

Appendix 1

Summary of changes to Housing Allocation Scheme 2022

1. Removal of Band E category for housing applicants;
2. To revert back to weekly advertising cycle so that properties are advertised on Wednesdays and open for bidding until midnight on the following Tuesday, as opposed to the current daily advertising and bidding cycles.
3. Widened the criteria for qualification for properties with a Section 106 agreement: The council has reviewed the local connection criteria in relation to family association for properties with a Section 106 agreement and Registered Providers can now include associations with a wider group of family members, such as step-parents, grandparents, grandchildren, aunts or uncles provided there are sufficiently close links in the form of frequent contact, commitment or dependency;
4. Additional preference awarded to two extra categories, which are Care Leavers and Looked After Children who are ready to move to independent living accommodation and those in supported accommodation who have been assessed by their support providers as ready to move on. Additional preference will be provided by backdating the effective date by six calendar months;
5. Applicants currently serving a custodial sentence: clarification on when the applicant can apply to the Home Point register before leaving a custodial sentence and when their application will become live.
6. Addition of Qualification for properties with a Section 106 agreement: The Council have reviewed the local connection criteria in relation to family association for properties with a Section 106 agreement. Registered Providers can now include associations with a wider group of family members such as step-parents, grandparents, grandchildren, aunts or uncles provided there are sufficiently close links in the form of frequent contact, commitment or dependency.
7. Addition of Appendix H which sets out what supporting documentation is required when applying to Home Point.

Changes to Band Categories

Band A	
Statutory or severe overcrowding	<p>Changed to Severe Overcrowding as the description needs to be amended as it gives the option to use the room standard of part X of the Housing Act 1985 or Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).</p> <p>Removed: "in preference to the statutory overcrowding standard in Part X of the Housing Act 1985" to add clarification on which definition is being used to determine overcrowding,</p>

	which is in line with Herefordshire Council's supplementary environmental health housing enforcement policy.
Serious state of disrepair / lacking facilities (reasonable preference)	Now combines both Serious State of Disrepair and Lacking Facilities, which were separate categories. Additional wording to clarify the way hazards are assessed under the HHSRS.
Timescales	Removed timescales on all categories except homelessness.
Exceptional Circumstances	Addition of an exceptional circumstances category in line with the Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities in England (publishing.service.gov.uk) section 3.31
Care Leavers (Reasonable Preference)	Title changed to Children in Need (CIN), Looked after Children (LAC) and Care Leavers (Reasonable Preference) Moved from Band B to Band A Wording amended to provide greater clarification around definition of Care Leavers and how their application will be assessed when the young person is ready for independent living.
Under-occupation by a social housing tenant	Moved from Band B into Band A in order to free up family-sized accommodation.
Band B	
Overcrowding	The description has been amended as it gives the option to use the room standard of part X of the Housing Act 1985 or HHSRS. EH refer to HHSRS in the supplementary environmental health housing enforcement policy. These two documents need to align. Description therefore changed to reflect the guidance in the housing enforcement policy.
Prevention and Relief of homelessness (Band B) and Relief of homelessness (Band C).	Amended to become Prevention and Relief of Homelessness (reasonable preference) 'No duty owed' Removed Relief from Band C.
Lacking facilities (reasonable preference)	Combined with Serious state of disrepair in BAND A
Sharing facilities with non-family members (reasonable preference)	Moved to Band C, as already housed.
Right to move for social housing tenants who need to move to take up a	Description amended for greater clarity about needing to move to take up a job or live closer to work

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Verified urgent need to move to a particular area to avoid hardship (reasonable preference)	Description amended for greater clarity on journey times that define URGENT need to move
Band C	
Relationship Breakdown	Description amended for greater clarity on a sole person leaving the family home, no children.
Affordability	Description amended to be clear that this is the ability to pay rent and not household bills etc. Also amended to be clear that calculation excludes Housing Benefit.
Verified need to move to avoid hardship (reasonable preference)	Description amended for greater clarity on journey times that define a need to move
Rural localities /s.106 local connection schemes	Text amended to give greater clarity and to reflect section 7.6 of the amended allocations scheme.
Band D	
Ending s.193 Duty	Additional category added under ending s.193 duty An Applicant who has refused a reasonable offer of accommodation, which the Council are satisfied is suitable.
Band E	
Removed Band E	

8. Other changes to the Housing Allocation Scheme include amended wording in various sections to provide greater clarification on definitions. All amendments to the policy are fully covered in Appendix 3 Housing Allocations Scheme Review 2022 – List of Changes.