

Appendix 1.



Housing Allocation Policy

A Housing Options Approach
for
Rotherham

Revised September 2015
Revised May 2017
Revised March 2019
Revised March 2021
Revised September 2023
Revised November 2023

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1. General Guidance

1.1 Introduction

The Council has re-evaluated and re-drafted its Allocation Policy, practices, and procedures to take account of the requirements of the Housing Act 1996 Part VI and VII, the Homeless Act 2002, Homeless Reduction Act 2017 the Localism Act 2011 and the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government's Homelessness and Allocation Code of Guidance for Local Authorities. The content of this document reflects an entirely new approach to the letting of accommodation based on need and choice. In reviewing the Allocation Policy, the local housing authority have had regard to:

- Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2023-2026.
- Rotherham's Tenancy Policy.

The Council's Allocation Policy focuses on helping people in greatest housing need to gain access to suitable and appropriate accommodation. The Allocation Policy aims to make best use of the Council's available housing stock and will compliment other services we provide that advise applicants about other housing options available to them provided by the Council and other Landlords as well as Owner Occupation.

The term "Allocation of accommodation" is when the Local Authority selects a person to be either:

- a secure or introductory tenant of accommodation held by the authority.
- nominates a person to be a secure or introductory tenant of accommodation held by another housing authority.
- nominates a person to be an assured tenant of accommodation held by a Private Registered Provider (or Registered Social Landlord in Wales) (s.159(2)).

By using a range of landlords within "Key Choices" Scheme we aim to: -

- Change the culture from one of "gate keeping" to one of customers exercising choice and empowerment.
- Ensure we let properties fairly.
- Lettings are appropriate and sustainable.
- Stimulate new markets and interest in social housing to improve our image and market perceptions.
- Contribute to sustainability, neighbourhood renewal by creating mixed and balanced communities.

Full details, of each landlord participating in "Key Choices" can be found at the end of this policy document.

1.2 Allocation Policy Overview

Rotherham will allocate housing accommodation in accordance with our Allocation Policy. The Housing Act, 1996 Part VI, Homelessness Act 2002 and Homeless Reduction Act 2017 require that each Housing Authority shall have a policy for the letting of housing. The Act specifies groups of people who must be given reasonable preference in the scheme. Subject to these provisions the Council can decide the principles on which the scheme is to be framed.

Rotherham's Allocation Policy meets the requirements of the Housing Act 1996, the Homeless Act 2002, Localism Act 2011, and Homeless Reduction Act 2017 and is based on choice, need and date of application and ensures that the needs of local people are met that cannot be provided by the market or afforded by households. In conjunction with the Housing Acts the Policy will aim to ensure that access into housing is based on:

- sufficient advice, assistance, and information to make informed choices about housing options available.
- fair and equal access to available accommodation.
- a choice of accommodation or the opportunity to express preference about the housing accommodation to be allocated.

The Housing Act, 1996, the Homeless Act 2002, Localism Act and Homeless Reduction Act 2017 require that reasonable preference be given to:

- people who are homeless (within the meaning of Housing Act 1996 Part VII).
- people who are owed a duty by any local housing authority under section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any such authority under section 192(3).
- people occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions.
- people who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (including any grounds relating to a disability).
- people who need to move to a locality in the district of the authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others).

In addition, Rotherham's Allocation Policy will also give preference to:

- Customers unable to return home from hospital, as their current property does not meet their medical needs and temporary accommodation would be

inappropriate or they require immediate rehousing preventing an admission to hospital or institution.

- Ex Service Personnel and their families who are leaving the Armed Forces and Former Members of the Reserve Forces and have no accommodation to return to.
- Customers leaving temporary or supported accommodation schemes.
- Households that are subject to adult or child safeguarding issues.
- Households who need to move to an area in the district to avoid hardship to themselves or others. This includes those who give or receive care or need to access specialist treatment. In these circumstances an established medical need must be demonstrated such as mental illness or disorder, physical or learning disability, or progressive medical condition.
- RSL and Council Tenants that wish to move to a smaller property that they are under occupying.

Rotherham's Allocation Policy is also framed to consider qualifying criteria including:

- The financial resources available to a person to meet their housing costs.
- The behavior of a person (or of a member of his household) which affects the suitability to be a tenant.
- The local connection which exists between a person and the authority's district.

1. 3 Delivering a Quality Service

Throughout the allocation process all customers will receive quality information about the service available to assist them in making informed choices about their future home.

We will ensure all our customers have access to quality housing that meets their housing need.

The Council's current services standards for letting homes are:

- All details of the customer's application will be treated with due care and will be completely confidential. Information will only be shared with other landlords where the applicant gives a signed declaration giving permission for this to take place.
- We will give advice and assistance of the highest quality concerning all housing options available to the applicant.
- Customers will be told if they have been successful in the bidding process and be contacted to arrange a convenient appointment time to verify their application details.

1.4 Equalities and Diversity in Action

Rotherham MBC has a responsibility to serve the needs and promote the interests of all who live or work in the Borough, or who use its services. The Council's Corporate Equalities Strategy works towards developing services, facilities and working practices, which are equally accessible to and appropriate for all its customers, irrespective of their gender, age, race, sexuality, disability, or income.

Rotherham MBC is committed to the principles set out in the Equalities Act 2010 and the Equalities Standard for local government. A key element of the Equalities Standard involves carrying out an Equalities Impact Assessment on all existing and new policies to ensure they do not have an adverse impact on or have any that can be justified on a particular group. An Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out in October 2013 to the Allocation Policy and reviewed following implementation. A reviewed Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out in January 2019 to assess the proposed changes which were agreed and implemented on 1 March 2019. A further review has been completed in January 2021 to ensure the changes implemented in April 2021 do not have an adverse impact on a particular group.

The Allocation Policy is intended to improve community cohesion and will increase opportunities for applicants to move between neighbourhoods and communities. This will be done through the provision of information on the adverts regarding the local area, such as nearest schools, doctor's surgeries, and leisure facilities. The Key Choices website also links to "up my street" where customers can search for a wide range of facilities including mosques, churches etc.

We will provide information in languages other than English, in Braille, Large Print and Audiotape. All reception areas will be fitted with a hearing loop.

1.5 Support for Vulnerable People

Vulnerability can be a result of being in urgent housing need or a result of health or social welfare issues. Individuals who are vulnerable will be supported by officers and agencies that will be sensitive to their needs. Types of support which will be offered are:

- Enable Auto bid facility on our online choice based letting system. We will discuss with the applicant their requirements and suitable localities for the system to bid on properties to meet their needs.
- Utilise picture symbols as an alternative to written text on property adverts.
- Provide a free email address, which can be used in all Libraries.
- Undertake home visits to explain the Allocation Policy.
- Officers taking time to explain property and local area information.
- Enabling a proxy to be nominated to request properties on behalf of the applicant.
- Viewing a property with an advocate or carer.
- Viewing a property via video footage, of internal and external shots of the rooms, décor, and surrounding area.

- Ensuring information meets the requirements of other language users, people with a disability and people with sight or hearing impairment.

Rotherham Adult Commissioning Team have also helped to develop a range of floating support schemes, which are aimed to help vulnerable people in developing life skills and supporting customers within their home. There are a number of different agencies that are part of the Housing Related Support Services with provide support packages designed to meet individual need.

1.6 Monitoring the Scheme

The Council will seek to ensure that its Allocation Policy is being operated fairly in respect of all sections of the community in Rotherham.

Monitoring systems will be developed to enable performance to be reviewed against the stated objectives and any necessary changes to be made. Housing Register applicants will be asked to voluntarily provide details of their ethnic origin so that we can gather evidence to test whether the Allocation Policy is being administered fairly.

All elements of the Allocation Policy will be closely monitored through Key Performance Indicators. This is to ensure that:

- We are meeting housing need in the Borough.
- Housing trends are being monitored.
- Equality is achieved, and diversity supported.
- Information is collated annually for Communities and Local Government for the Local Authority Housing Statistics and the P1Es quarterly detailing households who considered themselves to be at risk of homelessness.
- We are offering a customer focussed letting scheme.
- There is a reduction in refusal rates.
- Void turn round times are not increasing.
- There is sustainability within the estates.
- Vulnerable people are not excluded.

1.7 Right to Request a Review

The Allocation Scheme will also ensure that applicants have the right to request the authority to inform them of any decision about the facts of their case which is likely to be, or has been, taken into account in considering whether to allocate housing accommodation, and has the right to request a review of a decision and to be informed of the decision on the review and the grounds for it.

The applicant has a right to request a review if an applicant(s) disagrees with the Authority's decision relating to applications to join the Housing Register and subsequent offers of properties including:

- if an applicant believes that they are in the wrong band, or that their band has been changed unfairly.

- cancellation following a Housing Register Review.
- date of application.
- an offer has been withdrawn because the authority believes that the applicant has provided false information or has taken action which has made their circumstances worse.
- where applicants have been suspended or excluded unfairly in the `customer's view.
- offers of property made; if an applicant believes that a property has not been allocated according to the allocation policy. For instance, if they expressed an interest for a home, and were in the same priority band and had longer waiting time than the successful applicant.

The Right to Review will be considered by the Housing Assessment Panel and the applicant(s) must be informed of any decision concerning their application in writing and giving the reasons for the action taken. Applicants or their representatives should in all cases be encouraged to make oral as well as written representations.

If the applicant(s) wish to exercise their right of review, they must do so by providing reasons as to why they disagree with the decision in writing to the Authority.

The appeal must be submitted within 28 days of the applicant receiving the decision letter concerning their application.

1.8 Housing Options

In order to ensure households who may no longer qualify for social housing in Rotherham, either because they have not lived in the area long enough, or because they cannot demonstrate that they qualify for other reasons, we operate a housing options approach alongside the housing register. This will include help to access alternative housing in the private sector.

The Allocation Policy aims to work closely with applicants in providing information on all housing options with a focus on meeting the individual needs of applicants.

We will promote a wide range of housing options and will work closely with applicants. Advice will be based on comparing the applicant's housing need, preference, aspirations, and financial resources with the range of housing options available to the applicant.

The aim will be to:

- provide information on all housing options with a focus on meeting the needs and aspirations of individual applicants.
- improve the quality of information, advice, and support available to help applicants in housing need find suitable and affordable housing.
- agree with the applicant on realistic achievability of their preferred housing option.

- provide a framework, timetable and plan for applicants wishing to live independently, giving access to supported housing, or moving from supported accommodation to more independent living.
- agree a number of action points for the applicant to follow to take more control of their housing situation.
- any necessary referrals can be made to appropriate support agencies.

The housing options that will be explored are:

HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS (RSL) - As well as Council housing, there are other social landlords with rented properties in Rotherham. RSL's are "not for profit" organisations that have different types of property to rent, which includes homes for young people, families, and older people.

Most of the RSL's are working together with the "Key Choices" scheme to provide a wider selection of properties for rent. Individual property adverts will identify who the landlord is, and you need only apply to the Council. This means that only one waiting list application form has to be completed and will be considered by the Council and all the Housing Associations who are part of this scheme. Applicants can make a request for an advertised housing association property.

Before making an offer of a tenancy, the housing association will check whether the applicant meets its own rehousing rules.

There is a list of all housing associations which have homes in the Rotherham area available at Key Choices and Customer Services Centres.

PRIVATE RENTED – RENT GUARANTEE SCHEME –

Credit Unions offer a savings and loan service for customers with low incomes to enable them to borrow the rent in advance and repay at an agreed affordable repayment rate.

HOMESWAPPER AND MUTUAL EXCHANGE - provides an online mutual exchange database, with an online self-service function that enables customers who are already tenants the facility to transfer both locally and nationwide. Homeswapper can be found at www.homeswapper.co.uk.

Both secure council and housing association tenants in England, Wales, Northern Ireland, and Scotland, who occupy permanent accommodation, have a legal right to exchange their tenancies under Section 92 of the Housing Act 1985.

Before a mutual exchange can take place both exchange partners must get their own landlord's permission. The landlord has 42 days to notify the tenant in writing if they agree to the exchange taking place. An exchange can only be refused on one of the following specified schedule grounds, which are set out in Schedule 3 of the Housing act 1985.

SHARED OWNERSHIP – Is a form of home ownership designed for people who choose to buy a home but cannot afford to make the full mortgage payments. It is designed to give applicants the chance to own their own home in stages. Shared

ownership is where the applicant can buy a share of a property, paying a mortgage on that share and rent on the remaining share. The initial share is normally between 25% and 75%. The applicant must be made aware that in addition to making rent and mortgage payments; the applicant is responsible for most of the normal costs of home ownership.

HELP TO BUY MORTGAGE SCHEME – a government backed mortgage scheme which helps borrowers to buy a home with just a 5 % deposit.

THE “RIGHT TO BUY” – Council tenants have the “Right to Buy” and RSL tenants have the Right to Acquire, which means that they may be able to buy their home at a discount. There are rules about who can do this. The Council’s or the RSL will be able to advise which people qualify to purchase their home under the Right to Buy or Right to Acquire regulations.

HOUSING FOR OLDER PEOPLE OR HOUSEHOLDS WITH AN ASSESSED NEED FOR GROUND FLOOR ACCOMMODATION.

The properties are individual self-contained bungalows or flats that have 1 or 2 bedrooms. They have varying levels of adaptations some have level access showers and are ramped for wheelchairs users.

Generally, bungalows are available for people over the age of 50 with an illness or physical disability that would benefit generally from ground floor and level access accommodation. The Council's Rothercare service is available for people living in a bungalow; this is our community alarm service that provides a 24-hour response, 365 days per year. It is an alarm service provided by Rotherham MBC to help people live safely in their own homes. This service is for anyone living in Rotherham either in private, rented, or owner-occupied accommodation. It is available to anyone regardless of their age or personal circumstances who feels they may be vulnerable. There is a separate mandatory charge for these services, whilst there is the option to opt out of the Rothercare Service the tenant will be liable to pay the mandatory charge. To access the Rother Care Service the tenant must have a telephone landline installed.

The eligibility criteria for new build bungalows are amended so that preference is given to those over the age of 60 with an assessed need for ground floor, those over the age of 60 with no current medical need will be considered next. In respect of couples only one party needs to be over the age of 60. The tenancy will be held in joint names if their partner is over the age of 50 or has an assessed need for ground floor.

The properties remain exempt for the Right to Buy. New tenants of these properties with Rothercare also require the installation of a telephone land line. (Cabinet Member Minute 45 of 6th September 2010.) This amendment reflected the change to GSM dialler policy approved by the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care on 12th July 2010, Minute No. H12 refers.

EXTRA CARE HOUSING – Offers a new way of helping individuals over the age of 55 to live independently and gives the security and privacy of a home with a range of

facilities on the premises. A medical assessment of need is required in order to access Extra Care Housing. The letting of Extra Care properties is carried out by Together Housing Association in accordance with their Allocation criteria.

REMAINING IN YOUR OWN HOME – Sometimes the best course of action is for customers to stay living where they are, rather than look for a new home. The Neighbourhood Area Housing Officer can provide advice or signpost to another agency depending on the reason for moving, but there are a number of services which may be able to help with:

- Facing eviction or in arrears.
- Experiencing Domestic Abuse.
- Requiring aids and adaptations.
- The private rented home needs repairs.
- Family breakdown - Family Mediation Services.
- Help for Homeowners with Grants.

2. The Housing Register - Who will qualify to go on the Housing Register?

2. 1 People subject to immigration control do not qualify for public sector housing.

The right of persons from abroad to social housing is decided by the Government and the rules may change from time to time.

To qualify for housing assistance, an applicant must be eligible for housing allocation.

The Housing Act 1996 defines the groups of people who are not eligible for assistance. These are:

- 'Persons subject to immigration control' – These people are defined by the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, unless they fall within one of the classes of exceptions listed in the Homelessness Regulations.
- anyone who is excluded from entitlement to housing benefit by s.115 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- other 'persons from abroad' where the Secretary of State has made regulations that they are not eligible for assistance.

These rules imply that if someone is subject to immigration control then they are not eligible for housing allocation, unless they meet the criteria for one of the specified classes of persons who are re-included back into eligibility by regulations made under the Housing Act 1996. (See Housing Allocation Procedure guide for more details.)

The Secretary of State may issue regulations at any time under the Housing Act 1996. Local Authorities are notified of any such changes by way of statutory instruments, approved by Parliament. Eligibility criteria changed by primary or secondary legislation will form part of this scheme from the date any such changes come into force without the need to refer any changes to Cabinet.

As such any policy change will comply the Government's Allocation Policy guidance. "Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities in England (publishing.service.gov.uk)".

As the United Kingdom has left the European Union, new regulations regarding the allocation of housing and homelessness assistance under the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) have come into force. The Government's policy intent is that those granted pre-settled status under the European Union settlement Scheme will be subject to existing eligibility rules following the end of the transition period on 31 December 2020. Updated criteria are reflected below.

EEA nationals, and their family members, including those with a derivative right to reside, will need to apply to the Home Office under the EU Settlement Scheme to secure their long-term immigration status in the UK. Those with less than 5 years' residence in the UK will be granted limited leave to enter or remain (also referred to as "pre-settled status"), those with 5 or more years' residence will be granted indefinite leave to enter or remain (also referred to as "settled status").

Having acquired leave under the EU Settlement Scheme, an EEA national, or a person with a derivative right to reside such as a Zambrano carer, will have both a right to reside in accordance with domestic immigration rules (under the EU Settlement Scheme) and a right to reside in accordance with their existing rights under EU law (as expressed in the EEA Regulations 2016).

2.2 Rotherham operates an Allocation Scheme with a Local Connection Criteria.

All applicants over the age of 16 seeking accommodation through Key Choices Letting Scheme must provide evidence that they have a local connection to Rotherham for a minimum of 3 years up to and including the date of application.

Applicant's aged between 16 and 18 years will require a guarantor before signing for a tenancy. The guarantor will be required to have a financial assessment in order to confirm that they are able to cover the rent in the event of non-payment.

A person has a local connection where:

- They have lived for the last 3 years in Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council's geographical boundary through their own choice.
- They are currently employed in Rotherham and have been for the last 3 years.
- They have a close Family Relative or Primary Carer who live in Rotherham and have done so for the last three years. The applicant will be required to provide proof of address and a letter of confirmation from the relative that they are in regular contact as per the validation process.

Applicants who are homeless or at risk of homelessness will be assessed for Local Connection eligibility in accordance with Homelessness Legislation.

This does not include residence where they have been rehoused in temporary accommodation in Rotherham by another Local Authority in resident in a bail hostel

or other such accommodation, detained in the district under the Mental Health Act, receiving specialist hospital treatment, in occupation of a mobile home, caravan or motor caravan which is not placed on a residential site, in occupation of a holiday letting this includes a permanent building, hotel or bed and breakfast accommodation for the purposes of a holiday.

Applicants exempt from the Local Connection Criteria are:

- Members or Former Members of the Armed Forces, this includes Former Members of the Reserve Forces.
- Bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the Armed Forces leaving service family accommodation following the death of their spouse/partner.
- Relationship breakdown and divorcees of Members of the Armed Forces and Former Members of the Reserve Forces at the time of application.
- Serving or former members of the Armed Forces Former and Former Members of the Reserve Forces who need to move in urgent circumstances because of serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service irrespective of when this was.
- Care Leavers whose placements have been made by another Local Authority within the Rotherham Borough.
- Applicants considered via the Witness Protection Scheme as agreed by the Housing Register and Advice Manager.
- Applicants who present as homeless who are fleeing violence including domestic abuse.
- Existing social tenants who are seeking to move between local authorities to avoid hardship and needs to move in order to be closer to work or take up a job offer.
- Homeless Applicants with no local connection to Rotherham will be eligible for Band 4 only.

2.3 Applicants who will not qualify to go on the housing register.

All housing applications will be treated on an individual basis, and therefore considered on their individual circumstances. The following applicants will not qualify to go on the housing register. (Note that in some circumstances applicants may qualify to join the register and be placed in Band Four - see Section 2.8 Direct Homes).

- Current or former Council, Housing Association and Private Rented tenants with breaches in their tenancy conditions, in the last 5 years, and that in the opinion of the Council, affects the applicant's suitability to be a tenant.
- Applicants who have previously been evicted from a Council or Housing Association secure tenancy in the last 5 years due to breaches of their tenancy conditions. This includes tenancies outside of Rotherham.
- Applications with no local connection to Rotherham. (See section 2.2 and exemptions).
- Applications that have been cancelled will not qualify to re-join the Housing register for 12 months. (See Section 3.6 Cancelled applications).

- Applicants owing a cumulative outstanding debt over £800 to Council, Housing Associations or Private landlords. (See section 2.4 Rent Policy).

In determining whether in the Council's opinion an applicant qualifies to join the register due to their behaviour, the Council will consider the following:

- Has the applicant any mental health issues that need to be taken into account.
- In the Councils' opinion would the unacceptable behaviour affect their suitability to be a tenant.
- At the time of the application, is the applicant still unsuitable to be a tenant by reason of that behaviour, or the behaviour of a member of his household.

Where an applicant does not qualify to join the Council's Housing Register scheme, they will be entitled to appeal the decision if they consider that the local authority should no longer treat them as ineligible.

Next Steps Plan to stop repeat Homelessness.

Where an applicant does not qualify to join the Council's Housing Register and at risk of homelessness, those who are willing and engage with the following services will be considered under the Next Steps Plan. Their case will be heard at the Housing Assessment Panel requesting to re-join the Housing Register.

The commitment includes:

1. Make appropriate Safeguarding referrals.
2. Make a commitment to sign up and engage with a relevant employment or training programme.
3. Complete the Crisis Skyline or Shiloh Renting Ready course.
4. Agree to referrals to debt advice and attend appointments.
5. Agree and engage with tenancy support.
6. Agree and engage with drug and alcohol treatment services.
7. Agree and maintain a payment plan based on what is affordable to reduce outstanding debt.
8. Complete an anger management course.

Their situation will be reviewed 2 months prior to making an offer of accommodation. If the applicant has not maintained the agreement, their application will be placed into suspension and reviewed monthly.

The agreement will also continue to be monitored into the introductory tenancy period. If there are tenancy breaches, such as anti-social behaviour or rent arrears which are grounds for possession.

2.4 The Rent Policy regarding qualification for Allocations

This section of the policy applies to housing register applicants with cumulative outstanding debt to the Council, Housing Associations or Private Landlords that are

based in Rotherham. Outstanding debt would include rechargeable repairs/damages, rent in advance loans, furnished or district heating charges.

Outstanding debt will be prioritised as: -

1. Current rent arrears to Rotherham Council.
2. Current tenancy related debts to Rotherham Council until 25% reduction has been repaid.
3. Former rent arrears to Rotherham Council until 25% reduction has been repaid.
4. Rechargeable repairs/ damages to Rotherham Council until 25% reduction has been repaid.
5. Council, Housing Association and Private Rented tenancy related debts for current and previous tenancies held in Rotherham.
6. Council, Housing Association and Private Rented tenancy related debts for current and previous tenancies held outside Rotherham during the last two years (The applicant will need to provide a rent statement from their respective landlord).

A tenant is liable to pay rent to the Council. If the tenant is claiming housing costs it is the tenant's responsibility to provide full and correct information to the Department of Work and Pensions and inform the Housing Department how the claim is progressing.

Applicants in all groups will not qualify to join the housing register if their debt exceeds £800.

All applicants with debt less than £800 in all groups will be allowed to join the register but will be placed in suspension. The application will remain placed in suspension until the arrears have reduced by 25%. It will be the responsibility of the applicant to inform the Council when the debt has reached the eligible level. The agreed 25% will be calculated from the highest amount of debt to the specified amount required, at this point they would be taken out of suspension and then will be allowed to bid and be made an offer. E.g., the highest level of accumulated debt 2 years ago was £400, the household must have reduced this debt by at least 25% (£100) and they will then become eligible to bid for properties and for an offer of Council housing when the arrears have reduced to at least £300. The household must continue to make regular payments on an agreed payment plan to continue to reduce the arrears lower than the 25% threshold.

Those applications that are placed in suspension will remain until the applicant has informed us that they have either:

- Cleared the account, or
- Reduced the debt by at least 25% to an agreed amount and agreed to continue to reduce the debt lower than the 25% threshold by making regular payments via an agreement payment plan.

Example 1	Example 2	Example 3
<p data-bbox="172 248 480 282">Applicant owes £900.</p> <p data-bbox="97 398 560 613">They will need to make payments totalling £225 (25% of total debt) before qualifying to go on the register. They will then be able to bid on properties.</p> <p data-bbox="97 837 560 976">The applicant must continue to make payments on the outstanding balance to qualify to be offered a property.</p>	<p data-bbox="592 248 1023 353">Applicant owes £2000 but has paid off £1200 so still owes £800.</p> <p data-bbox="579 398 1031 573">They will qualify to go onto the register and be able to bid as they have reduced their total debt by more than 25 % of the total debt.</p> <p data-bbox="579 837 1023 976">The applicant must continue to make payments on the outstanding balance to qualify to be offered a property.</p>	<p data-bbox="1134 248 1445 282">Applicant owes £600.</p> <p data-bbox="1054 398 1501 685">They can go on the Housing register, but the application will be suspended until they have made payments totalling £150 (25% of total debt). The application will then be unsuspended allowing them to bid.</p> <p data-bbox="1054 837 1522 976">The applicant must continue to make payments on the outstanding balance to qualify to be offered a property.</p>

Safeguarding vulnerable applicants with debt

Whilst seeking to exclude or suspend applicants with outstanding debts owed to the Council, it is also important to provide appropriate safeguards for vulnerable applicants.

All new applications are verified at the point of registration and prior to an offer of accommodation. The verification process involves undertaking checks on various databases which will confirm if the applicant has any outstanding debt. Where there are debts of any amount, and the customer has not indicated on their application form that they are in urgent priority housing need; the customer should be contacted to reconfirm their personal circumstances. If there are no vulnerability issues or urgent housing needs identified following contact the applicant would be advised in writing that their application does not qualify and will be either excluded or suspended from the housing register until they inform us that their agreement has been met. The applicant would also be encouraged to get back in touch if their circumstances change.

All prospective tenants will undergo an affordability check as part of the offer process and the Council will have the “Right Not to Offer” a property to customers who cannot afford to take on the tenancy.

Before a tenancy is offered, all applicants must open a basic bank account, and set up a direct debit, a standing order form or a recurring debit card payment to pay their rent. One week’s rent in advance is also required before a tenancy is offered.

The applicant would also be encouraged to get back in touch if their circumstances change. This would be reinforced in a paragraph included in the decision letter, which would also advise the applicant of their Right to Review the decision on qualification.

Vulnerable applicants with debt in urgent housing need will be considered by the Housing Assessment Panel.

The Housing Allocation Policy also delegates decision making to individual officers in recognition that not all cases can wait for the HAP to meet. The delegation is to the Head of Housing Options who can delegate to the Housing Register and Advice Manager, and the Assistant Director of Housing who can delegate to the Head of Housing Operational Services.

Statute Barred Debt

Statute barred debt cannot be taken into account in allocations decisions as this is an unrecoverable debt. The following are examples to give clearer guidance: -

- Example 1 - If the debt occurred in the year 2010 but the customer acknowledged the debt and made some payments with the last payment made in October 2014. The debt become statute barred in October 2020 if no more payments are made.
- Example 2 - Debt occurred on 1st January 2011, but no payments were made before October 2015. Then one payment was made in October 2015. No payments have been made after October 2015. The case becomes statute barred in October 2021 if no further payments are made.
- Example 3 – Debt occurred on 1st January 2011, the customer started to make payments and are continuing to do so, the debt is not statute barred as the six-year limitation period has not started yet.

2.5 Fixed Term Tenancies (FTTs) and Local Lettings Policies

Fixed Term Tenancies (FTTs)

The Council's Strategic Tenancy Policy was reviewed and approved by Cabinet on 15 February 2021. The policy sets out the use of fixed term tenancies (FTT's) for larger family homes (4, 5 and 6 bedrooms).

Specialist adapted properties are also let on a fixed term tenancy, these types of properties will be identified on the property advert. Specialist adapted properties include properties that have been extended, or have multiple adaptations i.e., through floor lift, stair lift, ground floor bedroom.

Local Letting Policies

Rural Local Letting Policy

The Rural LLP ensures that 50% of new vacancies will be offered to persons on the housing register with a local connection to that village.

Rural LLP is that properties in rural areas are in extremely high demand and rarely become available. Often families within villages wish to remain within the community for family support but when a property becomes vacant, they find they are competing in the choice based letting process with other applicants with no local connection.

A rural village is a population less than 3,500; with few or no facilities; surrounded by open countryside. There are 35 rural villages in Rotherham, some with populations as small as 100. However, not all villages have any council stock. The villages are detailed in the Rural LLP - 50% of new council vacancies in these villages will be offered to persons on the housing register with a local connection to the village.

Sensitive lettings - In some instances, there may be a requirement to undertake "sensitive lettings" in particular areas. Where this applies this will be clearly set out in the Property advertisement. Section 167 (2E) of the 1996 Housing Act enables authorities to allocate accommodation to people of a particular description, whether or not they fall within a reasonable preference category.

Where there is Housing Management Difficulties Certain streets or blocks of flats may have experienced management problems in the past. Such management problems can include high vacancy rates, low demand, and high instances of anti-social behaviour. Large amounts of money can be spent on repairing fixtures and fittings that are damaged due to neglect or acts of vandalism. All bungalow complexes will exclude applicants with management difficulties (Cabinet Member Report 19th April 2010. Minute No. 167).

2.6 The Council reserves the right not to offer a property.

In some cases, the history of the applicant is not known until the applicant has made a bid and may appear at the top of the shortlist and be due to be made an offer. Where this will apply will include, but not be restricted to, if the applicant:

- Requests an area where they may be unable to sustain a tenancy from lack of support. For example, in the case of an applicant with a medical priority on support grounds and the property requested is away from the support network.
- Requests a property that is too small for their family circumstances, and this would lead to an unacceptable overcrowding or cramped living conditions of the property including non- statutory overcrowding as per the Allocation Policy.
- Has specific needs for disability adaptations and the property does not meet these requirements.
- Where there is no local letting policy and the applicant or members of the household have been involved in anti-social or criminal behaviour in the last twelve months.

- Where there is no local letting policy and the applicants has breached a condition of their current tenancy, e.g., rent arrears.
- Where the applicant cannot afford to take on the tenancy.

Individual cases that are being considered by Housing Assessment Panel for Band One status will also take the above criteria into account when making their decision.

Where the Council has reserved the right not to offer a property the applicant will be advised in writing of the reasons for this decision.

2.7 If I qualify to go on the Housing Register, how do I apply and make requests?

All new applicants will be required to have a Pre-Tenancy interview. This will give all new applicants an opportunity to learn about Rotherham Council homes and other affordable housing options. The applicant will be required to provide the following documents for all household members prior to the interview: -

- photographic identification.
- proof of local connection.
- A bank account statement dated within the last 3 months for all accounts held. (The bank statement must show one full month transactions).

At the interview, the applicant will receive information on the housing options available and affordable to them.

Where the applicant has not had a Tenancy before or has had a previous failed tenancy in any sector, they will be required to complete an online pre-tenancy workshop before their application is made active. Support is available for applicants who need it.

The online workshop will offer a range of advice on a range of subjects, including money management, which will help people to sustain their tenancy.

There are several ways to complete an application form:

- By electronic registration at www.keychoices.co.uk.
- By telephone if assistance is required.

If you are eligible and qualify to go on the housing register your application will be placed in one of the following bands:

- Band One.
- Band Two.
- Band Three.
- Band Four.
- Transfer Band.

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough operates a Choice Based Letting Scheme; all empty Council homes that are available for letting are advertised daily. Applicants can view advertisements in a range of locations: -

- On the internet at www.keychoices.co.uk.
- On a mobile application on a smart phone.
- By Auto bid when applicants need support.

Applicants can make a maximum of 3 bids within an advertising cycle at a range of outlets: -

- By telephone to (01709) 336009.
- Via an online request.
- On a mobile application on a smart phone.
- By Auto bid when applicants need support.

All properties will be offered to the Priority One Band ahead of the other Bands. Properties will be offered to the following quota: -

- 60% to Band Two.
- 30% to Band Three.
- 10% to Transfers.

Where there is no demand from the Band One the properties will be offered as preference to Band Two, and if no demand then Band Three will be considered next, and if still no demand, then the Transfer group will be next and if still no demand, then Band Four will be next.

Preference to Band Three and no demand then Band Two will be considered, and if still no demand, then Transfers will be considered and then Band Four will be considered next.

Preference to the Transfer Band, and no demand then the Band Two and then Band Three will be considered and if still no demand, then Band Four will be next.

2.8 Direct Homes – Properties available now

The policy for properties that receive fewer registrations of interest or where the shortlist is exhausted are called Direct Homes. Properties are advertised daily on the Key Choices Website. Applicants must be eligible as detailed below.

Households who do not normally qualify to join the register in Band One, Two, Three or the Transfer band may be eligible to join the register and be placed into Band Four, provided that the applicant:

- has a local connection to Rotherham.
- does not have any tenancy related debt to the Council or other Landlord.
- has not been evicted from a tenancy during the last 5 years.

- has not got a history of anti-social behaviour in the Community for the last 2 years.
- has no intention to make the property overcrowded.

Applicants eligible to join Band 4 only

- Applicants who own their property anywhere in the world, which is adequate for their needs and can afford to purchase an alternative property on the open market. Owners includes properties which have secured loans, it also includes joint ownership when the applicant wishes to move with a family member who is the other owner. An applicant will be expected to sell their property within six months of obtaining a Rotherham Council tenancy. Applicants with medical needs will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Households living with partners/family/friends/dependants that do not currently need to move home.
- Households who are living in private rented homes.
- Service Sector tenants living in tied accommodation whilst they are in employment. A Service Sector tenant will qualify once their employment ends, and if they have no alternative accommodation will be placed in Band One following assessment.
- Applicants with savings over £16,000 (with joint applicants both individual savings will be considered). Applicants with medical needs will be considered on a case-by-case basis. This does not apply to current Council Tenants.
- Households in Supported Accommodation with no local connection.
- Homeless applicants with no local connection.

The band 4 banding will not apply to those who present as homeless in the following groups:

- Members or Former Members of the Armed Forces, this includes Former Members of the Reserve Forces
- Bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the Armed Forces leaving service family accommodation following the death of their spouse/partner.
- Relationship breakdown and divorcees of Members of the Armed Forces and Former Members of the Reserve Forces at the time of application.
- Serving or former members of the Armed Forces Former and Former Members of the Reserve Forces who need to move in urgent circumstances because of serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service irrespective of when this was.
- Care Leavers who present as homeless.
- Applicants who present as homeless who are fleeing violence including domestic abuse and witness protection.

If a property has been advertised and no interest has been made from any suitable applicants, then this property will be advertised as a Direct Home and offered daily to the suitable/eligible applicant in the shortlist. The shortlist will be considered at the end of each day and will be offered in date turn order to Band One, then Band Two,

then Band Three and then to a Transfer application and if still no demand, then Band Four will be next. The offer will not be made on a first come first served basis.

3 How properties are allocated.

3.1 Affordability - Applicants should consider affordability prior to making a request. This is important considering the measure in the Welfare Reform Act 2012 which will reduce Housing Benefit entitlement for working age social sector tenants who under-occupy their property.

Affordability Assessments - as part of the offer process during the “It’s Your Move interview” all new tenants will undergo a detailed affordability assessment to determine their ability to sustain a Council tenancy. This will take account of under occupancy fees and additional charges such as furnished packages and district heating. If there is a risk about the applicant’s ability to pay the rent a referral will be made to Tenancy Support or Money Advice to ensure the tenant has the necessary budgetary management skills to maintain the tenancy from the onset. This process will reduce the propensity for arrears to accrue at the start of each tenancy.

As part of the offer process the Council will have the “Right Not to Offer” a property to customers who cannot afford to take on the tenancy.

3.2 Declarations and Verification of Identity

Section 171 of the Housing Act 1996 makes it an offence to withhold information that the Council reasonably require to assess an application, or to provide false information that leads to gaining a tenancy. We will take appropriate action, including possession proceedings, against anyone who gains a tenancy through knowingly providing false information. We will check if an applicant, or anyone in the household, is already registered. Only one application at any one time is allowed.

Before a property is offered for every applicant on the application, we must see at least two forms of proof of identity, and proof of current address. The applicant(s) sole or joint will be asked to provide photographic proof of identity. This will be at the application stage and prior to offer of accommodation. A photograph will be taken of the tenant where there is no other photo ID is available.

Applicant checks will be carried out at the time of application and offer stage on all members of the household applying to be re-housed. These checks will be made to confirm:

- Identity e.g., passport, Identity Card (issued to certain Foreign Nationals), photo-driving licence, birth certificate or written confirmation from a professional person or support agency.
- Information on income and expenditure, bank account statement from the last three months.
- Public and Private Sector landlord references.

3.3 Offers

Applicants who have made requests must inform the Council if they are unavailable. E.g., they are going on holiday or into hospital. If the applicant is contacted by the Council and there is no response, we use various contact methods giving the applicant 24 hours to make contact (during working time). If there is no response in the specified time period, the application will be bypassed.

Where applicants have told us that they are on holiday or in hospital, the property will be held for no longer than 7 days.

If an applicant is short-listed for more than one property in the same cycle, they will be asked which property they prefer. All viewings will be classed as offers. The application will be cancelled following 2 refusals.

Where a property advertisement has not closed, we will not consider these bids when making contact about a closed property.

Careful consideration must be made in deciding whether a property should be classed as a refusal. If there are no genuine reasons for a refusal, such as: the garden is too large, or there is no off-road parking, then this will be classed as a refusal as the information should have been attained from the advert.

It is mandatory that all new tenants pay one week's rent in advance before signing the tenancy agreement. All new tenants must also have a bank account and sign a direct debit, a recurring debit card payment or a standing order to pay their rent.

3.4 Bedroom requirements

The Council will ensure that applicants are considered for the most appropriate type of property. The number of bedrooms required is assessed through the number of people to be re housed and the ages and gender of children.

Family houses will be allocated to couples that are either married, civil partners or cohabiting partners (2 bedrooms only) and families with children/dependants who are living with them permanently will be eligible for houses.

The Allocation Policy considers that a woman who is pregnant (confirmation needed 21-24 weeks, MATB1) would be considered as requiring a bedroom for the unborn child and eligible for family accommodation. The Welfare Reform will not consider awarding Housing Benefit in respect of the number of bedrooms until the child is born. In instances where applicants who are expecting their first child cannot afford to take on the tenancy with the extra bedroom until the child is born will be paid an allowance for one bedroom for up to 8-weeks. This period can be extended to assist applicants who attain a tenancy before the 8-week period or if the baby is overdue.

Single People and Couples qualify for flats and maisonettes irrespective of the bedroom size; as long as the property is not overcrowded and is affordable, taking into account service charges and the spare room subsidy.

In accordance with Communities and Local Government (CLG) Code of Guidance the Allocation system must ensure that reasonable preference and flexibility is given to families that are separated who have carers, shared access, equal or staying access. Consideration can be given to families wishing to adopt, become a guardian or foster children and more bedrooms are needed to meet the adoption criteria. In cases of adoption or fostering a letter of supporting evidence is required from Children and Young People's Services.

In respect of relationship breakdown or shared custody of children under the age of 18 years, applicants may be considered for another bedroom in excess of their current assessed needs if they have shared access where a parent has the child up to the age of 18, to stay at least three nights per week. This will depend on the demand for properties in that area. It will not always be feasible to allow extra bedrooms for staying overnight or shared access.

Where there are children under the age of 18, and both parents have an arrangement for access the parent that has the child for overnight stays of less than 4 days will be eligible for a maisonette/ground floor flat, and the parent with access to the child 4 nights will be eligible for a house.

If the arrangement is 50/50 shared care e.g., 1 week with one parent and one week with the other parent, both parents will be eligible for family accommodation, subject to affordability. Families will need to provide evidence e.g., Court Order, or an agreement from Mediation detailing custodial arrangements, or a signed disclaimer from both parents detailing overnight access arrangements.

The signed disclaimer will be acknowledged by letter which will contain the following statement:

"I am obliged to inform you that it is a criminal offence for an applicant of Council housing to provide false information regarding their circumstances, and it could result in the application being cancelled. If a tenancy is granted and it later transpires that it was granted on the basis of false information provided by the tenant, then the Council would have the right to issue Court proceedings to seek a possession order to end the tenancy."

If an extra bedroom is needed to give or receive care, supporting evidence would be needed e.g., reports from health care, carers, or attendance allowance. A distinction should be made between a customer requiring 24 hour, seven days a week sleep over care, from a customer who only requires now and again sleep over care.

The Council will not offer a property if it will lead to a household being overcrowded.

Policy regarding occupancy levels

	Bedsit	1 Bed flat	2 Bed flat	3 Bed flat	2 Bed maisonette	3 Bed maisonette	1 Bed house	2 Bed house	3 Bed house	4 Bed house	Bungalows
Single Person	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	Assessment or age limit applies
2 Individual adults	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	Assessment or age limit applies
3 Individual adults	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	Assessment or age limit applies
Single person with overnight access to children	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	Assessment or age limit applies
Couple	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Assessment or age limit applies
Households with 1 child or single mums expecting their first child on production of a MATB1	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	Assessment or age limit applies
Households with 2 children or dependents	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	Assessment or age limit applies
Households with 3 or more children or dependents	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	Assessment or age limit applies

NOTE THAT: AFFORDABILITY CHECKS WILL BE MADE BEFORE A PROPERTY IS OFFERED, IF THE OUTCOME IS THAT THE APPLICANT CANNOT AFFORD TO TAKE ON THE TENANCY THE COUNCIL HAS A RIGHT NOT TO OFFER THAT PROPERTY

3.5 The Banding on the Housing Register

In order to identify those in the most housing need in a fair, objective, and sympathetic way we will use the information from the housing application and place in a band that best reflects the applicant's current circumstances.

Where there is a change in circumstances, we will reassess housing need and consider whether it is necessary to place the applicant in a different band.

The application will be changed from the date the customer advises of the change of circumstances.

Having determined the applicant's category of housing need, applicants will be placed on the Housing Register in one of the five bands from the date of assessment or from the date of receipt of the application and will be considered for rehousing in the date of application order.

The applicant will retain their banding application date throughout the rehousing waiting period. The only time a change will be applied is if the applicant has a change of circumstances and moves up a band.

Single applicants who subsequently add a joint applicant to their housing application will retain their application date.

In all other circumstances where the household accepts an offer of accommodation their application will be cancelled, this also includes mutual exchanges.

3.6 Cancelling applications

Applications will be cancelled in the following circumstances:

- People who complete a Right to Buy application.
- Is granted a tenancy by the Council or Housing Association and has voluntarily terminated their secure tenancy.
- Has been evicted from a Council or Housing Association tenancy.
- Has abandoned their Council or Housing Association home.
- Does not reply to a waiting list review letter within 4 weeks.
- Has more than one application registered.
- Has been nominated to a Shared Ownership Scheme
- Has succeeded or been assigned a Council Tenancy
- On accepting and signing a Mutual Exchange
- Has applied and accepted major adaptation work that meets their long-term needs.
- Has refused two suitable offers of Council or Housing Association accommodation.
- Has told us to do so.

Once an application is cancelled for any of the above reasons the applicant will not be allowed to rejoin the Housing Register for 12 months.

Applicants who have been evicted from their Council or Housing Association property will not be allowed to re-join the Housing Register for 5 years from the date of eviction.

3.7 Homeless Households

Where a person or persons present to the local authority as homeless or threatened with homelessness, enquiries will be made by the homeless team. If the person/s, are eligible for assistance a homeless application will be offered in line with the Homeless Reduction Act 2017. If the enquiries conclude the person/s is not eligible for assistance, they will be informed of this, and the decision will be put in writing. A referral will be made to either adult or children's services.

The homeless application and the enquiries made will determine which duty is owed. The homeless officer will assist in either preventing or relieving the homeless situation and all available housing options will be offered. If the person/s is in priority need and we have not either prevented or relieved them from homelessness they will go on to be owed the s193 main duty.

If the s195 prevention or s189b relief duty is owed and the person/s does qualify to join the housing register, the application will be placed in band 2 under the duty owed. This is regardless of priority need **or** intentionality. Applicants owed the S193 main duty and applicants currently residing in temporary accommodation, the homeless officer will request band 1 at the Housing Assessment Panel.

The Housing Assessment Panel will consider cases for households living in supported accommodation, once confirmation is received that they are ready for independent living.

A person, who is homeless, has no local connection to the borough of Rotherham will qualify to join the housing register and will be eligible for band 4. Homeless, in priority need and no local connection can be referred back to the local authority where they have local connection. This is in line with the process under the Homeless Reduction Act 2017. We do need to inform the person/s of this referral been made.

If an applicant is assessed under s190 Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 as intentionally homeless they will be placed into Band 3 and will be offered advice and assistance to access private rented housing or Housing Association accommodation.

Where an applicant does not qualify to join the Council's Housing Register and at risk of homelessness, those who are willing and engage with the following services will be considered for a "Next Steps Plan". Their case will be heard at the Housing Assessment Panel requesting to re-join the Housing Register.

The commitment includes:

1. Make appropriate Safeguarding referrals.
2. Make a commitment to sign up and engage with a relevant employment or training programme.
3. Complete the Crisis Skyline or Shiloh Renting Ready course.
4. Agree to referrals to debt advice and attend appointments.
5. Agree and engage with tenancy support.
6. Agree and engage with drug and alcohol treatment services.
7. Agree and maintain a payment plan based on what is affordable to reduce outstanding debt.
8. Complete an anger management course.

Their situation will be reviewed 2 months prior to making an offer of accommodation. If the applicant has not maintained the agreement, their application will be placed into suspension and reviewed monthly.

The agreement will also be continued to be monitored into the introductory tenancy period. If there are tenancy breaches, such as anti-social behaviour or rent arrears which are grounds for possession the tenancy will result in possession proceedings.

The Statutory Guidance on Allocations of Accommodation was revised on the 15th of May 2023. It states as follows: -

“Authorities may frame their allocation scheme to take into account factors in determining relative priorities between applicants in the reasonable (or additional) preference categories” (s.166A(5)). Examples of such factors are given in the legislation: financial resources, behaviour, and local connection. However, these examples are not exclusive, and authorities may take into account other factors instead or as well as these.

It is recognised that social rented housing is not the only tenure available to accommodate a person/s who are owed a prevention, relief, or main duty and where appropriate they will be supported to secure a private tenancy. Where a private rented tenancy is obtained the applicant can remain on the housing register in band 3.

Households who have been assessed as owed a prevention, relief or main duty are entitled to one offer on the Housing Register in Band 2 or a Private Rented Sector Offer and are given time limits to their banding status and are listed on table 4.2. The homelessness duty will be discharged following acceptance or refusal of a suitable offer.

Homelessness households who have been assessed as owed a prevention, relief or main duty who refuse a suitable offer of Council, RSL or Private Rented Sector Offer will be moved to Band 3. Once the applicant refuses 2 offers in total their Housing register application is cancelled.

Homeless households who are owed a main duty or residing in temporary and who have been actively bidding will be considered by Housing assessment Panel to move to Band 1 (table 4.1) and will subsequently be made one suitable offer.

If the household has been actively bidding and have had no previous offers, then subsequently refuse a successful bid in Band 1 their homelessness duty will end, and they will move to the Band 3 and be entitled to one final offer on the Housing Register.

4. The tables below show descriptions of Bands:

4.1 Band One all Vacant Council properties will be offered first to Band One.

Housing Assessment Panel will consider placing applications in one of four Bands. Not all cases heard at panel will be actively bidding as they may not be eligible for the housing register i.e., rent arrears, eviction. The award must be agreed by members of the Housing Assessment Panel, with at least 2 senior officers of the Council, one of which must be either the Head of Housing Options, Housing Advice and Assessment Manager or Housing Advice Coordinator, Housing Assessment Co-ordinator or Housing Information Co-ordinator see terms of reference. In extreme urgent situations the award status can be considered under delegated powers by the Head of Housing Options who can also delegate to the Housing Register and Advice Manager; and the Assistant Director of Housing who can delegate to the Head of Housing Operational Services.

Band 1 Award - The applicant will be awarded areas where we have sufficient stock and turnover. When determining suitable areas, the Housing Assessment Panel will consider the property household size, the type and size of property, affordability and subsequent stock, the turnover of a locality, the current demand, any support that maybe required and education or employment needs. The household will be advised by letter of the Housing Assessment Panel decision, including details of the property type and area they can bid for. Offers of accommodation will be dependent on confirmation that Care, and Support Services are provided and funded where necessary.

In certain circumstances properties may not necessary be allocated in date order but be considered against pressing need and waiting time, such as adaptations within a property, associated risks and where the assessment recommends specific streets, or where a Band 2 application has been waiting for a long period due to being restricted to certain areas due to support needs.

One offer of a property is allowed in Band 1, if the offer is refused the applicant will lose their Band 1 status and their housing application will be moved to Band 3, Council Tenants will be moved to the Transfer Band, where one remaining offer will be made. If the applicant has already had two offers the application will be cancelled following two refusals. Where a property is accepted the application will be cancelled. Time limits of 3 months is given to all applicants in Band 1 from the date of the Panel meeting. If the applicant has not made a request and properties, which meet the household size and area of choice, have been available, the applicant will be contacted to determine their circumstances. If there are no valid reasons for not bidding the Band 1 status will be cancelled and the application moved to Band 3. Homeless households will be supported by the Homeless team. The homelessness team will check available properties. If a suitable property becomes available a bid will be made on behalf of the applicant. If a suitable property is offered to the applicant and either accepted or refused the homelessness duty will be discharged.

BAND ONE	Status awarded by:	Details	Conditions
Main Duty Accepted	<p>Housing Assessment Panel</p> <p>Date of Main Duty Acceptance</p>	<p>Not intentionally homeless</p> <p>With a local connection in accordance with homeless legislation</p> <p>Triage Full Investigation Homeless Assessment Personal Housing Plan</p> <p>Homeless Officer to diarise / prepare panel case as part of main duty acceptance process.</p>	<p>Intentional decisions case closed move to Band 3</p> <p>One Offer</p> <p>Restricted to agreed areas of stock and turnover.</p> <p>Time limited to 3 months from the date of panel meeting. If no bids are made within 3 months or 1 offer is refused the application will move to band 3. If the applicant has already had 2 offers in total and these have been refused the application will be cancelled.</p> <p>The Homeless Team and Resettlement team to monitor cases and bid for suitable, affordable properties advertised. e.g., If a suitable property becomes available a bid will be made on behalf of the applicant.</p>
Households living in RMBC Temporary Accommodation	<p>Housing Assessment Panel</p> <p>Date when moved into Temporary Accommodation</p>	<p>With a local connection in accordance with homeless legislation</p> <p>Not intentionally homeless</p>	<p>One Offer</p> <p>Restricted to agreed areas of stock and turnover.</p> <p>Time limited to 3 months from the date of panel</p>

		<p>Triage Full Investigation Homeless Assessment Personal Housing Plan</p> <p>Resettlement Team to prepare panel case when all Housing Options have been exhausted.</p>	<p>meeting, if no bids are made within 3 month or 1 offer is refused the application will move to band 3. If the applicant has already had 2 offers in total and these have been refused the application will be cancelled.</p> <p>The Homeless Team and Resettlement team to monitor cases and bid for suitable, affordable properties advertised. E.g., If a suitable property becomes available a bid will be made on behalf of the applicant</p>
Households living in Commissioned Housing related Supported Accommodation	<p>Moving on Panel for applicants living in supported accommodation and ready to live independently.</p> <p>Date when Housing Advice & Assessment Team receive confirmation from the Supported Accommodation Provider the applicant is ready for independent living</p>	<p>With a local connection in accordance with homeless legislation</p> <p>Eligible for Housing Register</p> <p>Commissioned Providers and Providers where a service level agreement has been made</p>	<p>One Offer</p> <p>Restricted to agreed areas of stock and turnover.</p> <p>Time limited to 3 months from the date of panel meeting. If no bids are made within 3 month or 1 offer is refused the application will move to band 3. If the applicant has already had 2 offers in total and these have been refused the application will be cancelled.</p> <p>Supported Accommodation Providers to assist and monitor bidding</p>
Care Leavers in need of rehousing and are ready to live independently.	<p>Moving on Panel</p> <p>Date when Housing Advice & Assessment Team receive confirmation the applicant is ready for independent living</p>	<p>Care Leavers living in Supported accommodation ready to live independently.</p> <p>Care Leavers who have left foster care at the age of 18 and are living with family or</p>	<p>One Offer</p> <p>Restricted to agreed areas of stock and turnover.</p> <p>Time limited to 3 months, from the date of panel meeting. If no bids are made within 3</p>

		<p>friends. (Band 1 status will be applied up to the age of 25 – the housing application will remain in suspension until the applicant is ready to live independently.</p> <p>Joint applications where one of the applicants is a Care Leaver. The application will be placed in suspension.</p> <p>Care Leavers who have been evicted from supported accommodation will be placed in suspension until they are ready to live independently</p>	<p>month or 1 offer is refused the application will move to band 3. If the applicant has already had 2 offers in total and these have been refused the application will be cancelled.</p>
Armed Forces Covenant	<p>Housing Assessment Panel</p> <p>Date of confirmation of discharge received</p>	<p>Leaving Her Majesties Armed Forces, or former members of the Reserve Forces, or is a family member who has resided with the Service Personal and has no accommodation to return to. (As per Allocation of Housing Qualification Criteria for Armed Forces) (England) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/1869) and Housing Act 1996 Section 166A 3</p> <p>Former members of the forces</p>	<p>One Offer</p> <p>Time limited to 3 months, if no bids are made within 3 month or 1 offer is refused the application will move to band 3. If the applicant has already had 2 offers in total and these have been refused the application will be cancelled.</p> <p>Exempt from Local Connection</p> <p>Restricted to agreed areas of stock and turnover.</p>

		or Former Members of the Reserve Forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness, or disability should be assessed by the Medical Assessment team and placed in Band 1.	
Severe Social and Welfare Circumstances Exceptional Circumstances as detailed in Section 5	Housing Assessment Panel See sub-headings regarding effective date awarded at Housing Assessment Panel	<p>Adult or Child Safeguarding. Date panel case received, confirming safeguarding concerns.</p> <p>High Risk Domestic Abuse subject to MARAC, and the recommendation is rehousing. Date of MARAC meeting</p> <p>High risk offenders subject to MAPPAs and the recommendation is rehousing. Date of MAPPAs meeting</p> <p>Witness Protection, Date of notification on witness protection programme and referral to Rotherham made.</p> <p>Harassment / Threat of Violence Date panel case received.</p>	<p>One Offer</p> <p>Restricted to agreed areas of stock and turnover.</p> <p>Time limited to 3 months, if no bids are made within 3 months or 1 offer is refused the application will move to band 3. If the applicant has already had 2 offers in total and these have been refused the application will be cancelled.</p>

Housing Management Lettings	Housing Assessment Panel Date panel case received	Households decanted from their current tenancy. Successions	One Offer Restricted to agreed areas of stock and turnover. Time limited to 3 months, if no bids are made within 3 month or 1 offer is refused the application will move to band 3. If the applicant has already had 2 offers in total and these have been refused the application will be cancelled.
Severe Medical Need	Housing Assessment Panel See sub-headings regarding effective date awarded at Housing Assessment Panel	Terminal Illness and life expectancy has been medically diagnosed. Date DS1500 received. Bed Blocking This is where the applicant is unable to return home from hospital because their property does not meet their medical needs, and where temporary accommodation would be inappropriate. Date confirmation received from medical professional. Life limiting Illnesses. Requests from the Housing Occupational Therapist can be	One Offer Restricted to agreed areas of stock and turnover. Time limited to 3 months, if no bids are made within 3 month or 1 offer is refused the application will move to band 3. If the applicant has already had 2 offers in total and these have been refused the application will be cancelled.

		heard at the Housing Assessment Panel Date panel case received	
Service Sector leaving employment and have no accommodation	Housing Assessment Panel Date notification of leaving employment received	Leaving employment where there has been a provision of Private Sector tied accommodation or Council tied accommodation and have no accommodation to return to This will only apply if conditions of employment have been met. Those applicants who have been dismissed will not be eligible.	One Offer Restricted to agreed areas of stock and turnover. Time limited to 3 months, if no bids are made within 3 months or 1 offer is refused the application will move to band 3. If the applicant has already had 2 offers in total and these have been refused the application will be cancelled.
Applicants who live in an Adapted property or Disabled Persons Unit (DPU) who wish to move once they no longer need the adaptation.	Housing Assessment Panel Date panel case received confirming adapted property is no longer required	This will only include households who were allocated the property due to a medical need for an adaptation and the member of the household that needed the adaptation no longer lives there. This includes tenancies both with and without a Fixed Term Tenancy	One Offer Restricted to agreed areas of stock and turnover. Time limited to 3 months, if no bids are made within 3 month or 1 offer is refused the application will move to band 3. If the applicant has already had 2 offers in total and these have been refused the application will be cancelled.
Multiple Priority Needs.	Housing Assessment Panel Date second priority awarded	Applicants in band 2 with at least 2 reasonable preferences. Panel case to be prepared	One Offer Restricted to agreed areas of stock and turnover.

		when processing decision letter for second priority.	Time limited to 3 months, if no bids are made within 3 months or 1 offer is refused the application will move to band 3. If the applicant has already had 2 offers in total and these have been refused the application will be cancelled.
Homes Subject to Repair, Renewal or Emergency Prohibition Order, or where demolition through regeneration schemes results in only 25% of the scheme remaining occupied	Housing Assessment Panel Date cabinet report / notification of 25% remaining on the scheme. Date emergency prohibition order received	This includes applicants in all sectors	One Offer Restricted to agreed areas of stock and turnover. Time limited to 3 months, if no bids are made within 3 months or 1 offer is refused the application will move to band 3. If the applicant has already had 2 offers in total and these have been refused the application will be cancelled.
Households that are prospective foster carers, guardians or adopters that require suitable accommodation	Housing Assessment Panel Date panel case received, confirming applicant has proceeded to stage 2 of fostering / adoption process	Confirmation required from CYPS or a Solicitor of assessment of approval, awaiting suitable housing/number of bedrooms to be a foster carer, guardian, or adopter	One Offer Restricted to agreed areas of stock and turnover. Time limited to 3 months, if no bids are made within 3 months or 1 offer is refused the application will move to band 3. If the applicant has already had 2 offers in total and these have been refused the application will be cancelled.
Ex -offenders who wish to voluntary terminate their Council tenancy on	Housing Assessment Panel Date panel case received.	Eligible for the Housing Register Local Connection	One Offer Restricted to agreed areas of stock and turnover.

<p>sentencing as their prison sentence is more than 6 months. Housing Assessment Panel will consider the voluntary termination and determine the level of priority that will be awarded one month prior to being released.</p>		<p>The applicant will be encouraged to make requests 1 month prior to their release from prison.</p>	<p>Time limited to 3 months, if no bids are made within 3 months or 1 offer is refused the application will move to band 3. If the applicant has already had 2 offers in total and these have been refused the application will be cancelled.</p> <p>Where offenders have voluntarily terminated their tenancy, any live application will be cancelled. The person will be able to reapply to go on the housing register on release from prison</p>
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4.2 Band Two: These applicants have been awarded Band 2 through an assessment process as having some form of priority status. Offers are made in date order in Band 2.

In certain circumstances properties may not necessary be allocated in date order but be considered against pressing need and waiting time, such as adaptations within a property, associated risks and where the assessment recommends specific streets, or where a Band Two application has been waiting for a long period due to being restricted to certain areas due to support needs. For example, a property is advertised in August 2013 and a Band One applicant is at the top of the shortlist dated 24/7/2013 but the applicant in Band Two has a date of 19/8/2010 and the property meets their needs due to being close to support needs.

Applicants are entitled to two offers of accommodation on the Housing Register; if these are refused then the application will be cancelled. Where a property is accepted the application will be cancelled.

Re homeless households - The homelessness team will check available properties. If a suitable property becomes available a bid will be made on behalf of the applicant. If a suitable property becomes available a bid will be made on behalf of the applicant. If a suitable property is offered to the applicant and either accepted or refused the homelessness duty will be discharged.

Band 2	Status awarded by:	Details	Comments
Relief Duty Accepted	Homeless Officer Date when prevention or relief duty accepted (e.g., retain prevention date)	Priority Need / Non-Priority Need With a local connection in accordance with homeless legislation	One offer in Band 2 for priority applications, time limited to 56 days. Non-Priority cases relief duty ended after 56 days, provide advice and assistance, and move to Band 3

		<p>Physically Homeless exploring all other housing options.</p> <p>Discharge of duty can be through a suitable private rented sector offer.</p> <p>Triage Full Investigation Homeless Assessment Personal Housing Plan</p>	<p>This can be extended by the Officer if a suitable property does not become available.</p> <p>If a suitable offer is accepted or refused, then the homelessness duty will be discharged. If the property is refused the application will move to band 3 with one offer of Council Housing remaining.</p> <p>The Homeless Team and Resettlement team to monitor cases and bid for suitable, affordable properties advertised. e.g., If a suitable property becomes available a bid will be made on behalf of the applicant</p>
Prevention Duty Accepted	<p>Homeless Officer</p> <p>Date prevention duty owed</p>	<p>Priority Need / Non-Priority Need</p> <p>With a local connection in accordance with homeless legislation</p> <p>Threatened with Homelessness in Priority Need exploring all other housing options.</p> <p>Discharge of duty can be through a suitable private rented sector offer.</p>	<p>One offer in Band 2 time</p> <p>However, this can be extended by the Officer if a suitable property does not become available.</p> <p>If a suitable offer is accepted or refused, then the homelessness duty will be discharged. If the property is refused the application will move to band 3 with one offer of Council Housing remaining.</p> <p>The Homeless Team and Resettlement team to monitor cases and bid for suitable, affordable properties advertised. e.g., If a suitable property becomes available a bid will be made on behalf of the applicant</p>

		<p>Triage Full Investigation Homeless Assessment Personal Housing Plan</p>	
Homes Subject to Repair, Renewal, Demolition or Prohibition Order,	Strategic Housing Development Team, Environmental Health Cabinet Member	Homes subject to Demolition or Prohibition Orders, whose property has been approved for demolition/clearance and where major works are required to a customer's property making it inhabitable. To be awarded Band 2 from the date of the Cabinet Member decision	<p>Prohibition Orders Make requests in Key Choices- 2 offers.</p> <p>Regeneration makes requests in Key Choices - 2 offers. A Relocation Package will be offered to those affected by regeneration work.</p>
Medical Needs	Housing Advice and Assessment Team	Physical and Mental Health where current property no longer meets their needs.	<p>2 offers and time limited to 28 days. Confirmation of the support to be obtained by Social Care Assessment (if one undertaken by Adult Services) Distance to provide care and family commitments will be considered. The medical team have the right not to offer a property if it does not meet the applicant's medical needs. Homeowners and applicants with savings over £16,000 will be considered on a case-by-case basis, e.g., where the applicant cannot access alternative housing options which meet their medical need. This does not apply to current Council Tenants.</p>

<p>Current Rotherham Housing Association or Rotherham Council tenants who need to move for work related reasons and where failure to move closer to work would cause hardship</p>	<p>Housing Advice and Assessment Team</p>	<p>Evidence of job offer required.</p> <p>The length of the employment contract must be intended to be at least 12 months, voluntary and ancillary work is excluded. (Ancillary work means work that is occasional in an area, but the main place of work is in a different area)</p> <p>The travel distance and time taken to travel from home to work will be considered.</p> <p>The cost and availability of transport</p> <p>Medical conditions and childcare will be considered.</p>	<p>Consider whether failure to move would result in the loss of an opportunity to improve their employment, for example a better job or promotion or an apprenticeship.</p> <p>If the applicant has had a previous application cancelled, then they will NOT be required to wait the 2-year waiting period.</p> <p>2 offers</p>
<p>Households who are in low paid work or attending college or university who cannot afford to access or maintain housing options such as home ownership or private</p>	<p>Housing Advice and Assessment Team</p>	<p>Dated from the date the applicant notifies the Council to advise of their circumstances.</p>	<p>2 offers.</p> <p>Affordability check with Money Advice to be undertaken and the Council has the right not to offer a tenancy if the applicant cannot afford to take it on.</p> <p>To assist households who are struggling to manage private rented or homeownership due</p>

rented			to affordability
Victims of Domestic Abuse not subject to MARAC	Homelessness Team Housing Advice & Assessment Team		2 Offers
Statutorily Overcrowded	Environmental Health	Statutorily Overcrowded, and the household requires larger housing	2 offers. No time Limit due to lack of stock of 4 bedrooms.
Households who are under occupying a Council or Housing Association Tenancy.	Housing Advice and Assessment Team	Households who are under occupying by at least one bedroom. Giving up a house to a bungalow or flat with the same amount of bedrooms The downsizing category of Band 2 is awarded 12 months before the expiry date of a fixed term tenancy.	Assessment of size of property in relation to occupants. Subject to bedroom tax Preference for bungalows will only be given to those applicants who are age eligible or have an assessed need. Behaviour and conduct of previous and current tenancy's will be considered when assessing for bungalows. Affordability checks required. DHP referrals Money Advice Referral

4.3 Band 3 Households in the Band 3 will be entitled to two offers of accommodation. If these are refused the application will be cancelled. Where a property is accepted the application will be cancelled.

Band 3	Status awarded by	Details	Comments
Homeless under investigation	Homelessness Team Date of approach	Priority Need and Non-Priority Need With a local connection in accordance with homeless legislation	All other housing options to be explored
Homeless households who refuse a suitable/affordable offer of Council, RSL or Private Rented Sector Offer, and the homelessness duty have ended.	Homelessness team Retain the homelessness duty date	Priority Need and Non-Priority Need With a local connection in accordance with homeless legislation	Homeless Households are entitled to 1 offer before the homelessness duty is discharged. Following refusal in Band 1 or 2, the application is moved to this band 3, and will have 1 remaining offer on the housing register. Once the applicant refuses 2 offers in total their Housing Register application is cancelled. No bids in the last 12 months the application will be cancelled
Homeless households who have received an intentional decision	Homelessness team – case closed. Retain the homeless duty date	Priority Need With a local connection in accordance with homeless legislation Offer reasonable assistance	Homeless Households are entitled to 1 offer before the homelessness duty is discharged. Once the applicant refuses 2 offers in total their Housing Register application is cancelled. No bids in the last 12 months the application will be cancelled
Homeless cases in non-priority need	Homelessness team – case closed.	Non-Priority need	Homeless Households are entitled to 1 offer before the homelessness duty is discharged.

when relief duty has ended.	Retain the homeless duty date	With a local connection in accordance with homeless legislation Offer reasonable assistance	Once the applicant refuses 2 offers in total their Housing Register application is cancelled. No bids in the last 12 months the application will be cancelled
Households that have been moved from Band 1 having refused an offer. (Council Tenants will be moved from Band 1 to the Transfer Band)	Housing Advice and Assessment Team		These include applications that: was time limited to 3 months in Band 1 and no bids were made within this time? refused 1 offer in band 1. Note that if the applicant has already had 2 offers in total and these have been refused the application will be cancelled.
Households who are not employed or attending college and lack amenities or where the applicant cannot afford to access or maintain the rent or mortgage or where their current housing is unsuitable for their individual circumstances	Housing Advice and Assessment Team	Private tenants with lack of amenities (no hot/cold running water, inside toilet bath/shower, wash hand basin) or have shared facilities. Households who cannot access or afford to maintain rent payments will have an affordability check and an analysis of income and expenditure to determine affordability. Shared accommodation	Offers. Coded and dated on receipt or to the date of notification of circumstances.

		with shared amenities	
Families forced to live apart.	Housing Advice and Assessment Team	Couples or family and the accommodation is not large enough or appropriate for the family to live together.	2 Offers. Dated to the date the applicant informs the authority of the change of circumstances
Mobile caravans or boats with no static amenities	Housing Advice and Assessment Team	Mobile caravans or boats with no static amenities	2 Offers.
Overcrowded as defined by the bedroom space standard.	Assessment made by Environmental Health	Locally Overcrowded Children of the opposite sex who share a bedroom and one has reached their 10 th birthday	2 Offers. Dated to the date the applicant informs the authority of the change of circumstances
Living in a Council or Housing Association Flat in Rotherham for applicants with dependants under the age of 21. This includes a flat or a bedsit at all floor levels.	Housing Advice & Assessment Team	Council & Housing Association flats in Rotherham Households with dependants under the age of 21 This includes an applicant with children who chooses to accept a Council or Housing Association tenancy which is a flat	2 Offers and restricted to houses. Dated to the date the applicant informs the authority of the change of circumstances. Applicants can apply from the date the tenancy commences if desired. Otherwise, dated to date of application.
If a homeless applicant chooses to accept a private rented property to prevent or alleviate	Homelessness Team Dated from tenancy commencement date.	All property types. With a local connection in accordance with homeless legislation	2 Offers - can bid for eligible properties. Applicants can apply from the date the tenancy commences if desired. Otherwise, dated to date of application.

<p>their homelessness</p> <p>This includes non-commissioned supported housing providers.</p>	<p>With a local connection</p>		
<p>Applicants who wish to be considered for Council or Housing Association accommodation who are living on a permanent basis with family or friends and are ready to move on</p>	<p>Housing Advice and Assessment Team</p> <p>Coded on receipt by the Council</p>	<p>Applicants with no accommodation of their own, who are living with family or friends on a permanent basis and now require re-housing</p>	<p>2 offers – If no bids are made within 12 months the application will be cancelled.</p>
<p>4.4 Band Four – Applicants who are not eligible to be placed in Band 1, 2, 3 or the Transfer Band will qualify to join this Band if the applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has a local connection to Rotherham. • does not have any tenancy related debt to the Council or other Landlord. • has not been evicted from a tenancy during the last 5 years. • has not got a history of anti-social behaviour in the Community for the last 2 years. • has no intention to make the property overcrowded. 			

- Applicants who own their property anywhere in the world, which is adequate for their needs and can afford to purchase an alternative property on the open market. Owners includes properties which have secured loans, it also includes joint ownership when the applicant wishes to move with a family member who is the other owner. An applicant will be expected to sell their property within six months of obtaining a Rotherham Council tenancy. Applicants with medical needs will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Households living with partners/family/friends/dependants that do not currently need to move home.
- Households who are living in private rented homes.
- Service Sector tenants living in tied accommodation whilst they are in employment. A Service Sector tenant will qualify once their employment ends, and if they have no alternative accommodation will be placed in Band One following assessment.
- Applicants with savings over £16,000 (with joint applicants both individual savings will be considered) Applicants with medical needs will be considered on a case-by-case basis. This does not apply to current Council Tenants.
- Households in Supported Accommodation with no local connection.
- Households assessed and accepted as Homeless with no Local Connection to Rotherham will be awarded Band 4.

The band 4 banding will not apply to those who present as homeless in the following groups: -

- Members or Former Members of the Armed Forces, this includes Former Members of the Reserve Forces
- Bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the Armed Forces leaving service family accommodation following the death of their spouse/partner.
- Relationship breakdown and divorcees of Members of the Armed Forces and Former Members of the Reserve Forces at the time of application.
- Serving or former members of the Armed Forces Former and Former Members of the Reserve Forces who need to move in urgent circumstances because of serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service irrespective of when this was.
- Care Leavers who present as homeless.
- Applicants who present as homeless who are fleeing violence including domestic abuse and witness protection.

If a property has been advertised and no interest has been made from any suitable applicants, then this property will be advertised as a Direct Home and offered daily to the suitable/eligible applicant in the shortlist. The shortlist will be considered at the end of each day and will be offered in date turn order to Band One, then Band Two, then Band Three and then to a Transfer application and if still no demand, then Band Four will be next. The offer will not be made on a first come first served basis.

Households in this Band will be entitled to two offers of accommodation. If these are refused the application will be cancelled

Applicants who accept a tenancy including a Direct Home will have their application cancelled.

4.5 Transfer Band - Council or Housing Association Tenants in the Transfer Band will be entitled to two offers of accommodation. If these are refused the application will be cancelled.

Tenants not in housing need who do not wish to move will be asked to reapply when they are ready to move.

Current Council or Housing Association tenants who live outside Rotherham and are seeking to transfer to Rotherham to take up a job offer of long-term work and need to move to avoid hardship will be placed in this Band. (1% of lettings will be considered for this group of applicants and 9% for Rotherham tenants)

4.5 Transfer Band	Status awarded by	Details	Comments
<p>Existing Council and Housing Association tenants who have been a good tenant and have had no breaches in their current tenancy conditions in the last 12 months.</p> <p>Council or Housing Association tenants that have been</p>	<p>The Council's Area Housing Officers or relevant Housing Association to confirm eligibility of the tenant before the application is registered.</p>	<p>The tenant's current property and garden must be in good clean and tidy condition, with no unauthorised repairs.</p> <p>Breaches in tenancy conditions are defined in the Tenancy Agreement and includes rent arrears and reports of any anti-social behaviour.</p>	<p>2 Offers.</p> <p>Tenants who are not in housing need and do not want to move now will be asked to reapply when they are ready to move.</p> <p>Tenants will be able to bid for another home in accordance with the size of their household and bedroom need table section.3.4</p>

<p>moved from Band 1</p> <p>Current Council or Housing Association tenants who live outside Rotherham and are seeking to transfer to Rotherham to take up a job offer of long-term work and need to move to avoid hardship. (1% of lettings will be considered for this group of applicants)</p>		<p>For current Social Tenants who live outside of Rotherham consideration will be given to whether failure to move would result in the loss of an opportunity to improve their employment, for example a better job or promotion or an apprenticeship, and there must be:</p> <p>Evidence of a job offer is required.</p> <p>The length of the employment contract must be intended to be at least 12 months, voluntary and ancillary work is excluded. (Ancillary work means work that is occasional in an area, but the main place of work is in a different area)</p> <p>For those moving within the South Yorkshire Region, the travel distance and time taken to travel from home to work will be considered.</p>	
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		<p>The cost and availability of transport</p> <p>Medical conditions and childcare will be considered.</p> <p>Tenants with tenancy related debt that has accrued in the last 2 years must comply with the Allocation Policy debt rules.</p>	
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5. Housing Management Lettings

There are certain circumstances when vacant properties may not be advertised in the “Key Choices” letting scheme, and on some occasions, properties may have been advertised but the accommodation is required for a Management Letting for Rotherham residents.

These will normally apply to the following situations where the Council and its partner landlords may need to use vacant properties for specific management purposes in urgent circumstances. Some of the reasons include:

- Emergency re-housing, for example accommodation maybe required following fire, flood, or another major incident in Rotherham.
- Witness protection scheme – this includes cross boundaries.
- Safeguarding Rotherham Adults or Children.
- Housing for those leaving foster care or ensuring foster placements are available for Rotherham residents.
- Individuals re-housed through Multi Agency Public Protection Panel.
- Customers who are in hospital and are well enough to return home, but their current home in Rotherham is not suitable for their needs; this is known as Bed Blocking and has direct financial consequences to the authority.
- Customers who live in Rotherham are experiencing violence and need to move to ensure their safety.
- Provision of homeless temporary accommodation.
- Other exceptional housing management reasons assessed by the Housing Assessment Panel, Risk Management Panel or Cabinet Member Report.
- Other Exceptional urgent housing management reasons.

In extreme urgent circumstances where cases require an immediate decision, cases can be considered under delegated powers by the Head of Housing Options who can delegate to the Housing Register and Advice Manager and the Assistant Director of Housing who can delegate to the Head of Housing Operational Services. In making a decision the evidence included in a case will be considered

6. Furnished Homes

Applicants who have been offered a Council tenancy can choose to have a furniture package. Their application will be cancelled on taking a furnished home. A furnished charge is added to the rent account. It is advisable to check that furnished items are affordable. If claiming housing costs applicants will be advised to check with Department for Work and Pensions that the charge will be covered. The furniture charge is fully covered by Housing Benefit regulations for people on low incomes who would normally qualify.

There are different types of furnished packages to rent, which vary in cost.

7. Announcement of the Allocation Outcome

To ensure that all Allocations are transparent the results will be published on the internet on the Key Choices website and made available at all Customer Service Centres and at Key Choices. The General feedback will include the details of: -

- The type of property, locality and advertised group.
- Total number of requests received for the property.
- Registration Date and category of successful applicant.