

**Proposed changes to the Housing Allocation Scheme 2017
Issues List**

Area & paragraph	Summary of Issue	Discussion/Resolution
1. Bedroom Standard (Annexe 1)	When assessing household's bedroom requirement, non-dependent members of the household are excluded. Non-dependents are defined as aged 18 or over who are not carers, vulnerable or the subject of other exceptional circumstances.	<p>Currently household members aged 18yrs+ are not included when assessing bedroom requirement, however often they are living at home, possibly still in education with parents in receipt of child benefit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For consideration: • No Change, leave as it is. • Including all family members – will increase demand on larger properties. • Raising the age from 18 to 21, which will include those in school or college and where parent is in receipt of child benefit. • Different rules for different groups ie. existing tenants seeking transfer v new applicants to the housing register.
2. Local Residency Qualification (2.21)	<p>Meeting a local residency qualification is a central tenet of this Housing Allocation Scheme. Local residency qualification within the terms of this scheme will normally mean that an applicant:</p> <p>Only those that have lived in this borough, through their own choice, for a minimum of five years up to and including the date of their application, or the date on which a decision is made on their application, whichever is later, OR</p> <p>Have been resident for a total of five out of the last seven years and are resident in the borough at the time of application.</p>	<p>There are existing Council tenants that have a need to move but do not meet the Local Residency criteria and therefore cannot join the Council's housing register to secure a transfer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider exempting existing secure or fixed term tenants of Hammersmith & Fulham Council where they otherwise meet the criteria to transfer.

<p>3. Local Residency Qualification (2.21.3)</p>	<p>Currently where applicants are applying jointly, both applicants must meet the local residency qualification, including household members. Children under 5 will not be disqualified from inclusion in the assessment on the basis of the residency criteria so long as they were born to parent’s resident in the borough.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration that this is amended that where applicants are applying jointly, at least one of the applicants must meet the LRQ criteria.
<p>4. Under-occupation (reasonable preference category)</p>	<p>Currently only Council tenants under occupying their property & willing to downsize to 1-bedroom accommodation automatically qualify for a housing transfer. Priority Band 1 is awarded. All other downsizing transfer applications require director discretion.</p>	<p>The Council benefits from tenants releasing larger properties, it therefore makes sense that we extend the automatic qualifying criteria to those households seeking to downsize.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For consideration: • Extend the under-occupation preference category to include those seeking to downsize to accommodation which is suitable for their assessed housing need, regardless of property size. • Award priority Band 1 in line with those downsizing to 1-bedroom. This may also be applied where a split household arrangement has been agreed. • For a variety of reasons under-occupying tenants often wish to downsize but retain a spare bedroom. Consider extending the under-occupation preference category to include those seeking to downsize to accommodation 1-bedroom larger than assessed need. • If agreed, consider whether application is awarded Band 1 or 3 (Band 2 if meeting community contribution criteria).

<p>5. Service Tenancies Para (3.16)</p>	<p>Retiring LBHF employees who occupy housing for the better performance of their duties, eg. caretakers,</p> <p>The Scheme currently reads:</p> <p>“Employees of the Council who have a service tenancy associated with their employment may be re-housed by the council. in pursuance of a contractual agreement that may be in place. This may be achieved outside of assisted choice through a direct nomination.”</p>	<p>Current wording is unclear and requires clarification. Consider:</p> <p>I suggest replacing the current wording which is ambiguous with the following:</p> <p>Service Tenancies</p> <p>“A service occupier is an employee of the Council who occupies accommodation let to them by the Council for the better performance of their duties.</p> <p>A service occupier with 10 years continuous service retiring on grounds of health or age will qualify for rehousing and placed in Band 1 for an offer of housing.</p> <p>The Council will make an offer of rehousing determined by their assessed housing need. In making the offer, the Council will take into account the applicant’s choice of area and property type, however it may not be possible to meet these.</p> <p>Where an employee dies in service and would have qualified for rehousing, an offer of housing will be made to their surviving partner who has lived at the premises as his/her only home for a minimum of 12 months immediately prior to the service occupant’s death.</p> <p>Service occupiers may not be entitled to rehousing under this scheme where their loss of employment is as a consequence of dismissal on disciplinary grounds or where they fall within the meaning of <i>Classes of Person that do not Qualify</i>, see paragraph 2.14.”</p>
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