

## Housing Allocations scheme - Questions and Answers

**Q. I am currently under occupying a social housing tenancy. Will I still get priority to downsize into a property that is suitable for my needs?**

A. Yes, we have classified residents under occupying accommodation as unsatisfactory. We want to enable residents to have the ability to move into a property size that is suitable for their housing needs and therefore you will retain your position in band 1.

**Q. I am not in a housing need. Will I still be able to join the housing register under the new qualifying/eligibility criteria?**

A. All residents who meet our qualification criteria will remain or be able to join our housing list. This includes residents who have resided in the borough for five years or more, keyworker residents who are in a housing need and accepted homeless households. The council also considers any other exceptional circumstances. If you do not qualify or are not eligible to join the register following the changes, you will be offered advice and assistance to pursue other rehousing options to meet your household needs.

**Q. I have been on the housing register but I do not bid every week as I am in a low priority band. Will my position on the housing register be maintained?**

A. Our system will monitor individual bidding frequency. Where a resident does not place a bid in a 12 month period, they will be removed from the housing register. We, however, will write to residents in advance of any closure and possibility of being removed from our housing register.

**Q. How am I going to get a home if I do not qualify to join the housing register?**

A. The council will provide information about all housing options available to residents who approach the authority for assistance.

**Q. Under the proposed scheme, non-dependent adult children will only be added to the application at the discretion of the rehousing manager. Will**

**my adult children be removed from my application on the implementation of the new allocations scheme?**

- A. No, the council is not attempting to split up families. All existing households registered on our system will continue to remain on our housing register; however, due to the lack of available housing stock, the council will aim to provide greater options for individuals within a household who do not normally need to reside together.

**Q. I have lived in Southwark for the last 3 years and I am a keyworker who works in a neighbouring borough. I do not have a housing need. Do I qualify for the housing register?**

- A. No, due to the shortages of available properties, we have to ensure that priority is given to local residents who have a housing need.

**Q. I'm currently living in a studio flat with my 3 year old son. If priority bands are changing does that mean I will remain in band 3?**

- A. There will be no change to clients overcrowded in a studio/bedsit flat. Under the proposed changes, households in a studio/bedsit with a child under 5 years of age will be considered overcrowded and will be able to bid for 1 bedroom properties. However, households in a one bedroom property, with one child under 5 will no longer be considered as overcrowded and no longer qualify for any overcrowding priority.

**Q. I am a single person listed on the housing register and am able to bid for a 1 bedroom property, will this remain under the new policy?**

- A. Under the proposed scheme, single person households will be eligible to bid for studio/bedsit properties only.

**Q. I'm living in a multi-generational household with my partner, my parents and my adult siblings. Due to the size of the property we have no priority on the waiting list. I have been bidding in band 4 for the past five years. Under the proposed Housing Allocations policy, will there be a higher priority for local households?**

- A. Under the proposed scheme, priority will not be provided for multigenerational households. However should the sub households be

overcrowded, you could potentially benefit from future local lettings schemes and have priority for accommodation in the local area.

**Q. I am an accepted homeless applicant and I am currently residing in a temporary accommodation, I have been advised that I will receive a direct offer of permanent social accommodation, will I be able to refuse this offer and continue to bid?**

A. Accepted homeless households who are residing in temporary accommodation will receive one suitable offer. Due to pressures on temporary accommodation and in line with the relevant legislation, the council is only required to make one suitable offer; therefore homeless households will not be able to refuse a suitable offer.

**Q. Will the changes mean there will be more properties available for my household to bid upon?**

A. It is not likely there will be more properties available due to the proposed changes. In addition, the waiting times are not likely to improve due to the increasing demand. The council is doing all we can to build as many new homes as possible and have committed to building 11,000 new homes.

**Q. I am an accepted homeless resident who is currently in temporary accommodation, registered in band 3, will my priority change as a result of this?**

A. No, if the proposed housing allocations scheme is adopted, residents listed on our housing register will remain in band 3. However if you are an accepted homeless household and have been placed in temporary accommodation as a result of domestic abuse, you will be placed in band 2.

**Q. How would an annual lettings plan be determined?**

A. The housing allocations scheme is monitored to ensure allocations reflect those that are in a housing need and meet the requirements of legislation. A report will be drawn up and will set targets across all priority bands.

**Q. I'm an accepted homeless household in temporary accommodation, I have been bidding for 5 years in Band 3. I should be in a higher band.**

A. Under the proposed Allocations scheme applicants who accept an offer in the private rented sector in borough or out of borough, will be awarded a higher priority on Southwark housing register in Band 2.

**Q. I am currently on the system and I have been awarded two priority stars, one for my voluntary work with the local charity and one for my employment. How will this impact my application given the newly proposed allocations scheme?**

A. Residents who are volunteering for their local tenants and residents association will be eligible for a priority star, under the proposed scheme. If you are volunteering for your local charity, this additional priority will be removed alongside any other priority stars. All other applicants will be prioritised for accommodation firstly by their assessed band, and then the length of time they've been on the housing register.

**Q. I have left the Armed Forces due to injury and Post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Can I join the housing register?**

A. Yes, we want to help our ex-service personnel by ensuring that they are able to access social housing.