

The principle amendments proposed to the Scheme are:

1. The format of the Allocation Scheme document has been revised to make it more readily understandable and to remove any areas of duplication.
2. Revised wording has been incorporated to better reflect the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act (amendments to Part VII of the Housing Act 1996) and to make clear how priority is applied in section 6 (exceptions to the qualification connection) and section 7 (note Band B, C and D) of the Scheme.
3. There is explicit inclusion of priority for victims of domestic abuse reflecting the current broader definition of abuse and reflecting anticipated changes under the new Domestic Abuse Bill currently going through Parliament and due to come into force in April 2021.
4. Expanded wording regarding additional preference for armed services personnel/veterans to reflect new statutory guidance (see section 6 (exceptions to local connection) and section 7 (banding additional preference)).
5. The criteria for eligibility as a result of employment in the Borough is proposed to be amended to employed in the Borough for 24 months within the last 3 years (changed from 12 months employment within the last 2 years in the current policy).
6. Eligibility for persons moving on from supported accommodation has been expanded to include people moving on from supported accommodation in the Borough that is provided by a registered provider of social housing rather than restricting eligibility to those moving on from supported housing commissioned by the Council.
7. The income and savings thresholds in the financial qualification criteria have been updated to better reflect the current housing market and average earnings to ensure that social housing is accessible to those that most need it.
8. The income and savings thresholds are extended to apply to persons who are existing social housing tenants.
9. The preference to allocation of newly built properties to existing social housing tenants is proposed to be removed.
10. The criteria regarding non-eligibility due to previous anti-social behaviour is proposed to be limited to circumstances where a formal sanction has been imposed on the persons in their current or a former tenancy as a result of anti-social behaviour or violence, rather than simply referring generally to anti-social behaviour.