

## **Allocations Scheme Summary**

### **Introduction**

The Allocation Scheme is an expression of interest based scheme used to allocate most social housing in Trafford. The aim is to enable applicants to exercise a greater degree of choice in where they live compared to traditional housing allocations systems.

Vacant social homes are advertised and applicants who have registered for housing are able to respond to advertisements for properties that meet their needs and are in areas where they would like to live.

The scheme incorporates systems that enable the Council to fulfil its statutory duty to give reasonable preference to those in urgent need of housing, whilst allowing fair access to all eligible applicants.

### **Eligibility**

The tenancy of a property will only be offered to a person who has completed a housing application form and is accepted onto the register as a qualifying applicant.

#### **Ineligible applicants**

Applicants will be ineligible to join the register if:

- 1. They are subject to immigration control** within the meaning of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 or fall within a class of persons from abroad prescribed as being eligible.
- 2. They are not habitually resident in the UK** and do not have recourse to public funds.
- 3. They are guilty of serious unacceptable behaviour** that is serious enough to make them unsuitable to be a tenant. This could include former rent arrears, anti-social behaviour or having previously knowingly provided false information in order to obtain housing.

#### **16 and 17 year olds**

Applicants aged 16 and 17 years of age are eligible to join the register but will have their application suspended until they reach their 18th birthday. Some applicants may have their application unsuspending prior to their 18th birthday following an assessment by the Housing Advice and Support Service.

#### **Applicants who have housing related debts**

Some applicants may be ineligible to appear on the register as a result of housing related debts. For most applicants who owe either current or former tenant arrears, they will be eligible to appear on the register but their application will be suspended until the debt has been cleared in full.

## **Bandings**

### **Band 1 - Urgent Need Band:**

- Emergency Medical, Welfare or Disability
- Exceptional needs to move
- Release adapted property
- Ready to move on from approved supported accommodation
- Tenants of Registered Providers under occupying by two or more bedrooms
- Statutory overcrowded
- Insanitary or unfit property
- Care leaver
- Approved Foster Carer

### **Band 2 - Need to move – Reasonable Preference:**

- Statutorily homeless applicants who have been assessed and meet the legislative requirements under the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002.
- Overcrowded by two or more bedrooms
- Tenants of Registered Providers under occupying by one bedrooms
- Lack of basic facilities
- Urgent medical need
- Exceptional circumstances panel award
- Homeless prevention option after 6 months

### **Band 3 - Applicants assessed as:**

- Entitled to reasonable preference as being non-priority homeless, intentionally
- Homeless or homeless within the meaning of Housing Act Part 7
- Homeless Prevention during first 6 months or prevention option being chosen.
- Housing Need Age (60+) seeking sheltered accommodation
- Standard Medical

### **Band 4**

Applicant not being assessed as being owed a reasonable preference but meet Trafford Positive Community Criteria(e.g. Voluntary work, training, local connection, key workers).

### **Band 5**

Applicants owed Reasonable preference but who have been awarded reduced preference or have no recognisable Housing Need – Nil Priority

*\*All ex-Armed Forces applicants in housing need will be assessed and awarded addition priority as appropriate (the next band up).*

## **Re-registration and Review of Priority Status**

All applicants will be asked to confirm that their circumstances have not changed and that they wish to remain on the housing register on a rolling basis. If applicants do not reply within 4 weeks, their application on the housing register will be cancelled.

## **How the Scheme Operates**

Properties that are available for renting will be advertised for one week at all partner

landlords' offices accessible to the public and on the internet. Adverts will clearly show the letting criteria for each property.

Applicants may express an interest for up to 3 properties but preference will be given to those that meet the letting criteria.

At the end of the advertised period, the tenancy of each property will be offered to the person, or representative, who meets the letting criteria. If the selected applicant refuses the offer, the property will be offered to the next ranked applicant from the original bidding list.

Should an applicant refuse 2 reasonable offers within the past 3 months, their application will be down banded for a period of 12 months. This means they will be able to bid for other properties but bids will be based on the lower banding. (e.g. band 5).

### **Exclusions**

Some homes will be allocated directly, without being advertised. It is intended that these will be kept to a minimum, and will include for example, housing applicants in exceptional circumstances such as fire or flood, adapted properties and for the council to discharge its statutory duties.

### **Appeals and right to review**

Any applicant who is dissatisfied with a decision may request a review of that decision. A request for a review **must** be made in writing directly to HOST, there is no time limit between registration and the applicant's right to appeal.

All Reviews will be dealt with by an officer of the HOST, who is acting on behalf of Trafford Council, within 56 days of the request. All decisions following Reviews will be notified to the applicant in writing giving the reasons for the decision.

An applicant dissatisfied with a review decision may refer their case through Trafford Council's formal complaints procedure.

*(It is important to note that any review request concerning the facts of the case is not a review of the decision itself but solely a review of the facts taken into account when making the decision).*