

**THE HOUSING REGISTER AND NOMINATIONS POLICY**

**This booklet details Horsham District Council’s policy on admission to the Housing Register and the nomination of applicants for housing. It indicates the size and type of accommodation which can be offered and gives other useful information.**

<b>SECTION</b>	<b>PAGE NO</b>
<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Local Housing Association Partners.....	4
Access To Personal Information .....	5
Data Protection.....	5
<b>2. Equalities Statement.....</b>	<b>5</b>
Policy Statement .....	5
<b>3. The Joint Housing Register.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Who Can Apply?.....	6
General Overview.....	6
Persons From Abroad .....	6
Unacceptable And/or Anti Social Behaviour .....	6
Outstanding Housing Related Debts.....	7
Finances.....	7
Reviews Of Decisions On Eligibility.....	8
Age Restrictions .....	8
Correspondence Address.....	8
Joint Applications.....	9
Low Cost Homeownership .....	9
Age Restricted Housing.....	9
Mutual Exchange.....	9
Tenancy Deposit Scheme.....	9
<b>4. The Registration and Assessment Process.....</b>	<b>10</b>
Preference.....	10
Medical Needs.....	10
Mobility Needs.....	12
Unsatisfactory Housing Conditions And Statutory Duty .....	12
Overcrowding .....	13
Shared Childcare Arrangements .....	15
Homeless Households .....	17
Multiple Needs And Other Social Welfare Considerations .....	17
Other High Priority Categories (Applicable To Transfers Only).....	18
Notification Of Banding And Challenges .....	19
Re-registrations .....	19

<b>5. The Assessment Panel (Multi Agency)</b> .....	<b>20</b>
Membership .....	20
The Referral Procedure.....	20
Attendance At Meetings .....	20
The Decision Making Process.....	20
Carrying Out Resettlement And Care Plans.....	21
<b>6. The Banding Structure</b> .....	<b>22</b>
Band A.....	22
Band B .....	23
Band C .....	24
Band D .....	25
Exceptions – Balancing And Creating Sustainable Communities .....	25
Re-assessing Need And Priority Dates .....	26
Moving Up A Band.....	26
Moving Down A Band .....	26
Severe Multiple Needs .....	26
<b>7. Nomination to Empty Properties</b> .....	<b>26</b>
Waiting Time .....	26
Choosing An Area .....	26
Pets Policy .....	27
<b>8. The Nomination Process</b> .....	<b>27</b>
<b>9. Refusing an offer of a property</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>10. Records on let properties</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>11. Planning policy exception sites</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>12. Appeals and reviews</b> .....	<b>29</b>
<b>13. Appendix a - persons from abroad</b> .....	<b>30</b>
<b>14. Appendix b - unacceptable and/or anti-social behaviour</b> .....	<b>31</b>
<b>15. Appendix c - checklist - proof of identity</b> .....	<b>34</b>
<b>16. Appendix d - local lettings policy</b> .....	<b>35</b>
<b>17. Appendix e - local connection - definition</b> .....	<b>37</b>
<b>18. Appendix f - low cost home ownership schemes</b> .....	<b>39</b>
<b>19. Appendix g - medical needs flowchart</b> .....	<b>40</b>
<b>20. Appendix h - mobility needs rating - property assessment guidelines</b> .....	<b>41</b>
<b>21 Appendix i - miscellaneous general information</b> .....	<b>43</b>
▪ Neighbouring Local Authorities .....	43
▪ Rent Deposit Scheme .....	43
<b>22. Appendix j - Equality Impact Assessment</b> .....	<b>44</b>
Map - Horsham Area Zones .....	48
Map - Horsham District (inside back cover)	

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This is the scheme as required under section 167 of the Housing Act 1996. It sets out the priorities and procedures for the letting of all forms of affordable (social) housing, and our nominations to Registered Social Landlords (also called RSLs). The scheme applies equally to existing Housing Association tenants wanting to move (who are called ‘transfers’) and to new members applying to the Housing Register for the first time (who are called ‘homeseekers’).

Under the Housing Register and Nominations Policy, transfers and homeseekers are placed in one of four broad bands of housing need according to their circumstances. All accepted applicants become ‘**members**’ of the register.

Horsham District Council does not own housing but works in partnership with a number of Housing Associations who are Registered Social Landlords. They manage and maintain a range of different types of affordable housing.

Applicants joining the register with a proven local connection to Horsham District will be given a higher priority when being shortlisted for eligible properties. (see appendix E)

We reserve the right that in the event of a change to this policy, the amendment(s) will usually be applied to existing applications at the time of renewal.

If you need any help or advice about the information in this booklet please contact us.

### Local Housing Association Partners

The following Registered Social Landlords are Horsham District Council’s local partners in providing affordable housing within Horsham District:

Downland Housing Association  
Greenoak Housing Association Ltd  
Hanover Housing Association  
Horsham ‘Y’ Centre  
Housing 21  
HydeMartlet  
London & Quadrant Housing Trust  
Moat Housing Group

North British Housing Association  
Places for People Group  
Raglan Housing Association  
Royal Air Forces Association  
Sanctuary Housing (SE) Ltd  
Saxon Weald Housing Association  
Southdown Housing Association  
Southern Housing Group

## Access to Personal Information and Data Protection

The Data Protection Act 1998 and the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) give applicants the right to certain information. Under data protection law applicants are entitled, upon request, to be told if any personal data is held about them whether this is held in computerised or in some cases paper form and, if so, to be provided with a copy. This may include any entry on the Housing Register.

Requests should be made in writing to the Head of Housing Services. A fee may be payable and applicants may be asked for evidence to verify their identity.

In addition, under the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) applicants are entitled to request such general information as will enable you to:

- assess how your application is likely to be treated under the Policy; and
- whether housing accommodation appropriate to your needs is likely to be made available and, if so, how long it is likely to be before such accommodation becomes available.

Applicants are also entitled to request that they be informed of any decision about the facts of the case which is likely to be or has been taken into consideration when considering whether to allocate housing accommodation to them. Applicants are entitled to request an internal review of certain decisions and to be informed of the decision on any review and the grounds for it.

If you wish to request any of this information please contact the Head of Housing Services.

The Act also prohibits disclosure to any other member of the public (including relatives) other than the applicant, without specific permission from the applicant.

We will normally retain a record of cancelled applications for a period of 3 years from the date of cancellation.



## 2. EQUALITIES STATEMENT

### Policy Statement

Horsham District Council is firmly committed to providing and promoting equality for all its employees and the wider community. The Council has adopted an equalities strategy that will ensure equality influences the way we provide services and the employment of staff. To achieve this we endeavour to create an environment in which there is respect for everyone and make a clear commitment that no-one will be discriminated against on the grounds of their race, colour, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, family status, transgender or Trans sexuality or unjustifiably because of their disability or age. The Council is equally strongly committed to the principle that the public as its service users are not discriminated against on any of these grounds.

In respect of race equality the Council has adopted the equality standard for Local Government. The definition of a racial incident - "a racial incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person".



## 3. THE HOUSING REGISTER

### WHO CAN APPLY?

#### General overview

The Council will consider all applications for social housing solely in accordance with the procedures set out in this allocation policy. Any person wishing to join the housing register must complete a housing application form. All applications will be considered. Current Housing Association tenants who wish to be re-housed will also be considered under this scheme.

Housing Associations do however have the right to refuse a nominee, put forward to them by the Council for a vacant property, if they believe a prospective tenant is unacceptable within the terms of their own admission policy. Registered Social Landlords will ask Housing Services for detailed information about the household.

#### Ineligible applications

Although the District Council does not operate blanket policies with regards to eligibility for membership of the register current statutory requirements stipulate that an applicant may be made ineligible to join the housing waiting list because:

#### Persons from Abroad

- the applicant is subject to immigration control and not otherwise re-included by regulations
- the applicant falls within a class of person from abroad prescribed by the Secretary of State

#### Unacceptable and/or Anti Social Behaviour

- The District Council is satisfied that the applicant (or a member of the applicant's household) has a history of unacceptable and/or anti-social behaviour serious enough to make that person unsuitable to be a tenant.

Further details concerning applicants treated as ineligible to become members due to a history of unacceptable and/or anti-social behaviour are set out in Appendix B.

Applicants treated as ineligible due to unacceptable and/or anti-social behaviour may be deemed to be ineligible to join the housing waiting list for a period not exceeding two years but can make a fresh application after six months of the date of notification of ineligibility if they feel that there is good reason why they should no longer be treated as ineligible. Such applicants will need to show that there has been a material change in their behaviour or their circumstances. For example, they have sought help and support in managing their tenancies or have an established repayment plan to clear arrears, and can evidence this.

Applicants should note that Registered Social Landlords share information on the previous behaviour of their tenants. New applications for membership may be cross-checked against their history in previous social housing accommodation and this information may be used in determining an applicant's eligibility to rejoin the Housing Register.

## **Outstanding housing related debts**

Applicants for membership of the Housing Register who have housing related debts will have the circumstances surrounding the debts investigated prior to any decision on full admittance to the register being made. They will also be given the opportunity to either:

- clear the debt in full  
or
- show they have demonstrated a genuine commitment to clear any debt in instalments by making regular agreed payments to the Council or RSL for a period of no less than three months.

A decision will be made as to their acceptance onto the Housing Register and their relevant banding. Applicants will not be eligible for nomination to available properties until full admittance to the Housing Register has been agreed.

The following are regarded as types of housing related debts

- licence fee and/or service charge arrears accrued whilst in Horsham District Council's temporary accommodation
- former outstanding licence fee and/or service charge arrears relating to a previous stay in Horsham District Council's temporary accommodation
- outstanding recharges related to a stay in Horsham District Council's temporary accommodation (e.g. charges for damage, cleaning or rubbish removal)
- outstanding arrears in repayments for debts accrued under the Council's Private Sector Rent Deposit Scheme
- outstanding arrears from a current or previous RSL or LA tenancy

## **Financial Resources**

If the Council is of the opinion that an applicant has the resources to finance alternative affordable accommodation it will normally afford them a lower priority for housing to those without such resources.

The Council will look at each application on an individual basis and establish as to whether it is necessary to carry out an assessment on the financial resources of the applicant and partner. An assessment will consist of the following elements:-

- an evaluation of the income of the applicant and partner; and
- an evaluation of the capital of the applicant and partner (this will include equity within a property)

The Council will carry out a net income assessment for all new or repeat applications to the housing register unless the application is exempted.

An exemption from the income assessment will apply if:

- the applicant or partner is owed a duty by Horsham District Council under section 193 (2) of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended)  
or

- the applicant or partner, where applicable, is in receipt of one of the following means-tested benefits
  - Income Support
  - Income-Based Jobseekers Allowance
  - Working Tax Credit
  - Housing Benefit
  - Council Tax Benefit
  - Pensions Credit
  - ESA (Employment and Support Allowance)

Net income means income net of Income Tax and National Insurance contributions. The following types of income are fully disregarded:

- Attendance Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance
- Maintenance for dependant children

Where it is decided that the homeseeker or transfer applicant should be given less priority because they own accommodation; or they have sufficient capital to buy; or sufficient income to raise a mortgage to buy outright or through HomeBuy; or a combination of both the applicant will be placed in Band D. For the purposes of this policy it is considered that normally a mortgage can be obtained amounting to 3 times a single annual income or 2½ times joint annual incomes.

### **Reviews of decisions on eligibility**

Where the Council decides that an applicant is ineligible to join the housing waiting list for any of the reasons given above, the Council will record its decision and will provide the applicant with written notification. The notification will give clear grounds for the decision, which will be based on the relevant facts of the case. Any decision to exclude an applicant from membership of the register will need to be approved by the Housing Needs Manager.

Applicants have the right to request a review of any decision by the Council as to eligibility together with a right to be informed of the decision on review and the grounds for that decision. Further details concerning the right to request a review are set out in Section 12

### **Age restriction**

The District Council will only treat applicants aged 16 years or over at the time of applying as eligible to join the Housing Register. However it must be noted that some RSLs will also require applicants under the age of 18 years to provide a guarantor in order to be able to grant such applicants a tenancy.

### **Correspondence Addresses**

All members (even those who are homeless) must be able to provide the District Council with at least a correspondence address at the time of applying. This is necessary to enable the Council and/or Registered Social Landlord to communicate effectively and quickly with accepted members. The District Council offices can not be used as a correspondence address. Applications received without an address will be immediately rejected.

## **Joint applications**

Horsham District Council cannot nominate to a Registered Social Landlord for a joint tenancy to two or more people if any one of them is a person from abroad who is ineligible or is a person who is being treated as ineligible because of unacceptable behaviour.

Otherwise joint applications are acceptable regardless of relationship to each other, their marital status or sexual orientation.

Joint applicants who are nominated for a property will always be offered a joint tenancy by the relevant RSL. It will not be possible to subsequently grant a tenancy in just one of the joint member's names. It is therefore very important that joint members who separate advise the District Council as soon as possible so that their application can be amended.

## **Low Cost Home Ownership Schemes (see appendix F)**

Moat Housing Group is responsible for maintaining a Housing Register of applicants for schemes which fall into this category.

## **Age restricted housing**

Generally members applying for retirement housing and their household must be at least sixty years old at the time of joining the Housing Register however a limited number of RSLs will consider applicants of 55 years and above. In addition consideration will be given to those between 55 and 60 years of age where there is a disability, they are registered disabled or have other serious support needs (subject to the approval of the relevant RSL). Some RSLs will have different or additional eligibility criteria for their retirement accommodation and this information can be sought directly from the landlord.

Some other RSL properties will be designated solely for either older persons (e.g. Extra Care schemes) or younger persons (e.g. the 'Y' Centre). Where such restrictions / requirements apply members of The Housing Register will only be considered if all members of their household meet these age restrictions.

## **Mutual Exchange**

Tenants of Registered Social Landlords within the Horsham District who wish to swap their home with a tenant either from the same or another housing association within the District may, upon request, have their details placed on a Mutual Exchange List known as Band X. The published list holds the tenants name, address, details of existing property, desired property type and size and areas of choice. It is displayed in a prominent position in the Council's Help Point at Park North, North Street, Horsham and at the Storrington Library Help Point. Tenants should check the register on a regular basis; it is the tenant's responsibility to find an exchange partner. It is necessary to obtain written consent from your landlord and the landlord of the tenant you want to exchange with before any move can take place.

## **Tenancy Deposit Scheme**

The Council operates a Tenancy Deposit Scheme please refer to Appendix I for further details.



## 4. THE REGISTRATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS

New homeseekers and existing RSL tenants must apply to join the Housing Register by completing the Housing Options Assessment Form. A self assessment medical form (see Appendix G) is also available for completion if a member feels that their current accommodation is affecting their health or the health of the member of their family and they believe this should be taken into account when assessing the household's priority for housing. If not eligible to register the District Council will notify the member in writing giving the reason for the decision and informing them of their right to request a review (page 28).

The Housing Options Team makes decisions about member's relative priority for housing based on the following criteria:

- Local connection to the Horsham District and/or any relevant parish. (local connection is defined fully at Appendix E)
- Relative assessed need for housing (grouped into four consecutive bands) with Band A being the highest assessed need and Band D being the lowest assessed need. Bands B and C are further split into two sections to reflect an additional priority where a homeseeker may meet two or more of the band assessment criteria.
- Time spent in the members' current band

Where a homeseeker can arguably be placed in different bands, the most favourable band to the homeseeker will be used but only in accordance with the criteria above.

As set out in the 1996 Housing Act housing authorities must ensure that reasonable preference is given to the following categories of people accepted onto the Housing Register.

- a. People who are homeless or threatened with homelessness under the terms of Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) or who are living in temporary accommodation provided by the local authority as a result of a homeless application.
- b. People occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions.
- c. People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability. In April 2009 the Secretary of State issued guidance that applicants who need to move to suitable adapted accommodation because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability which he or she, or a member of their household, sustained as a result of service in the Armed Forces are to be included within this category.
- d. People who need to move to a particular locality in the District where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others).

**A member's relative priority for housing is assessed by the Housing Options Team in the light of appropriate advice and the following guidelines:**

## Medical Needs

A self assessment medical form is available for members to complete where they or anyone in their household, has an illness or disability which is affected by their current home, or who may be vulnerable on physical or mental health grounds and in need of settled accommodation. The member must be able to provide evidence to support this claim from a health professional if requested to do so by the District Council. The Housing Options Team will first assess an applicant's priority based solely on the signed declaration made on the self assessment medical form and in accordance with the medical assessment flowchart shown in Appendix G. In cases where the self assessment form would lead the assessing Housing Options Officer to consider that the applicant has either a high, very high or over-riding medical need for re-housing the member will be requested to provide supporting evidence from their doctor, consultant or specialist. The Housing Options Team may also seek advice from a specifically appointed and independent medical advisor; Occupational Therapist; Environmental Health Officer; Social and Caring Services or Supporting People if it is felt that further or more detailed independent information is required to properly assess the evidence. The District Council will not make direct requests to a member's doctor, consultant or specialist for a letter of support for housing, nor will they meet any costs involved should the member make a direct request. The Council may however contact a member's doctor/specialist when requested to do so by the independent medical advisor.

Assessments are made specifically on the effect of the member's present housing on their current state of health or disability of anyone else in the household. In reaching the decision the Housing Options Team will consider whether the overall effect on any member of the household is sufficiently severe to warrant inclusion in a higher band. The flowchart in Appendix G shows the process used by the Housing Options Team to assess priority due to medical need.

In each case the recommendation is based on a judgement of need. Members with medical needs will be placed in one of the following bands:-

- Band A**      Overriding Medical Priority will be recommended where the member or one of the household has a life threatening condition which is seriously affected by their current housing. Band A will also be appropriate where current housing conditions and/or other circumstances are having such a major adverse effect on the medical condition of any member of the household as to warrant emergency priority. All recommendations for placement in Band A on medical grounds are made only through the Council's Assessment Panel (multi-agency) or recommendation by the Council's independent medical advisor.
- Band B**      Very High/High Medical Priority will be recommended where the current housing conditions are having a major adverse effect on the medical condition of the member or one of the household.
- Band C**      Medium/Low Medical Priority will be recommended where the current housing conditions are having an adverse effect on the medical condition of the member or one of the household which creates a particular need for them to move.

Where a household is overcrowded and/or there are other adverse circumstances the medical assessment will take into account the effect of the overcrowding and the adverse circumstances on the health of the household. For further information on this see under Multiple Needs and Other Social Welfare considerations (page 17).

## **Mobility Needs**

Irrespective of the band assessment where a member or one of the household has a substantial and permanent physical disability the Housing Options Team will refer the application to an Occupational Therapist, for a report on their specific housing needs. Appendix G shows the method used by Occupational Therapists to assess mobility needs. Taking into account the recommendations of the report the Housing Options Team will place the member in one of the following broad mobility groups:-

- a. wheelchair user indoors and outdoors
- b. people who cannot manage steps or stairs and may use a wheelchair some of the time
- c. independent but can only manage one or two steps

In many cases it may not be possible to find a property that meets the needs of a disabled person. In certain circumstances it may be possible to adapt an existing property to meet the needs of a disabled person using Disabled Facilities Grant funding.

Disabled Facilities Grants are made available from Horsham District Council to individual people to enable them to adapt their home to meet their identified needs. In order to be eligible for a Disabled Facilities Grant certain conditions must be met and the amount of grant will be determined by a financial assessment.

In addition to an assessment by an Occupational Therapist a disabled person applying to go on the register is recommended to contact the Public Health and Licensing Department to determine their grant eligibility. This will assist in ensuring that only suitable properties are identified.

## **Unsatisfactory Housing Conditions: Housing Health and Safety Hazards**

Should a tenant of a private landlord state on their housing application form that one of the reasons for wishing to move is that there are problems with the condition of their home, the case will be referred to the Public Health and Licensing Department. The tenant must show that they have reported the problems to their landlord and given them adequate time to deal with the issues raised. An Officer from the Public Health and Licensing Department will contact the tenant to discuss the issues and if necessary arrange to visit the property to assess the problems and discuss the options available to get the landlord to carry out any appropriate work.

The Officer from the Public Health and Licensing Department will assess the condition of the property and the member will be placed into one of the following bands based on the assessment:

**Band A** - Where there is a duty to re-house and a Prohibition Order on the whole of the house or a Demolition Order has been issued as conditions present a serious threat to health or safety but where remedial action is considered unreasonable or impractical for cost or other reasons.

**Band B** - Where occupying the property poses a serious and imminent risk to the health or safety of the household i.e. the conditions at the property are such that it falls in to Hazard Band A of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.

**Band C** - Where occupying the property poses a medium risk to the health or safety of the household i.e. the conditions at the property are such that it falls in to Hazard Bands B or C of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.

Mobile homes fall outside of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System but the Public Health and Licensing Department may assess that the unit would have fallen within the assessment had it been a permanent structure. This assessment will only apply where the unit has not been deliberately overcrowded or taken on in an already unfit condition.

In all cases an Officer from the Public Health and Licensing Department will work with the member and landlord to get all the appropriate works carried out. The member must co-operate with this and no priority will be awarded if the member refuses to allow works to be carried out.

Once the work has been carried out, this housing needs factor will be disregarded. The application will be reassessed and placed in the appropriate band.

Should there be problems needing minor works, the Council will give advice and assist with getting the work undertaken, but no priority will be given to the application on the housing register.

Owner occupiers are responsible for the maintenance of their home and will not generally be given any priority because of housing health and safety issues.

## **Overcrowding**

There are a number of statutory provisions in relation to overcrowding and the numbers permitted to occupy residential premises, the main ones being Part 10 of the Housing Act 1985 and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.

Statutory overcrowding will be assessed by an Officer from the Public Health and Licensing Department. Where a property is deemed to be statutorily overcrowded in accordance with the Housing Act 1985 or is determined to be a Category 1 hazard in accordance with the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, the applicant will be placed in **Band A**.

In addition to statutory overcrowding, regard will be had to the number of bedrooms available and an applicant will be placed in **Band B** should they lack two or more bedrooms and in **Band C** should they lack one bedroom according to the minimum provisions indicated in the following guide.

If the Council considers that by their deliberate action or inaction an applicant has worsened their housing circumstances, no additional Band priority will be given for a period of 12 months.

Household size	Type and Size of Home
Single person	Bedsitting room / one bedroom flat, house or bungalow
Couple or single person with a confirmed pregnancy	Two bedroom (3 person) flat, maisonette, house or bungalow
Couple without children	One bedroom flat, house or bungalow
Two adults of the same sex, e.g. two brothers or two sisters	One or two bedroom flat, maisonette or bungalow
Two adults of the opposite sex who do not live as a couple, e.g. a brother and sister	Two bedroom flat, (3 person) maisonette or bungalow
Adult or couple with one child	Two bedroom (3 person) flat, maisonette, house or bungalow
Adult or couple with two children of the same sex, where the eldest child is under 14 years of age	Two bedroom (4 person) flat, maisonette, house or bungalow
Adult or couple with two children of the same sex, where the eldest child is over 14 years of age or above and there is at least a 7 year age gap between the two children	Two or three bedroom house, flat, maisonette or bungalow. (Due to the acute shortage of three bedroom properties early re-housing may only be achieved by the offer of two bedroom accommodation)
Adult or couple with two children of opposite sex when one is over the age of 8 years	Three bedroom (4 person) flat, maisonette or house
Adult or couple with three children	Three bedroom (5 person) flat, maisonette or house
Adult or couple with four or more children	Three or four bedroom house. This can include considering 'parlour' rooms (more than one living/dining) as a bedroom in some properties

NB. The term 'couple' is deemed to mean either a heterosexual couple or a same sex couple.

Priority will always be given to a family who best match the property size ie.  
 1 child = 3 person property, 2 children 4 person property, 3 children 5 person property

Members of the Housing Register over retirement age (taken to be 60 years & above) will normally be considered for retirement housing unless there are special circumstances which would render this typew of accommodation unsuitable for their needs.

The following are examples of some of the exceptions that may be made to this guide:

- (a) a medical recommendation is received by the District Council which warrants an increase in the size of home to be offered (for example, to meet a medical need for separate bedrooms), or
- (b) existing tenants being re-housed because of a serious threat of violence or harassment may be offered a property with the same number of bedrooms as their current home regardless of their need, or
- (c) under-occupying tenants may, on request, be offered a home one bedroom larger than their assessed need (for example, to downsize by one bedroom rather than two bedrooms), or
- (d) the home to be allocated includes special adaptations and there are no other disabled members on The Housing Register of the correct household size available that require those adaptations, or
- (e) the allocation is the result of an emergency, or
- (f) the home is being used as temporary accommodation and in pursuance of statutory homelessness duty under Part VII Housing Act 1996, or
- (g) the home is being let under the terms of an agreed local lettings policy, or
- (h) the property is a bungalow which will generally only be allocated to households where both members are over 60 years of age or where a member of the household has a physical or sensory disability, is registered disabled and needs single level accommodation, or
- (i) to enable fostering or adoption where this has formally been approved by West Sussex County Council Social and Caring Services and larger accommodation is required to enable the process to be completed.

In addition it is important to note that:

- no member will be nominated for properties that would result in over- crowding or under-occupation unless as part of a local lettings policy
- if the property advertised has a second reception room it will generally be deemed to be available for use as a bedroom. Box rooms, which can reasonably be used by a child, will count as a single bedroom.

### **Shared childcare arrangements**

The District Council acknowledges that many separated or divorced families continue to share responsibilities for accommodating their children between the parents after deciding not to live together anymore. This is often designed to facilitate healthy and fulfilling relationships between both parents and their children.

Unfortunately, due to the demand for family sized affordable housing in the District, members of The Housing Register who have shared access to children but those children are no longer fully dependant on that member will not automatically be eligible for properties with additional bedrooms to enable them to provide full sleeping accommodation when they stay.

Horsham District Council will only be able to consider written requests to allow a member (with formal visiting access arrangements in place for their separated children) to be considered for properties with a greater number of bedrooms than the household entitlement as indicated in the guide on page 14. However it is important to realise that there is a great shortage of family sized properties within Horsham District. Written requests can be made either at the time of application to join The Housing Register or at any time afterwards.

All applications requesting nomination to properties with one additional bedroom will be assessed on their individual merit by the Housing Options Team who will consider the following factors in making their decision:

- the size of accommodation and the number of bedrooms that are already available for the children in their principal home
- whether the child is classed as a dependant child
- which member of the family receives maintenance and/or welfare benefits (such as child benefit) on behalf of the children
- the average length of time that the children spend living in each parental home over the course of a year.
- written recommendations or advice from West Sussex County Council Social and Caring Services Department and/or any other professional acting on behalf of the best interests, safety and welfare of the children.
- directions or final decisions arising from the Family Courts with regard to access arrangements for children.
- the availability or likely availability of suitable sized accommodation in the district.
- any other relevant information

The Housing Options Team will make a decision based on all the advice received about how to best meet the needs of the children and the member will subsequently be notified in writing of the maximum bedroom size which they may then be considered for. Members who are dissatisfied with the outcome of their application are able to request a review of this decision within 21 days of notification by writing directly to the Housing Needs Manager. Further details about this right are given in Section 12 Appeals and Reviews.

## Homeless Households

Homeless households owed the main duty by Horsham District Council under s.193 of the 1996 Act or s.65 of the 1985 Act will be placed in the following bands:

### Band A

Homeless households placed in either bed & breakfast or short term temporary accommodation or households under imminent threat of homelessness where the only prospect of meeting the households' needs is in permanent accommodation. Examples of circumstances in which such a decision can be taken are:

- there are severe medical or disability reasons
- there is evidence of severe harassment or violence in the current property
- there is evidence of severe disrepair of the current property

### Band B

Homeless households making their own temporary arrangements for accommodation will also be placed in **Band B**. Any accommodation taken in this way must be reasonable to occupy and not fall within the category of 'Unsatisfactory Housing Conditions' or 'Overcrowding' (see pages 12 and 13) and there should be a reasonable expectation that it will be available for a minimum of four months.

Homeless household owed the main re-housing duty by Horsham District Council (HDC) placed in bed & breakfast or temporary accommodation or who when owed the main re-housing duty accepted an AST under a qualifying offer and have completed the first six months of the tenancy.

### Band C

Homeless household who when owed the main re-housing duty by Horsham District Council accepted an AST under a Qualifying Offer and is within the first six months of the fixed term of the tenancy.

A homeless household found to be unintentionally homeless but not in priority need will also be placed in Band C, where they meet the local connection criteria (see Appendix E)

### Band D

Homeless households found to be eligible for assistance but intentionally homeless. This will be reviewed after 6 months from the homeless decision date.

Homeless household found unintentionally homeless but not in priority need - who do not meet the local connection criteria.

## Multiple Needs and other Social Welfare Considerations

Where there is social/welfare housing need connected with a member or any of their household the Housing Options Team will consider the recommendations of West Sussex County Council's Social and Caring Services and any other statutory and voluntary agencies particularly taking into account evidence of the member's multiple needs.

Members and their household may be able to demonstrate evidence of having a variety of combined needs. For example they may have:

- **more than one** family member with individual medical/social or welfare housing needs
- a severe medical health problem **AND** be living in overcrowded conditions, or
- be statutorily homeless **AND** wheelchair dependant, or
- have one bedroom shortage **AND** living in a property with a category one health hazard.

Where a member is living in these sorts of exceptional circumstances and/or have multiple needs which are determined by the Housing Options Manager to warrant emergency priority they will be placed in **Band A**.

## OTHER HIGH PRIORITY CATEGORIES (APPLICABLE TO TRANSFERS ONLY).

### Moving for major works

**Band A** is awarded to transfers if their RSL property is imminently required for essential works and the tenant cannot remain in the property whilst these works are carried out.

### Management Transfers between partnership RSLs

**Band A** is awarded to facilitate a tenant's move in one of the following circumstances;-

- an emergency transfer from RSL accommodation is required and this has been approved by the RSL housing manager. (e.g. through an emergency, fear of violence or harassment)
- to release a disabled-adapted property – the decision to prioritise is made by the Housing Options Officer if there is an unmet need for the property currently occupied by the member (e.g. where the tenant does not require adaptations such as a walk-in shower and/or other wheelchair accessible facilities).
- to make best use of disabled-adapted housing - for example where providing adaptations in the member's current property is not feasible but there may be a suitable alternative property available elsewhere.
- to enable Housing Association tenants in the Horsham District who are under occupying family-sized accommodation to move to smaller accommodation.

## **Band B is awarded to facilitate a tenant's move in the following circumstance:-**

- where in the case of a one bedroom flat a baby has been born since the tenancy was taken on and that child is now over one year of age and still sharing the bedroom with the parent.
- releasing RSL accommodation within the Horsham District to assist with a local lettings policy or in order to make best use of limited stock within the district but where the current tenant's housing priority would only place them in Band C.

## **Notification of banding and challenges**

Once assessed and the appropriate bedroom category (as detailed in Section 4. page 20) is identified, the member is placed into one of the four priority bandings in date order of confirmed registration. For applicants accepted as unintentionally homeless under the Housing Act 1996 – Part VII (as amended) the date of registration will be the homeless decision date. For all other categories on the register the date of the completion of the home visit or housing options assessment will apply. Housing Services will write to the member to inform them of their registration date, reference number and priority Band

If a member considers that any of these details are inaccurate then they can request in writing a review of their priority from a Housing Options Officer setting out their reasons. Should a member's circumstances change after initial registration it will also be that member's responsibility to advise Horsham District Council's Housing Services of the changes either in writing or by completing a new housing application form. Evidence will be required of any change in circumstances (e.g. a birth certificate to prove the arrival of a new family member)

## **Re-Registrations**

It is the responsibility of members of The Housing Register to ensure that they renew their application every year. Members should automatically receive a renewal form annually from Housing Services which should be completed and returned immediately. If it is mislaid a further form can either be collected from a Help Point, sent in response to a telephone call or printed from the Council web site [www.horsham.gov.uk](http://www.horsham.gov.uk). Failure to renew an application means the member's name will automatically be taken off the Register. Some types of application are reviewed more frequently and we will let members know if this applies to them.



## 5. THE ASSESSMENT PANEL (MULTI AGENCY)

The purpose of The Horsham District Assessment Panel (multi-agency) is:

- to bring together relevant agencies in the Horsham District to assess the best way to meet the needs of The Housing Register members, where the formal assessment process is not seen to be sufficient or where it is anticipated that urgent housing is required and this may not otherwise be achieved
- to provide an overview of the assistance available for vulnerable members and to act as an appeals panel where necessary

### Membership

Membership of The Assessment Panel (multi agency) is open to all voluntary and statutory agencies in Horsham District which work with people in urgent housing need. Attendance at the Horsham District Assessment Panel is flexible however in order to meet the needs of the people being assessed. Agencies only need to attend meetings where they can make a contribution to the resettlement and care plans of the clients being discussed. There are also on occasions need for other agencies, which are not currently part of the panel membership, to be called in to panel meetings in order to assist with the provision of resettlement and care plans. Where there is a need for this the panel will formally invite the non-participating agency to attend the panel meeting.

### The Referral Procedure/ Attendance at meetings

Clients are referred directly to the Assessment Panel by Horsham District Council's Housing Options Team. Meetings will be scheduled to take place every six to seven weeks but will be cancelled if there are no clients to discuss. Panel members will be informed ten days before the meeting if it will take place and which clients are being assessed. The venue of the meetings is Horsham District Council, Park North, North Street, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 1RL. Clients may have been referred directly or through a voluntary or statutory agency to SIGNPOST who provide advice, guidance, information and encouragement on housing related problems. This service is provided through Southdown Housing Association in the Horsham District with funding from Supporting People. A leaflet detailing this scheme is available from Housing Services upon request

### The decision making process

All participating agencies involved in discussing a client's case at a panel meeting are responsible for agreeing a resettlement and care plan for the client. In order to agree a resettlement and care plan consideration will be given to the client's history, the client's needs, and the client's wishes and opinions. The agency representative will come to the meeting with pre-prepared information as to the services their agencies can provide the client and how they can work co-operatively with other participating agencies in the provision of a resettlement and care plan. The referring agency will, following consultation, inform the client of the agreed care plan and obtain their agreement to put it into action.

The Housing Needs Manager will also make decisions about the correct banding for the member discussed by panel and can also make decisions about referrals to specialist housing providers with whom the Council may not have a nomination agreement. In particular the Panel is able to approve the assessment of members as having an overriding medical priority that would place them immediately in Band A. Other decisions about the suitability of properties, the requirement for adaptations and other special requirements can also be discussed and agreed at panel meetings.

### **Carrying out resettlement and care plans**

Once resettlement and care plans are agreed the agencies involved will agree an action plan which will include details of how the resettlement and care plan will be implemented, which agency is responsible for which action and which agency will take overall responsibility for co-coordinating and carrying out the resettlement and care plan. The action plan will include times by which action will need to be taken and the names of agency staff responsible for each action. All agencies involved in the action plan will liaise with the panel co-coordinator and keep him/her informed of how the resettlement and care plan is being implemented. The panel co-coordinator will ensure the action plan is reviewed at the next panel meeting and that the implementation of the plan is monitored.

### **Recording of decisions**

Decisions made about clients at the panel meeting will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting and will also be recorded on the client file kept at the co-ordinating agency. Agencies who are involved in the client's action plan are responsible for ensuring that their agency keeps up to date case files on the client.



## **6. THE BANDING STRUCTURE**

The four priority Bands are:

### **Amendment to Band A of The Housing Register and Nominations Policy with effect from 24 February 2011**

#### **Band A - Emergency/Top Priority**

- Homeless households owed the main duty by Horsham District Council placed in short term temporary accommodation. If the household subsequently moves into the Council's own temporary accommodation, they will be placed in band B of the Housing Register with effect from their temporary accommodation start date.
- overriding medical priority, which is confirmed locally only by the District Council's Assessment Panel (multi-agency) or the Independent Medical Advisor and where the current housing conditions have a major adverse effect on the medical condition of the member (or member of the household) so as to warrant 'emergency' priority, or where emergency re-housing is required in order to enable the applicant or a member of their household to give or receive care, or to access specialised medical treatment

- members living in RSL accommodation within Horsham District who are under-occupying family sized (family accommodation = general purpose 2 beds or more) accommodation and are requesting a move to a one bed or accommodation designated for those over the age of retirement or releasing disabled-adapted RSL accommodation in order to make best use of adapted stock, and where the current tenant does not require these adaptations
- transfers living in one of Horsham District Council's RSL development partner's accommodation within the Horsham District who are in need of a permanent or temporary decant where the property is imminently required for major repair or redevelopment by one of the Council's development partners
- priority transfer from RSL accommodation required (e.g. through an emergency, fear of violence or harassment) due to proven significant and/or insurmountable problems associated with the tenant's occupation
- severe need – exceptional circumstances and/or multiple needs, which warrant emergency priority – can be approved only by Head of Housing Services/ Housing Needs Manager
- where there is a duty to re-house and a Prohibition Order on the whole of the house or a Demolition Order has been issued as conditions present a serious threat to health or safety but where remedial action is considered unreasonable or impractical for cost or other reasons
- where a property is deemed to be statutorily overcrowded as assessed by an Officer from the Public Health and Licensing Department in accordance with the Housing Act 1985 or is determined to be a Category 1 hazard in accordance with the Housing Health and Safety Rating System. Mobile homes fall outside of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System but the Public Health and Licensing Department may assess that the unit would have fallen within the assessment had it been a permanent structure. This assessment will only apply where the unit has not been deliberately overcrowded or taken on in an already unfit condition

### **Band B (B Plus) - Urgent Need to Move**

**Where the applicant fulfils two or more of the following criteria they will be placed in BPlus of the Band. Those meeting only one of the criteria will be placed in B.**

- very High/ High medical priority for re-housing relating directly to the suitability of the member's current accommodation or where urgent re-housing is required in order to enable the applicant or a member of their household to give or receive care, or to access specialised medical treatment within the Horsham District
- homeless households owed the main re-housing duty by Horsham District Council (HDC) placed in bed & breakfast or temporary accommodation or who when owed the main re-housing duty accepted an AST under a qualifying offer and have completed the first six months of the tenancy
- homeless households owed the main re-housing duty accommodated under

licence/tenancy in hostels or refuges within the Horsham District but not placed there by Horsham District Council will fall within Band B when they fulfil the Local Connection criteria (see Appendix E)

- where, in the case of an Assured or Assured Shorthold Tenant with a bedroom deficiency, there has been a change of circumstances since the tenancy was taken on which renders the accommodation unsuitable on welfare, spatial or social grounds. Where failure to meet that need would result in difficulty in everyday living and would result in hardship either to themselves or others.
- homeless households owed the main re-housing duty by Horsham District Council but who are making their own temporary arrangements for accommodation. This relates to a member with a local connection who has been accepted by Horsham District Council as homeless, eligible for assistance, in priority need and not intentionally homeless but has chosen not to take up the District Council's offer of temporary accommodation. Any accommodation taken in this way must be reasonable to occupy and not fall within the category of 'Unsatisfactory Housing Conditions' or 'Overcrowding' (see pages 12 and 13) and there should be a reasonable expectation that will be available for a minimum of four months. Help is available in accessing private sector accommodation through the Council's Rent Deposit Scheme (separate booklet available upon request)
- where occupying the property poses a serious and imminent risk to the health or safety of the household i.e. the conditions at the property are such that it falls in to Hazard Band A of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System. Mobile homes fall outside of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System but the Public Health and Licensing Department may assess that the unit would have fallen within the assessment had it been a permanent structure. This assessment will only apply where the unit has not been deliberately overcrowded or taken on in an already unfit condition
- households with a confirmed pregnancy or dependant children sharing kitchen, bathroom, toilet and living room with others not included on their application for housing
- lacking two or more bedrooms as assessed by an Officer from the Public Health and Licensing Department
- members registered as regularly rough sleeping with an appropriate agency and/or charity but not otherwise assessed as being in priority need for housing within the definition of the homelessness legislation
- members urgently requiring **move-on** from supported housing as part of an agreed care plan that has been discussed and approved through either the Council's multi-agency assessment/young person's panels or through existing signed agreements with providers. To qualify for this banding homeseekers from the Horsham 'Y' Centre must also have been placed in the 'Y' through the Young Person's Panel
- members assessed as requiring support under the Independent Living Scheme and accepted onto the waiting list for nomination to one of Southdown Housing

Association ILS tenancies

- where in the case of a one bedroom Housing Association flat a baby has been born since the tenancy was taken on and that child is now over one year of age and still sharing the bedroom with parent/s
- releasing RSL accommodation within the Horsham District to assist with a local lettings policy or in order to make best use of limited stock within the district but where the current tenant's housing priority would only place them in Band C.

### **Band C (C Plus) - Identified Housing Need**

**Where the applicant fulfils two or more of the following criteria they will be placed in CPlus of the Band. Those meeting only one of the criteria will be placed in C.**

- homeless household who when owed the main re-housing duty by Horsham District Council accepted an AST under a Qualifying Offer and is within the first six months of the fixed term of the tenancy
- homeless household found unintentionally homeless but not in priority need who meet the local connection criteria (as defined fully at Appendix E)
- medium/ Low medical priority for re-housing relating directly to the suitability of the member's current accommodation or where re-housing is required in order to enable the applicant or a member of their household to give or receive care, or to access specialised medical treatment within the Horsham District.
- where occupying the property poses a medium risk to the health or safety of the household i.e. the conditions at the property are such that it falls in to Hazard Bands B or C of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System. Mobile homes fall outside of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System but the Public Health and Licensing Department may assess that the unit would have fallen within the assessment had it been a permanent structure. This assessment will only apply where the unit has not been deliberately overcrowded or taken on in an already unfit condition.
- lacking one bedroom assessed according to the minimum provisions indicated in the guide on page 14
- members who have been given valid notice to leave their present accommodation
- members with a need to move for welfare, spatial or social reasons where failure to meet that need would result in difficulty in everyday living and hardship either to themselves or others.

### **Band D - Desire To Move**

- RSL tenants and new home seekers with either low or no other assessed housing need
- New home seekers and transfers currently living out of the HDC area or not yet meeting the local connection criteria. New home seekers accommodated under licence/tenancy in hostels or refuges within the District (but not placed there by Horsham District Council) will fall within this category as will homeless households found unintentionally homeless but not in priority need who do not meet the local connection criteria.

- New home seekers living in our area in specialist/supported housing or education but funded by agencies from another authority e.g. social services

### **Band X - Mutual Exchange**

- All RSL tenants living within the Horsham district who wish to swap their home with a tenant either from the same or another housing association within the district

### **Exceptions - balancing and creating sustainable communities**

In areas of the District where there are particular concentrations of deprivation or vulnerable households with support needs, Horsham District Council will consider giving preference for vacant properties to specific groups, including those assessed as having only a limited or low housing need. Through this process the Council and its partnership RSLs seek to help build balanced, sustainable communities and to ensure a mix of residents e.g age and employment..

The Government, from time-to-time, also places an emphasis on the provision of key-worker housing and has made specific funding available for schemes to develop low cost home ownership and affordable rented housing for this group. These properties will be made available to members who are registered in Bands A to D and who meet the qualifying criteria.

The national and regional housing agendas are particularly encouraging new housing schemes to feature a mixed population. Where the Council has the opportunity to nominate members to new schemes, the council will consider the needs of people in all Bands A to D to ensure new developments have a mix of residents. In order to achieve this an agreed Local Lettings Plan may be established with the partner Registered Social Landlord prior to allocation. Further information on the agreed process for fixing a local lettings plan prior to advertising is shown at Appendix D.

### **Re-assessing need and priority dates**

If a member's circumstances change they may be moved up or down a band at any time depending on their newly assessed need for housing.

Members must inform Housing Services at Horsham District Council immediately their circumstances change and may be required to complete a new housing application form and provide all the necessary evidence to support the change. If any change in circumstances results in a band change Housing Services will write to inform the member of the new band and their new priority date if applicable.

**The principle of the scheme is that no one should overtake existing members within a band.**

## Moving up a Band

If a member moves up a Band, then their priority date will become the date they entered that higher Band.

## Moving down a Band

If a member moves down a Band, then their priority date will revert to the date that applied when the member was previously in that Band, or any earlier date in a higher Band.

## Severe Multiple Needs

Where it has been assessed by the Council's multi-agency assessment panel that a housing member has severe multiple needs which warrant emergency priority, then the Housing Options Manager may authorize immediate placement in Band A.



## 7. NOMINATIONS TO EMPTY PROPERTIES

The Council's primary aim is to make best use of social and affordable housing within the District to meet housing need. A number of factors are taken into account in order to achieve this.

### How long will members wait?

This is the most difficult question of all. The Council tries to ensure that all groups receive a fair proportion of nominations. Housing resources are extremely limited and there are many applicants on The Housing Register to be considered for each vacancy.

### Can a member choose where they want to live?

Horsham District Council is keen to offer applicants as much choice as possible. As such, at the time of application, a member will be able to choose the areas in which they want to be housed. This choice can be between 1 and 33 areas, **where properties are available**. Although the Council will try to offer suitable accommodation in one of the members areas of choice, this may not always be possible and a member may be contacted with a view to expanding areas of choice.

### Can a member take their pets?

Not necessarily, please be aware that many RSLs have a no pets policy or, only by special agreement, particularly for dogs and cats. The rules vary between Housing Associations and are more likely to apply to flats. Working dogs, e.g. guide, hearing and for the deaf, will be given special consideration.

### Introductory Tenancy

Some RSLs may initially offer a successful nominee a twelve-month introductory tenancy for their new home. Further information on starter tenancies can be obtained from the relevant RSL.

Ensuring properties are let quickly

It is important for RSL's to minimise any rent losses (the cost of leaving a property empty for a period of time during which they do not receive any rent payments). Members must be able to take up an offer of accommodation quickly. If the RSL is unable to contact a member for whatever reason at the point of offering or a member is unable to move within a reasonable time after being made an offer a member may be passed over for nomination by the RSL but the Council may deem this to have been a reasonable offer.



## 8. THE NOMINATION PROCESS

As the Council no longer owns accommodation it is reliant on properties being offered to for nomination by partner housing organisations. Nominations are made by the Head of Housing Services or the Housing Needs Manager to Registered Social Landlords (also known as Housing Associations). If a members application is put forward for a suitable vacancy the Council will write to the member. The Registered Social Landlord will then contact the member and may arrange to visit and/or complete an additional information form.

It should be noted that the RSL has the right to refuse a nomination where they believe a prospective tenant would cause management problems. RSLs will ask for information about the conduct of previous tenancies and rent payment records.

If the Registered Social Landlord is able to make an offer of accommodation they will provide the member with full details and make arrangements for the member to view the property.

If the member is an existing tenant of a landlord, they may need to give their landlord a certain amount of notice before moving and they will also need to leave their existing property in a lettable condition for the next tenant. It is very important that the member notify their current landlord of any intention to move.



## 9. REFUSING AN OFFER OF A PROPERTY

### Refusals following Nominations

In view of the fact that housing resources are so limited and because demand greatly exceeds the available supply, the Council Housing Options Team will make one reasonable offer that as far as possible matches the size and type of property the member is eligible for. The member must give their reasons for refusing and has the right to request a review of the suitability of an offer. The property will not be held empty while the refusal is reviewed but will be let to another member.

A reasonable offer of accommodation is one that is suitable for the needs of the household in terms of size and type and in one of the areas specified for consideration (provided areas are chosen where accommodation is available).

If a member of the Housing Register refuses a reasonable offer for the first time, their application will remain on the Housing Register and subject to the availability of accommodation will receive a second offer. After this, should a member refuse the second

offer of housing their application will be cancelled on the Housing Register. A member may reapply to join the Housing Register 12 months following cancellation.

Any member thinking of refusing an offer of accommodation should discuss it with their Housing Options Officer first so that they are fully aware of the consequences of refusal. If a member has been accepted for accommodation as a homeless household under the Housing Act 1996 - Part VII (as amended) and has been made a reasonable offer of suitable housing and is not satisfied with the offer of accommodation the member can refuse it. However this means the Council will have discharged its duty, subject to a statutory right of appeal. The members application will remain on the Housing Register and subject to the availability of accommodation will receive a second offer but if they have been occupying accommodation in temporary housing they will have to leave it.

An appeal can be made in writing to the Head of Housing Services. It will be helpful submit supplementary information to support the refusal.



## 10. RECORDS OF LET PROPERTIES

Horsham District Council will keep records and statistics on all properties allocated through the nomination process.



## 11. PLANNING POLICY EXCEPTION SITES

In largely rural districts such as Horsham, a number of affordable homes are built on local planning policy exception sites. These are locations where an exception has been made to normal planning policy to allow the building of new affordable homes exclusively for **local** people. These properties thereafter remain available only for people who are able to claim a strong **local** connection with the parish (or immediately neighbouring parishes) in which the property is located in preference to any other homeseekers. For properties which are subject to this criteria, the Registered Social Landlord will initially only consider nominees who are able to **prove their local connection** with the specific parish.

A checklist indicating what elements constitute a local connection with a parish is shown at Appendix E. If no suitable homeseeker meets this criteria the RSL will then be free to consider any nominees with a local connection to the neighbouring parishes. Only thereafter, if no suitable homeseekers are listed are they able to consider other nominees according to their needs. If there are no members with the relevant local connection for a property on a local planning policy exception site then the RSL will be free to consider any other homeseekers according to their need.



## 12. APPEALS AND REVIEWS

This section sets out the procedure for reviewing or appealing the following:-

1. a decision not to put someone on the Housing Register or to remove someone from the Housing Register other than at his or her request
2. a decision that a member is ineligible for a nomination
3. a decision about the maximum number of bedrooms that a member can be considered for where they have shared childcare arrangements in place

4. other decisions relating to the Housing Register and Nomination Policy, including banding, and priority dates
5. refusal of an offer of accommodation

A District Council manager, senior to the officer making the original decision and who was not involved in making the decision will carry out these reviews.

### **Procedure**

- a request for a review to the Council must be made within 21 days from the date of the letter which the member is notified of Housing Services decision and the reasons for it. The council has discretion to extend the time limit if it considers that there are good reasons for doing so.
- the officer carrying out the review will carry out an investigation, and, if further information is needed, invite the member to write or if unable to do this, make oral representation. The member may also appoint someone to do this on his or her behalf.
- if the reviewing officer finds that the officer who took the decision did not take relevant information into account, they will refer the file back to that officer for re-consideration
- the officer will notify the member of their decision within eight weeks of the request for a review. There is no right to request a review of the decision unless the member's circumstances change

### **Appendix A - Eligibility (Persons from abroad)**

The following provides information to a person's eligibility to join the list, taking into account nationality and immigration status:-

1. Persons who are British Nationals and who are 'habitually resident' in the Common Travel Area (CTA). The CTA includes the UK, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, and the Republic of Ireland. Those persons arriving from abroad must establish habitual residence even if born in the CTA.  
NB. You will need to demonstrate that you are habitually resident in the CTA. If you came to live in the UK in the last 2 years the Council will have to make enquiries to decide if you are habitually resident, or can be treated as such.
2. Applicants from abroad who are nationals of a country within the EEA (European Economic Area) fall within two broad categories:

## Category A

- applicants whose only right to reside in the CTA (Common Travel Area) derives from EC Directive 90/364 or 90/365 will be ineligible (this group covers persons who are not economically active but also, by virtue of the Accession Regulations, includes nationals from A8 States plus nationals from Romania and Bulgaria who acceded to the European Union on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007. who are looking for work. It does not include EEA nationals who retired from work or self-employment in the UK) and
- all other applicants will be ineligible if they are not habitually resident in the CTA (and a person cannot be treated as habitually resident if they have no right to reside in the CTA). This group includes work-seekers from EEA States other than the A8 States and students.

## Category B

- applicants who are exempt from the requirement to be habitually resident in the CTA and are therefore eligible for housing eg, nationals of member States who are employed, or self employed in the UK.

NOTE. The EEA includes all states of the European Union plus Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein. The A8 States are Poland, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Hungary, Czech Republic. Nationals from these countries, with certain exceptions, will be required to register with the Home Office if they wish to work in the UK during the transitional period of Accession Regulations 2004. While looking for work their right to reside will be conditional on them being self-sufficient and not imposing an unreasonable burden on the UK social assistance system. These conditions would cease to apply once they have worked in the UK continuously for 12 months. A8 workers will have the same right to equal treatment as other EEA workers while they are working.

Romania and Bulgaria acceded to the European Union on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007 and nationals from these countries are required to hold an accession work card or a seasonal agricultural workers scheme (SAWS) work card or a registration document confirming the individual has unrestricted access to the labour market or is self-employed.

Generally, persons subject to immigration control are not eligible. However the Secretary of State has made the following classes of people who are eligible:

1. Persons granted refugee status (where the request for asylum has been granted).
2. Persons with exceptional leave (ELR) to enter or remain in the UK granted prior to 1 April 2003 or from that date humanitarian protection or discretionary leave. This will be either someone who has failed in their request for asylum but nonetheless has been given permission to remain, or someone granted permission to remain for compelling, compassionate circumstances. However sometimes ELR/humanitarian protection/discretionary leave is granted on condition that the applicant shall not have recourse to public funds (this includes housing).

3. Persons granted indefinite leave to enter or remain (ILR). This is someone who has permission to remain in the UK for an indefinite period and who is regarded as having settled status. In order to be eligible the applicant will still have to be able to establish habitual residence. If ILR was obtained through sponsorship 5 years must have elapsed since the person's arrival in the UK or the date of the sponsorship undertaking (whichever is later) unless the sponsor dies within the first 5 years.
4. Persons subject to immigration control who are nationals of a country that has ratified the European Convention on Social and Medical Assistance (ECSMA) or the European Social Charter (ESC), provided they are habitually resident in the CTA and are lawfully present in the UK.

NB. Countries that have ratified the ECSMA include all countries of the EU, except Austria and Finland, plus Iceland, Norway and Turkey. Countries that have ratified the ESC include all EU countries plus Iceland, Norway and Turkey.

## **Appendix B - Unacceptable and/or anti-social behaviour**

Where the District Council is satisfied that an applicant to join the Housing Register (or a member of the applicant's household) has a history of unacceptable and/or anti-social behaviour and the applicant is therefore considered unsuitable to be a tenant, the District Council may then decide to treat the member as ineligible for membership of the register.

The behaviour which can be regarded as unacceptable and/or anti-social for these purposes is behaviour by the applicant or by a member of the applicant's household that would – if the applicant had been a secure tenant of the Council at the time – have entitled the Council to a possession order under section 84 of the Housing Act 1985 in relation to any of the grounds in Part 1 of Schedule 2, other than Ground 8. These are fault grounds and include behaviour such as:

- evidence of previous conduct in RSL (Registered Social Landlord) or LA (Local Authority) accommodation which either did or would have been likely to have caused nuisance or annoyance to other people
- evidence of previous use of an RSL or LA property for immoral or illegal purposes
- evidence of substantial outstanding former tenant arrears having accrued whilst previously a tenant of RSL or LA accommodation
- people who have supplied false or misleading information on their application for membership or have failed to supply information that could have affected the eligibility of the application
- information obtained that any member of the household who, in the previous two years, has been convicted of or has had any order made against them in connection with anti-social behaviour, violence, race harassment, threatening behaviour or other harassment
- evidence of any physical or verbal abuse towards officers working for Horsham District Council, our Housing Association partners, contractors or agents

- people evicted from their Council or RSL home for breaches of tenancy or obtaining a home by deception
- where a property interest has been lost or transferred due to relationship breakdown due to Domestic Violence or where there has been a prosecution and conviction for Domestic Violence

It is not necessary for the applicant to have actually been a tenant of Horsham District Council when the unacceptable and/or anti-social behaviour occurred. The test is whether the behaviour would have entitled the Council or RSL to a possession order if, whether actually or notionally, the applicant had been a secure tenant.

Where Horsham District Council has reason to believe that an applicant (or a member of the applicant's household) may be ineligible for inclusion on the Housing Register (for up to two years) on the basis of unacceptable behaviour, it will take the following steps:-

- the District Council (taking responsibility for the assessment of all applications for housing) will satisfy itself that there has been unacceptable behaviour which falls within the definition in section 160A (8) of the Housing Act 1996. In considering whether a possession order would be granted in the circumstances of a particular case, the Council will consider whether, having established the grounds, the court would decide that it was reasonable to grant a possession order. It has been established in case law that, when the court is deliberating, "reasonable" means having regard to the interests of the parties and also having regard to the interests of the public. So, in deciding whether it would be entitled to an order the Council will consider these interests, and this will include all the circumstances of the applicant and the applicant's household. In practice, courts are unlikely to grant possession orders in cases which have not been properly considered and are not supported by thorough and convincing evidence. It is acknowledged that in cases involving noise problems, domestic violence, racial harassment, intimidation and drug dealing, courts are likely to grant a possession order. Rent arrears would probably lead to a possession order, although in many cases it will be suspended giving the tenant the opportunity to pay the arrears. In taking a view on whether it would be entitled to a possession order, the Council will consider fully all the factors that a court would take into account in determining whether it was reasonable for an order to be granted. In the Secretary of State's view, a decision reached on the basis of established case law would be reasonable.
- having concluded that there would be an entitlement to an order, the Council will satisfy itself that the behaviour is serious enough to make the person unsuitable to be a tenant of the Council. For example, the Council will need to be satisfied that, if a possession order were granted, it would not be suspended by the court. Behaviour such as the accrual of rent arrears which have resulted from factors outside the member's control – for example, delays in housing benefit payments; or liability for a partner's debts, where the member was not in control of the household's finances or was unaware that arrears were accruing – would not be considered serious enough to make the person unsuitable to be a tenant
- the Council will satisfy itself that the applicant (or a member of the applicant's household) is unsuitable to be a tenant for up to two years by reason of the

behaviour in question – in the circumstances at the time the application is considered. Previous unacceptable behaviour may not justify a decision to consider the applicant (or a member of the applicant's household) as unsuitable to be a tenant for up to two years where that behaviour can be shown to have improved

In reaching a decision on whether or not to treat an applicant (or a member of the applicant's household) as ineligible for a period not exceeding two years, the District Council will act reasonably, and will consider all the relevant facts before it. This will include all the circumstances relevant to the particular applicant (or a member of the applicant's household), whether health, dependants or other factors. In practice, the matters before the Council will normally mean the information provided with the application. Where there are relevant agencies providing support to the applicant, advice and information will be sought (with the applicant's permission) prior to making a decision on whether to exclude or remove preference from the application. Information will be sought concerning the applicant's current circumstances and any relevant actions that have taken place since the incidents in question.

If an applicant (or a member of the applicant's household), who has, in the past, been deemed by the District Council to be ineligible, considers that the unacceptable behaviour should no longer be held against the applicant as a result of changed circumstances, the applicant can make a fresh application for membership after six months. Unless there has been a considerable lapse of time it will be for the applicant to show that the applicant's circumstances or behaviour have changed (evidence to support this change of circumstance must be provided).

Where the Council in assessing the application has reason to believe that an applicant's unacceptable behaviour is due to a physical, mental or learning disability, it will not exclude that person from membership of the Housing Register without first considering whether the applicant would be able to maintain a tenancy with appropriate care and support. In considering the applicant's case, the Council will consult with relevant agencies, including Social Services, health professionals, and providers of suitable housing, care and housing related support services.

If you have any doubt about your eligibility please contact the Housing Options Team who will advise you. Tel: 01403 215560.

## **Appendix C - Checklist - Proof of Identity**

### **Proof of Identity**

Applicants for the Housing Register are required to provide proof of identity and accepted members of the Housing Register who are invited to view a property by a Registered Social Landlord may be required to bring proof of their identification, their eligibility for housing and proof of their local connection with them for the RSL at the viewing.

Unless you have a current application on the Council's Housing Register you must be able to produce two of the following documents for each **adult member** of your household and a **birth certificate for each child**. They must be original documents.

**We need at least two of the following:**

Passport  
Driving Licence (full or provisional)  
Birth Certificate/Adoption Certificates

If you are not a British/UK citizen, you will also need to be able to produce all your immigration papers, e.g. UK residence permit, Home Office Standard Acknowledgement Letter (SAL 1 or 2) and any other correspondence from the Home Office.

If you are an EU national (other than from the UK) we will also need to see your national ID card.

All documents must be up to date.

Other documentation required:-

1. Proof of Residence (any two of the following)

- Household Bill (gas, electricity, Council Tax etc)
- Tenancy or Licence Agreement
- Benefits Agency document (Aware Letter/payment book)
- Driving Licence
- Bank/Credit Card/Mail Order Account statement

2. Proof of National Insurance Number (One of the following)

- National Insurance Card
- Pay Advice
- Income Tax Statement

3. Proof of pregnancy/Responsibility for children

- EDC certificate or GP letter giving date of confinement
- Residence Order or Child Benefit Award letter or Payment Book
- Confirmation of arrangements from Solicitor or other parent/Guardian

4. Proof of Current Tenancy (Any one of the following for each applicant)

- Tenancy or Licence Agreement
- Rent Book
- Letter from your Landlord

5. Proof of Sale of Property

- Completion Statement
- Letter of Confirmation from Solicitor/Mortgage Lender

6. Proof of Income/Savings/Equity

- Recent payslips
- Bank/Building Society Statements
- Benefit Award Letters
- Estate Agent Valuation

If you are unable to produce the relevant documents it will not be possible to process your application and it will be returned to you with a letter indicating the information required.

**The RSL may also need to see proof of your income (payslip, P60, etc) and of any benefits that you receive (entitlement letter, benefit payment books).**

If you cannot produce originals of any of these documents or have any further questions with regarding to proving your identity please contact Housing Services on 01403 215204 or fax us on 01403 215243. Alternatively you can email us at [housing@horsham.gov.uk](mailto:housing@horsham.gov.uk)

## **Appendix D Local Lettings Policy**

### **Introduction**

Local letting policies have an important role to play in widening housing opportunities for **local** people and ensuring that good housing contributes to district wide regeneration and renewal.

The national and regional housing agendas are also encouraging housing schemes to be of a mixed tenure, catering for a range of households with varying needs and aspirations. Where there are such needs within Horsham District specific properties may be open to households that would not otherwise have the opportunity to access affordable housing. Eligible members of the housing register who meet the criteria will be considered as a priority for re-housing above those who do not. This is to ensure that these new housing developments cater for a variety of residents as opposed to concentrations of households with similar needs.

In areas of the district where there are concentrations of deprivation or vulnerable households with support needs, there may be instances where the Council will offer housing specifically to working households or those with a lower assessed housing need, or who can demonstrate a specific need that could be addressed by the locality. Through this process, lettings can contribute toward balanced, sustainable communities, with a positive impact on education, by influencing school populations, on local businesses and on health and by balancing the demand for services with local provision.

These policies will be carefully considered to ensure that, in correcting an imbalance in one area, they do not create another.

### **Meeting Affordable Housing Needs in Smaller Settlements**

A Local Lettings Policy can also be used specifically in rural areas where local people already contribute to a balanced community, but who may otherwise be forced to move away due to a lack of affordable housing. Horsham District Council in partnership with the Registered Social Landlords should support the particular needs of local people and enable them either to stay in their locality or to return to a locality with which they have a strong connection. These local policies will aim to widen housing choices for local people specifically in rural areas.

The Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy which was adopted by the Council in February 2007 specifically highlights the need to meet **local** affordable housing need. The policy stipulates that on residential developments of 15 dwellings or more (or on sites 0.5 hectares and above) an appropriate proportion of affordable homes should

be included with the target being 40% of all total homes on the site. In settlements with a population of less than 3,000 permission will only be granted for schemes providing 100% affordable housing unless it is demonstrated that market housing is required for the retention and enhancement of community facilities or services. In such circumstances the target of 40% provision of affordable housing will apply to developments of 5 dwellings or more on sites of 0.16 hectare and above. (see Appendix E)

## **Method**

Local Lettings Policies may be agreed for the letting of any individual property within the District, or in most cases for a larger number of new let properties within a scheme in most cases. The policy will apply only until the property is subsequently let and does not create a long lasting or binding policy in relation to that property.

Prior to requesting a nomination for the property, the RSL will contact the Housing Options Manager at the District Council by letter or email to advise that they wish to create a local lettings policy in relation to this specific allocation.

The letter or email will indicate the particular preferences or restrictions that the RSL wishes to apply with regard to the property, such as:

- the property/scheme will be most suitable for older persons
- the property/scheme will be most suitable for families without young children
- the property scheme will be most suitable for individuals without support needs

The RSL must also provide the Housing Options Manager with a rationale for the proposed Local Lettings Policy, providing evidence to support the need to impose the proposed restrictions. This might include the following examples:

- the locality has a high number of households in existing social housing who are under-occupying and that allocations to smaller units would enable the release of much needed family size accommodation for local people
- the immediate locality already has a high concentration of elderly people and it is felt that introducing younger families into the vicinity may create housing management problems in the future
- the property is not well suited or designed for prospective tenants with young children (the property has steep stairs, is in an area with few services or has poor transport links)
- the locality already has high concentrations of individuals with high support needs and a greater balance is required

Each request will be considered on its merits by the Housing Options Manager who may wish to discuss the request further with the RSL or other stakeholders (e.g. Social and Caring Services) .

Eligible members of the Housing Register will then be prioritised according to the usual process; firstly by Band, secondly by local connection, thirdly by priority date within the band and finally by a random selection if required. Further information on the selection process is shown in section 6.

## 17. Appendix E - Local Connection - definition

In Horsham District Local connection can be defined in two ways. These are:

- **Local Connection to Horsham District**
- **Local Connection to a particular parish within the district.**

### Proving a local connection to Horsham District

The District Council will only accept that an applicant has a local connection to **Horsham District** if you currently live within Horsham District and are able to **prove** that any one of the following statements apply to at least one adult applicant member:

- currently permanently reside within the Horsham District and have done so without break for the preceding six months. Placement in specialist/supported housing or education, where it is funded by agencies from another authority, e.g. social services, does not meet this criteria
- have resided within Horsham District for three out of the last five years
- an immediate member of the family has resided permanently within the Horsham District for three of the last five years without a break. Immediate family members are defined exclusively as either the mother, father, brother, sister or adult children of an applicant member
- an applicant member has employment within the district. Although your employment need not be paid you must be able to prove that you perform genuine work which is carried out predominantly within the Horsham District boundaries
- there are special circumstances (e.g. the need for at least one member of the household to reside near to special medical or support services which are **only** available in the district)

### Proving a local connection to a particular parish

A number of RSL properties within the Horsham District are subject to a planning agreement made under section 106 Town and Country Planning Act 1980 (as amended). This means that the RSL which is seeking a new tenant for these properties is restricted to only considering those members who have a proven local connection to the specific parish in which the property is located, or in some circumstances the immediately neighbouring parishes.

Horsham District Council consider members to have a local connection to a parish if they are able to **prove** that at least one of the following statements apply to at least one adult applicant member:

- current residence within the parish for at least three of the last five years
- previous residence within the parish for a period of at least five years but have been forced to move away because of the lack of affordable housing accommodation in the parish
- a need to return to the parish to provide support for elderly parents or a need to be near a close relative for support
- permanent employment within the parish in a manner which provides services which are important or relevant to the local community
- at least one of the applicant members is a member of the family of an existing living resident of the parish (as defined in section 186 of the Housing Act 1985)

In some cases it may be that there are no Homeseekers or Transfers with an eligible member of the Housing Register who is able to prove that they have a local connection with the parish. In those circumstances consideration will be given to members of the Housing Register with a proven local connection to the parishes that immediately neighbour the parish in which the property is located. If there are no eligible members of the Housing Register who meet this criteria consideration will be given to those applicants with a proven local connection to Horsham District (as defined above).

## 18. Appendix F - Low Cost Home Ownership Schemes

From 1 April 2005 all low cost home ownership schemes are called HomeBuy. Under these new arrangements the Government has appointed Moat, a Kent based housing association as HomeBuy Agent. This means that Moat will be responsible for the one-stop-shop arrangements previously carried out by Horsham District Council.

Moat as HomeBuy Agent will be responsible for:-

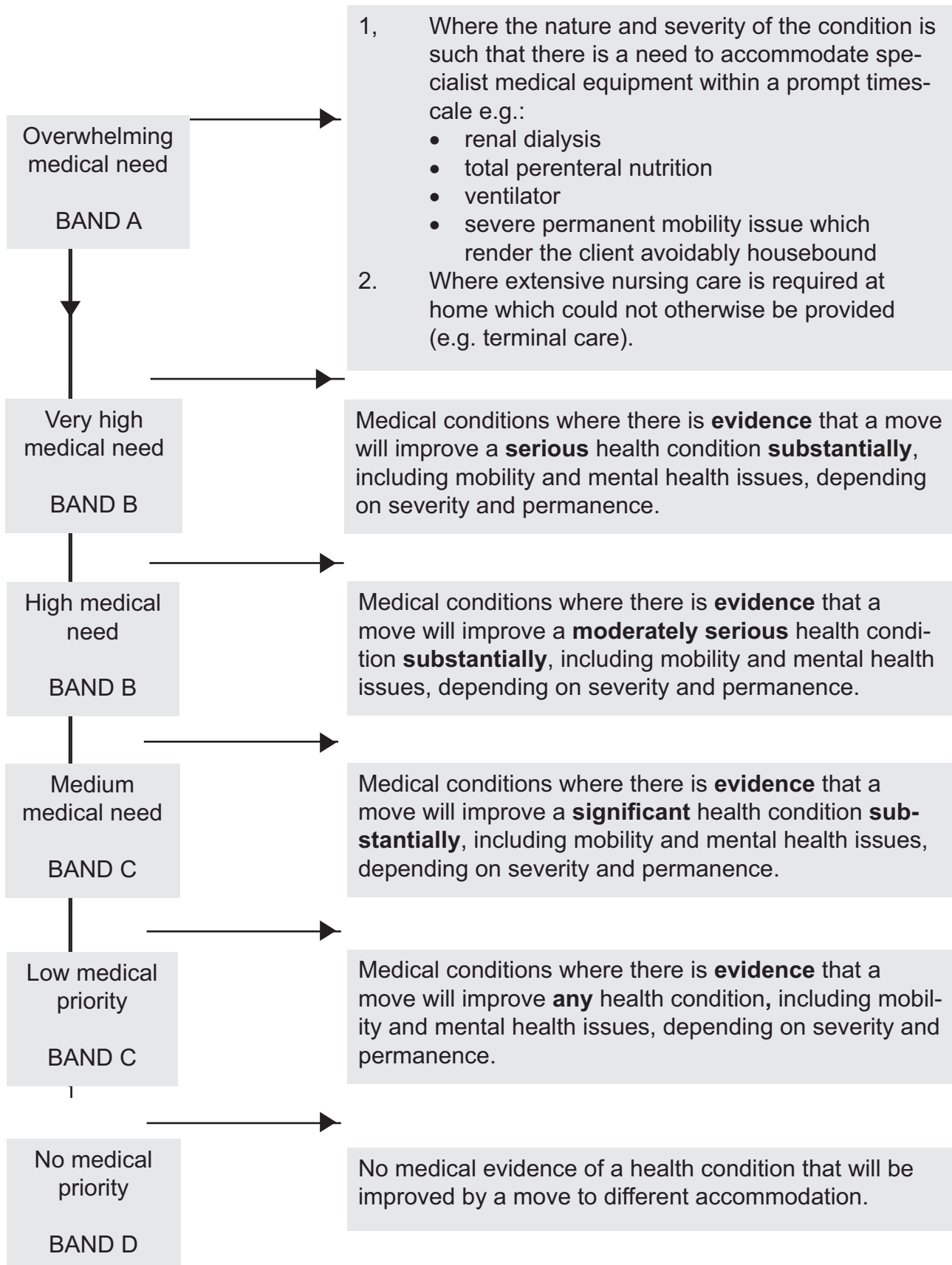
- holding a local waiting list for all applicants for Government supported Low Cost Home Ownership schemes (LCHO)
- processing all applications for LCHO schemes using a single standard application form. An application form can be obtained from the Council offices or from the HomeBuy Agent direct
- assessing eligibility
- providing applicants with LCHO information on properties in their area

Contact details:-

Telephone 07002 662848. E.mail [marketing@moat.co.uk](mailto:marketing@moat.co.uk) Website: [www.homebuy.co.uk](http://www.homebuy.co.uk)

## 19. Appendix G - Medical needs flowchart

### Medical Assessment Flowchart



## 20. Appendix H - Mobility Needs Rating - property assessment guidelines

### GUIDELINES FOR IDENTIFYING MOBILITY PROPERTIES SUITABLE FOR PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY ISSUES

#### Locality

When viewing a property consider what the local environment has to offer:-

- level entry into venues
- parking: on/off road
- provision of dropped kerbs
- public transport: vicinity of bus stops
- accessibility of amenities: GP/Health Centre, shops, schools, libraries, community centres

#### a. Suitable for someone who needs a wheelchair indoors/ outdoors.

These include:

- properties purpose built to a wheelchair standard
- properties substantially adapted for wheelchair use including bespoke adaptations these may be bungalows, flats or, in some cases, houses

#### External access:

- level pathway/driveway from pavement level or ramp with minimum gradient 1:15
- level platform minimum 1200mm x 1200mm at main entrance
- main/communal door minimum 840mm
- level threshold or maximum 15mm upstand

#### Internal access:

Level throughout or where there is lift access:

- 2 lifts to each floor
- maximum location no higher than 3<sup>rd</sup> floor
- minimum 1500mm x 1500mm clear landing in front of lift doors
- minimum door opening width 840mm clear
- hallways/lobbies minimum 900mm wide, not reduced by fixed objects i.e. radiators
- all doors to principal rooms i.e. bathroom, bedroom, kitchen and lounge minimum 840mm clear opening width
- bathroom containing toilet, basin bath/shower to allow wheelchair turning circle minimum 1500mm
- separate WC to be wheelchair accessible

Houses:

- no change of level on each floor
- continuous flight of stairs minimum clear width 800mm
- wheelchair accessible toilet on both floors

**b. Suitable for someone who needs a wheelchair for outdoors and cannot manage steps/gradients.**

Properties suitable for this category will generally be those that have been substantially adapted rather than purpose built. Where structurally possible the essential requirements of design will try to have been met, however there may be some construction/design variance that prevents this and this should become evident when viewing.

**c. Suitable for someone with poor mobility but who is able to manage 2-3 steps to access the property.**

One storey properties i.e. bungalows or flats:

- maximum 3 steps to access, no steep gradients
- property level throughout
- bathroom as Mobility Code 1 or the possibility to adapt
- lifetime homes

Houses:

- ability to adapt

Maximum 3 steps to access, no steep gradients

## **21. Appendix I - Miscellaneous General Information**

### **Neighbouring Local Authority**

The following local authorities are members of Homemove a Choice Based Lettings Scheme:

Adur District Council	Hastings Borough Council
Arun District Council	Rother District Council
Brighton and Hove District Council	Wealden District Council
Chichester District Council	

Crawley Borough Council operates its own Choice Based Lettings Scheme.

Vacant properties in these areas are advertised in one of two free fortnightly magazines that cover either the west or east part of Sussex and all available properties are advertised on the internet. Please contact the relevant Council for further information on Homemove or the website [www.homemove.org.uk](http://www.homemove.org.uk).

### **Tenancy Deposit Scheme**

This scheme provides help with the deposit for privately rented accommodation for eligible people in housing need on low incomes. This scheme is NOT designed to help you into emergency accommodation on the day you become homeless. You may receive help if you are aged 18 or over.

Funding is restricted and priority will be given to those households who have been or are likely to be assessed in priority need under Part VII of the 1996 Housing Act (as amended).

You will need to be on a low income with little or no savings or receiving benefit and unable to get this help from any other source. An assessment will take place on your ability to maintain a tenancy and you will be required to have a local connection or other valid reason for needing to be in the Horsham District e.g. employment in the area. Any money paid will be on a loan basis and you will be required to repay the amount back to the Council by monthly Standing Order.

A leaflet giving more detailed information is available from the Council Offices or if you wish to discuss this option with a Housing Options Officer please phone 01403 215560.

## Equality Impact Assessment

## Title: Horsham District Council - The Housing Register and Nominations Policy

GENERAL	
1	<p>Please provide a brief description of the function and/or related policy(ies) including its aims and objectives</p> <p>This policy details Horsham District Council's policy on admission to the Housing Register and the nomination of applicants for housing. It indicates the size and type of accommodation which can be offered and gives other useful information. The Policy is a requirement under Section 167 of the Housing Act 1996.</p> <p>Related policies / strategies include the Council's strategies for Housing and the Prevention of Homelessness, LDF Core Strategy, Anti-Social Behaviour Policy, Sustainable Community Strategy, Crime and Disorder Reduction, Older and Younger Persons Strategy.</p>
2	<p>Please list the main stakeholders/beneficiaries/recipients of the function, or the target group at whom the policy is aimed</p> <p>The main recipients of the function include:</p> <p>Homeseekers - Those seeking to join the Council's Housing Register for the first time as unable to enter the private sector due to high property / rent prices. Transfers - Those already housed by RSLs but seeking to move properties.</p> <p><u>Stakeholders</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Registered Social Landlords</li> <li>-Residents and members of the community seeking nomination to affordable housing</li> <li>-Private Developers, Landlords and Lettings Agents</li> <li>-Partner agencies involved in homelessness prevention: ie West Sussex Mediation Service, CAB, Local Crime and Disorder Partnership, Harm Reduction Action Group, Y Centre, Neighbouring Districts and Boroughs, West Sussex PCT, West Sussex Mental Health Trust, WSCC Social Services, WSCC Supporting People, Probation Service, Community Drug / Alcohol Teams</li> <li>-Neighbouring Local Authorities</li> <li>-County Courts</li> <li>-Horsham District Council internal departments - Community Development, Legal, Housing Services, Environmental Health, Property and Economic Development, Development Management, Strategic Planning, Reception</li> </ul>

<b>CONSULTATION</b>	
3	<p>Please list the minority ethnic groups/other target groups you have consulted with (or should consult ) and changes they recommend</p> <p>The following groups were consulted on the formulation of the policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Horsham Citizens Advice Bureau</li> <li>- Housing Register applicants</li> <li>- HDC legal Department</li> <li>- HDC Councillors</li> <li>- Signpost (Support Service)</li> <li>- Southern Housing Group</li> <li>- HDC Environmental Health Department</li> <li>- London and Quadrant Group</li> <li>- Shelter</li> <li>- Saxon Weald Housing Association</li> </ul> <p>The draft policy was also placed on the HDC web pages for public consultation.</p> <p>There is no direct representation from minority ethnic groups, due to an absence of organizations directly representing these groups in the District. It is anticipated however that that Housing Liaison forum representatives include ethnic minorities in their service provision</p> <p>WSCC Adult Services recognize a variety of organizations representing black and ethnic minority groups throughout the district (eg Islamic Social and Welfare Society, Asian Women’s Network and Black and Ethnic Minority Steering Group), although it is unclear which have representation within the Horsham District, with most operating in the Crawley Borough. Efforts could be made to contact these groups to gauge interest in forum membership and seek views on the policy.</p>
<b>DISCRIMINATION</b>	
4	<p>Please list any evidence or ideas you have of the function or policy having an adverse impact on different groups – might members of these groups perceive or experience things differently?</p>

	<p>The purpose of the Strategy is to address the needs of those without the means to access private sector accommodation. This specific concentration of resources may attract criticism from tenants and those in private sector accommodation that will not recognize benefit from the Policy</p> <p>The Policy is available on the Council’s website for consultation. The website is speech-enabled with 'Free to download' software. This assists those with reading difficulties, literacy problems, mild vision difficulties and where English is not their first language. The site provides free Browsealoud software with download instructions. Content on the website can also be read using its page magnifier function which assists the partially sighted. There is also an Access Key function, where short-cut keys direct users to the sites most popular pages – one of which is Council Services, where Housing pages can be accessed. This assists site visitors with learning disabilities or visual impairments. This site also contains a service to translate the contents into Dutch, French, Italian or Spanish, although there is a case for extending these options to non-European languages such as Arabic, Mandarin, Urdu etc.</p> <p>The Policy is therefore accessible on the website to some of those with disabilities, and those for whom English is not their first language. A page at the front of the Strategy offers services to provide document in Easy Read, Braille, BHSL and other languages.</p>
5	<p>Have you received any complaints about your function/policy from traditionally excluded groups? If so, please give a brief description</p> <p>Not aware of any complaints received, other than those concerning particular housing nomination decisions that are based on the Policy.</p>
6	<p>Please list any alternative ways the policy could improve access to or use of your service by different groups</p> <p>Make more widely available in hard copy, for example in public libraries, for the non-computer literate.</p>
<b>EQUALITY MONITORING</b>	
7	<p>Does the policy show how you carry out equality monitoring of take up of your function/policy and how the results are analysed</p> <p>Data is collected from all individuals presenting themselves as homeless and on the Housing Register, by way of ethnic monitoring, family circumstances etc. The Housing Options Assessment form (based on the Policy) includes an ethnic monitoring section. The Council annually monitors those housed, on the Housing Register and district Census data.</p>
8	<p>Does an analysis of your customer base against baseline population figures for the borough show that the policy enables you to reach all groups in your area? If not, which groups could be adversely affected by the policy?</p> <p>Whilst we lack detailed information on the size of disadvantaged groups in the District, the Policy is uploaded onto the Council’s website (with many functions allowing the Policy to be viewed and heard in different ways) and every effort has been made to include all groups in the area. Hard copies of the Policy are also available.</p>

<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>	
9	<p>If the policy pertains to services provided by a private sector or voluntary sector organisation on a contract basis, please list any arrangements you have made or plan to make to ensure that these comply with equality</p> <p>The Council's previous housing stock is now managed and maintained by Saxon Weald Homes Ltd. The July 2008 Audit Commission report on the Housing Association states:</p> <p>'The Association has a clear and comprehensive framework in place to support and deliver its diversity agenda. The equalities and diversity strategy is a key document that clearly sets out the challenges facing the Association and how it intends to address these. Disability and gender equality schemes have been introduced, with clear action plans and timeframes for progression. A diversity champion chairs the equalities and diversity working group and ensures that the Association is kept up to speed on diversity legislation and good practice. This structured approach ensures the Association keeps up to date with new diversity developments and helps it to mainstream diversity across the organisation.'</p> <p>No contracts with private sector or voluntary sector but service level agreements with CAB and Age Concern, and joint working with Southdown Support Service and 'Signpost'. CAB grant funded by HCD to provide debt advice/counselling service, which also collects data on ethnicity and disability.</p>
10	<p>Please list any staff training issues on equality arising from this assessment, (include this in your improvement plan summary attached)</p> <p>Widespread training carried out via personnel to all levels of organisation during 2006/7.</p>
11	<p>Does your function or policy result in any financial support being given to black and minority ethnic or other equality groups within the voluntary and community sector. If yes, please list organisations and amounts</p> <p>Service level agreements and financial support are supplied to the following organisations that impact on homelessness:</p> <p>Horsham District Age Concern - £51,950  Horsham Area Community Voluntary Service - £17,310  Horsham Voluntary Bureaux - £7,500  Citizens Advice Bureaux – £82,636  IMPACT - £23,542  Horsham Y - £20,000  Relate - £4,330  Homestart - £4,120  Mediation - £3,090</p>

**Please fill in the Improvement Plan list for any actions you propose to take as a result of this**

# Horsham Area Zones

