

Draft Housing Allocation Scheme

Key decisions in ‘Scoping’ a consultation

We	Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council	• Identify
need to understand the views of	Private registered providers with which we have nomination arrangements	• Target
concerning	The updating of our Housing Allocation Scheme	• Issue
so that	we	• Actor
can	determine a revised local scheme	• Action
on/by	by 31 May for implementation on 4 July 2013	• Data
so as to accomplish	a fair scheme that provides realistic expectations to applicants and prioritises the allocation of affordable housing based on their having both a local connection to Tonbridge and Malling and a genuine housing need.	• Wider Aim

A) These matters **have been decided**, and cannot be influenced by the consultation:

These are changes from the current scheme for inclusion in the revised scheme:

- Applicants must have **both** a local connection **and** a housing need to be included on the housing register.
- Applicants with a local connection will include members of the Armed Forces or former Service personnel within five years of discharge (or bereaved spouses or civil partners of such members), or serving or former members of the Reserve Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service.
- Applicants with a housing need will include those:
 - Private sector assured shorthold tenants who are threatened with homelessness because they have been served with a valid notice, usually at least 2 months, to quit their tenancy
 - Tenants occupying HM Forces service family accommodation who are threatened with homelessness because they have been served with a valid notice, usually at least 3 months, to vacate their tenancy.
- The revised scheme will be based on priority bands (rather than a combination of bands and points) and:
 - The priority bands will take account of under-occupation as well as housing need.
 - Households will be placed in the appropriate band according to their highest need (not the accumulation of their needs).
 - Additional preference will be awarded by placing applicants in the band that is one band higher than their assessed need. This applies only to serving or former members of the armed forces or reserve forces, or their bereaved spouses or civil partners.
 - Additional priority based on ‘community contribution’ will not be awarded, because of the practical difficulties in making an assessment.
- Children of the opposite sex will be expected to share a bedroom until the oldest is 10 years of age.

- The Housing Needs Panel will replace the Medical and Welfare Panel and its range of decision making will be extended to include:
 - Whether an extra bedroom is needed to accommodate a carer.
 - Whether an extra bedroom is needed to accommodate shared access to children.
 - Whether or not to apply down-banding to an application.
 - Awarding exceptional priority.

B) These matters **have not yet been decided, and the Council is open to being influenced by the consultation:**

- What constitutes a local connection apart from what has already been decided in section A.
- What constitutes a housing need apart from what has already been decided in section A.
- Allocation of housing needs to priority bands.
- Whether or not the revised scheme should take account of affordability.
- The circumstances that would result in an application being down-banded.
- The definition and application of the over-crowding assessment.
- The current scheme, other than those parts that have been revised and decided upon in section (A) above.

Precise definition of the service under consideration

- The service under consideration is allocation of affordable social housing.

Geographic coverage of the intended target audience

Registered providers operating in the borough of Tonbridge and Malling

5 February 2013