>5. No fixed abode</b>	Where someone does not have one fixed address but stays between various addresses with friends and/or relatives, or in temporary accommodation not provided by the Council. This will need to be confirmed before these points will be awarded. If these points are awarded, no points will not be awarded for the reasons in section A	60 points
<b>6. Sleeping rough</b>	Where someone has no address where they can stay. Confirmation will be needed before these points will be awarded. If these points are awarded, no points will not be awarded for the reasons in section A	150 points
<b>7. Caravans and boats</b>  a. Caravans on residential sites or boats with moorings b. Touring caravans or boats without moorings	a. Where someone lives on a residential caravan site or moored boat. Lack of facilities and overcrowding points will also be assessed b. Where someone lives in a touring caravan that is not on a residential pitch, or on a boat without a mooring. Lack of facilities and overcrowding points will also be assessed	20 points  30 points
<b>D. Time in need points</b>		
<b>1. Points for the length of time you have been on the Register and in housing need</b>	Where someone has been awarded points under sections A, B, or C above, they will also be awarded time in need points on the anniversary, and each year thereafter, of the date when they were awarded the first set of points under one of these categories.	15 points on the first anniversary, and each year thereafter, of the first set of points being awarded under the named sections (up to a maximum of 75 points)

**E. Where you are unable to live together as a family**

<p><b>1. Unavoidably separated households</b></p>	<p>a. Where families are unable to live together because there is a lack of space at any one address. This includes partners and/or children, who would normally, and have in the past, lived together, not being able to do so because of overcrowding. An assessment will be made of each address, using the room size standards in section A4, and points awarded under the overcrowding category. This will assume that household <b>could</b> live at the property that provided the best housing option available to them</p> <p>b. Where couples that have not previously lived together are unable to do so because there is a lack of space at any one address. An assessment will be made of each address, using the room size standards in section A4, and points awarded under the overcrowding category. This will assume that couples <b>could</b> live at the property that provided the best housing option available to them</p>	<p>a. Variable level of points awarded under the overcrowding ruling, depending upon each person's situation</p> <p>b. Variable level of points awarded under the overcrowding ruling, depending upon each person's situation</p>
---	---	---

**F. You have to move because of social or work reasons**

<p><b>1. To move nearer to employment</b></p>	<p>Where a person has difficulty getting to work because of transport problems. Evidence will be needed of the problems that exist so that an assessment may be made to confirm that a move closer to work may help. Areas of choice must make it easier to access work</p>	<p>15 points</p>
<p><b>2. To give or receive medical or social support</b></p>	<p>Where a person needs to move to give or receive support. Evidence of the medical or social support given or received will be required, together with details of the problems that current living circumstances cause in providing or receiving that support. Areas of choice must make it easier to give or receive support</p>	<p>20 points</p>

### G. Management Transfers

**1. Housing Associations requesting help to move a tenant on management grounds**

Where a Housing Association tenant living within the District may need to move due to management issues. The Housing Association can request that the Council award points under this category to help with a move to resolve the management issue. The Housing Association will need to work with the tenant to provide the evidence needed before the Council will consider awarding these points.

- a. If there is an urgent need for a management move
- b. Where a move is needed but the circumstances are less urgent

- a. 250 points
- b. 100 points

# Appendix 3

## Housing Association Properties by Type & Size in Each Area of the District Points System

This table is currently being updated and will be added prior to publication of the document





## Appendix 4

### The Nominations Policy Relating to Households Accepted as Homeless Under the Terms of the Homelessness Legislation

1. The Council has a duty to secure that housing is available for those households accepted as homeless under the terms of the homelessness legislation.
2. The Council will normally attempt to assist households accepted as homeless with more permanent housing by nominating them for an offer of a Housing Association property through the Housing Register.
3. As with all Housing Register applicants, the size and type of property that a household accepted as homeless will be considered for is given in Appendix 1 of this policy document.
4. For the first three months, after being accepted as homeless, an applicant may select as many, or as few, areas of the District that they wish to be considered for.
5. If, after this three month period, the applicant has not been assisted with housing through the Register, they must include **two or more** of the following areas within their areas of choice: Huntingdon; Godmanchester; St Neots; St Ives; Ramsey; and Yaxley. As the majority of Housing Association properties and, therefore, vacancies are in these areas, this will assist in offering the applicant more permanent housing, resolving their homelessness.
6. After this three-month period, an applicant will be considered for suitable vacancies in the areas they have selected from those listed in point 5. When this three-month rule is applied, the applicant will be considered for all suitable vacancies that subsequently become available in the areas they have chosen. The applicant cannot specify, for example, streets that they would, or would not, wish to be considered for within these areas, unless there are reasons that would make a property unsuitable. The Council will consider each case individually if there are reasons that may make certain areas unsuitable to a particular applicant.
7. If an applicant accepted as homeless refuses an offer of a suitable property, the Council's duty, under the terms of the homelessness legislation will then end. The applicant's Register application will then be reassessed in terms of the priority awarded, and if the applicant occupies temporary accommodation provided by the Council, this will no longer be available to the applicant.