

## **Housing Services**

Housing Options Team  
73 Low Pavement  
Chesterfield  
S40 1PB



E-Mail [Chesterfield.OnTheMove@chesterfield.gov.uk](mailto:Chesterfield.OnTheMove@chesterfield.gov.uk)

Please ask for Jayne Yates  
Direct Line 01246 345700

Our Ref  
Your Ref

August 2018

Dear applicant or tenant

### **Proposed changes to the Housing Allocations Policy**

Chesterfield Borough Council is in the process of joining the Home Options Partnership made up of Amber Valley Borough Council, Dales Housing, Derbyshire Dales District Council, East Midlands Housing, Erewash Borough Council, Futures Housing Group, High Peak Borough Council, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council and Your Housing Group.

It is proposed that Chesterfield Borough Council adopts the Home Options Allocations Policy. The allocations policy is similar for each partner but allows partners to include their own local differences.

The aim of the policy is to enable the council's Housing Options Team to improve how it allocates council properties to those in need, and to reduce the number of empty properties. Adopting the Home Options Allocation Policy will enable the council and our customers to benefit from:

- An on-line rehousing application
- Introduction of a simplified priority band system
- Ability to assess medical need using category groups
- Revision of residency requirement criteria
- Acceptance of out of borough applicants on to the housing register
- Introduction of an equity assessment

- Introduction of a time restriction on reapplying to the housing register after being rehoused
- Revision of property size (number of bedrooms) eligibility criteria
- Introduction of a pre-allocation financial assessment of affordability
- Revision of the housing register exclusion times and financial levels
- Alignment of the allocations policy with the Adaptations Policy 2017

A summary of the proposed changes is attached. The current policy and the proposed policy can be viewed online at [www.chesterfield.gov.uk/allocations](http://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/allocations). Alternatively you can call in to On the Move at 73 Low Pavement, Chesterfield, S40 1PB.

To give us your views on the proposed policy, please complete and return the enclosed questionnaire or complete it online at [www.chesterfield.gov.uk/allocations](http://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/allocations).

Please complete questionnaires online or return them using the enclosed reply paid envelope by **24 September 2018**.

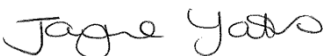
Returned questionnaires will be entered into a prize draw to win £50 of Love to Shop vouchers.

You are invited to attend the following drop-in consultation events to discuss any queries that you may have with members of the Housing Options Team:

Date	Time	Location
Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> August 2018	10.00am to 12noon	Healthy Living Centre, Barlow Road, Staveley, Chesterfield, S43 3XR
Wednesday 22 <sup>th</sup> August 2018	12noon to 3.00pm	Stand Road Park, Stand Road, Chesterfield, S41 8SW
Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> August 2018	1.30pm to 3.30pm	Hunloke Centre, Church Street South, Birdholme, Chesterfield, S40 2TF
Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> September 2018	4.00pm to 6.00pm	Parkside, Stand Road, Newbold, Chesterfield, S41 8SR

If you have any queries please email [Chesterfield.OnTheMove@chesterfield.gov.uk](mailto:Chesterfield.OnTheMove@chesterfield.gov.uk) or telephone 01246 345700.

Yours sincerely



Jayne Yates  
Team Leader – Allocations

## Summary of Proposed Changes

	<b>Home-Options Allocations Policy (proposed)</b>	<b>Choice Based Lettings and Allocations Policy (current)</b>
Application form	On-line application	Paper-based application
Priority banding	Applicants are prioritised in each band according to the date they became registered in it, irrespective of their priority reason.	Applicants are prioritised in each band by awarding points to reflect housing need.  Applicants with the same points are prioritised by their application registration date.
Homelessness	Accept Home Options partners' cases onto the housing register	Accept only Chesterfield's cases onto the housing register
Medical priority	Contact the applicant's doctor directly for support information  Assessment of priority made using categorised groups	Independent medical assessor consider applicant's self-assessment including any supporting information provided by applicant
Local residency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Live in Chesterfield (no time specified)</li> <li>▪ Lived in area for 3 out of last 5 years</li> <li>▪ Employed in Chesterfield for 6 months</li> <li>▪ Give or receive support from someone who has been resident in Chesterfield continuously for 5 years</li> <li>▪ Family connection</li> <li>▪ If have learning difficulties and need to access services or carry out voluntary work in Chesterfield</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Live in Chesterfield for 12 months</li> <li>▪ Employed in Chesterfield for 12 months</li> </ul>
Low demand properties	Accept from Home Options partners' areas when no bids made by Chesterfield applicants.	Accept applicants from North East Derbyshire and Bolsover District Councils for 1 or 2 bed flats only
Re-registration after rehousing	Not able to re-apply for 2 years after being rehoused unless there has been a significant change in circumstances	Able to re-apply immediately after being rehoused irrespective of housing need
Equity	Assess if applicant has enough equity to secure own housing	Equity not taken into account

## Summary of Proposed Changes

	<b>Home-Options Allocations Policy (proposed)</b>	<b>Choice Based Lettings and Allocations Policy (current)</b>
Owner occupiers	Only accept onto the housing register if have a housing need	Accept onto the housing register irrespective of housing need
Financial assessment	An offer of accommodation may be withdrawn if it clear that the prospective tenant has insufficient resources to be able to pay the rent and household bills	A voluntary self-assessment of affordability is used. An offer of accommodation cannot be refused even if it is unaffordable.
Chesterfield tenants with children in flats	No priority awarded unless overcrowded	Awarded 25 points
Pregnancy	Unborn baby eligible for bedroom when applicant is 6 months pregnant	Proof of birth required to activate bedroom eligibility
Exclusion for unacceptable behaviour eg, anti-social behaviour, rent arrears etc	Exclude for 12 months then review. May extend exclusion if behaviour has not changed.	Exclude for 2 years
Exclusion for rent arrears	If housing related debt is over £1,000	If housing related debt is over £1,500
Deferred for rent arrears	If housing related debt is less than £1,000 – need to make a payment plan and demonstrate ability to make regular payments for a minimum of 16 weeks	If housing related debt is less than £1,500 – need to reduce by at least 50% over 6 months
Change in priority	Application date within new band amended to date priority changed	Keep original application date within new band
Applicants who are not bidding	Priority reviewed and may be downgraded	Only cancel application if not renewed annually
Refusing reasonable offers	Review application. May reduce priority or priority date and may exclude from list for 12 months	Limit number of offers refused within timescale
16/17 year old applicants	Determine if they are capable of managing a tenancy	Not accept under 18 year olds unless they are referred under the children’s act or homeless

Full details of the current policy and the proposed policy can be viewed online at [www.chesterfield.gov.uk/allocations](http://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/allocations)