

Housing Allocations Policy comparison document

Brief table detailing the changes between the existing and proposed policies

Allocations Policy 2022	Allocations Policy 2025	Rationale for change
1.5 Service Standards The service you can expect from our Housing Team can be found on the Council's website.	To be deleted.	Service standards are no longer posted on the council's website.
2.2.1 Local Connection To be considered as having a local connection to TRDC, at least one of the following criteria must apply: • have current residence (by choice) in the district and have lived in the district for at least five of the last six years, excluding any time spent in temporary accommodation. This requirement applies at the point of application and the point of offer; • have an immediate family member (parents, adult children, adult siblings) who is currently resident and has continuously been a resident within the district for at least ten years. The customer must have a relationship with that family member and a need for their support or to provide support to that family member. The Council would consider a need for support to be a formal care requirement, significant childcare needs or the need to assist in the care of a child with high complex needs. This requirement applies at the	2.2.1 Local Connection To be considered as having a local connection to TRDC, at least one of the following criteria must apply: • have current residence (by choice) in the district and have lived in the district for at least five of the last six years, excluding any time spent in temporary accommodation. This requirement applies at the point of application and the point of offer; • have an immediate family member (parents, adult children, adult siblings) who is currently resident and has continuously been a resident within the district for at least ten years. The customer must have a relationship with that family member, a need for their support or to provide support to that family member and must demonstrate that the distance they currently travel to provide this support is unreasonable or creates a barrier to delivering effective care or assistance. The Council would consider a need for support to be a formal care requirement, significant childcare needs, the need to assist in the care of a child with high complex needs. This	The Council will retain local connection criteria for those supporting long-standing family members in the district. A new procedure will assess if applicants living nearby qualify, considering travel distance, transport access, and level of support provided.

point of application and the point of offer.	requirement applies at the point of application and the point of offer.	
The following are listed in Section 2.2.1 of the Policy as having an exemption to the local connection criteria - - those who are currently serving in the Regular Armed Forces or who were serving in the Regular Forces at any time in the five years preceding their application for an allocation of social housing; - bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the Regular Forces where (i) the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease, to be entitled to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their Service spouse or civil partner, and (ii) the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service; - serving or former members of the Reserve Armed Forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service; • a member or former member of the Regular Armed Forces and the application is made within five years of discharge (includes bereaved spouses and civil partners leaving accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of their partner); - a divorced or separated spouse or civil partner of a Regular Armed Forces member who needs to move out of	Section 2.2.2 Armed Forces Exemptions All Armed Forces veterans, irrespective the length of Service or when this Service ended, are exempt from local connection criteria to join the council's Housing Register. This includes: - Current serving members of the Armed Forces; - Former members of the Armed Forces; - Bereaved spouses or civil partners of Armed Forces members, where the death was attributable to service; - Adult children of serving Armed Forces members who need to move out of family accommodation.	The exemptions for Armed Forces members (and families) will be removed from Section 2.2.1 and a new section will be added (Armed Forces Exemptions) that clarify the exemptions to the local connection criteria for this cohort. These changes have been made to reflect new Government guidance on the local connection criteria for this cohort, released in December 2023. This updated guidance removes any reference to length of Service.

accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence due to a relationship breakdown; • an adult child of a serving Regular Armed Forces member who is no longer able to remain in family accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence		
2.2.2 Housing Need – A customer may be considered to have a housing need if they or a member of their household has a medical condition or disability that is affected by their current housing situation. A customer will be required to complete an online medical form and provide supporting documentation dated within the last 12 months. Medical needs will be assessed and may be referred to an Independent Medical Advisor for a recommendation on whether medical priority should be awarded.	2.2.3 Housing Need – A customer may be considered to have a housing need if they or a member of their household has a medical condition or disability that is affected by their current housing situation. A customer will be required to complete an online medical form and provide supporting documentation dated within the last 12 months. Medical needs will be assessed and may be referred to an Independent Medical Advisor for a recommendation on whether medical priority should be awarded. Should a recommendation on medical priority be provided by the council's independent medical advisor, any decision to award medical priority to the application will be taken by the council's Housing Solutions Manager.	This additional text has been added to ensure alignment with our current procedures on the award of medical priority banding to a customer.
2.2.2 Housing Need – ‘However, there is an exception for customers over 60 years of age with a local connection who do not have a housing need. These customers will only be considered for age restricted properties and only prioritised in Band E.’	2.2.3 Housing Need – ‘However, there is an exception for customers over 55 years of age with a local connection who do not have a housing need. These customers will only be considered for age restricted properties and only prioritised in Band E.’	The age has been changed within this exception to 55 from 60. This reflects the fact that most Registered Providers will now accept those aged 55 and over for age restricted properties.

2.2.3 Home Ownership Most customers who own a property will not be considered to have a housing need as they have sufficient financial means to resolve their housing and will not qualify to join the housing register. Applications from customers who own a property but are experiencing financial hardship which may result in them losing their home will be considered on an individual basis.	2.2.4 Home Ownership Most customers who own a property will not be considered to have a housing need as they have sufficient financial means to resolve their housing and will not qualify to join the housing register. Applications from customers who own a property but are experiencing financial hardship which may result in them losing their home will be considered on an individual basis, however, these customers must be engaging with the council's Housing Options team.	The council may be able to prevent the homelessness of a customer who own's a property but are experiencing financial hardship which may result in them losing their home with early intervention. Therefore, to be considered for access to the Housing Register in these circumstances, it is appropriate to require the engagement from this customer with the Housing Service due to their threat of homelessness.
3.8 Home Visits A customer may be visited at their home prior to an offer to confirm their circumstances. Home visits may be conducted at short notice and the customer will have to ensure that they are available; otherwise, an offer of accommodation may not be made. If a customer does not have any settled accommodation, a visit may be made to the address provided on the application form.	3.8 Home Visits A customer may be visited at their home prior to an offer to confirm their circumstances. Visits can be scheduled, requested at short notice, or conducted unannounced. If a customer is unavailable for a scheduled visit, the accommodation offer will be subject to reconsideration. If a customer does not have any settled accommodation, a visit may be made to the address provided on the application form. These visits are essential, with access granted to all areas of the property as part of this verification process.	These visits already take place; this policy change simply clarifies that they may be unannounced. Verifying application details is essential to ensure accuracy, transparency, and that any housing offer is based on reliable information about the applicant's current circumstances.
4.2 Additional Priority For customers that must be awarded reasonable preference (4.1) and have urgent housing needs, they	4.2 Additional Priority The following customers that must be awarded reasonable preference (4.1) and have urgent housing needs, will	This section has been amended to align with new guidance; however, the Council is only

may also receive additional priority in the following circumstances: • currently serving in the regular forces and suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable to that service; • has formerly served in the regular armed forces; • has recently ceased or will cease to be entitled to reside in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of a spouse or civil partner who served in the regular forces and whose death was attributable to that service; • has served or is serving in the reserve forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable to that service.	receive a Band C priority on the council's Housing Register – • currently serving in the regular forces and suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable to that service; • has formerly served in the regular armed forces; • has recently ceased or will cease to be entitled to reside in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of a spouse or civil partner who served in the regular forces and whose death was attributable to that service; • has served or is serving in the reserve forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable to that service.	required to grant 'additional' priority. As part of our review into best practice for Armed Forces veterans engaging with the Housing Service, the Council propose granting a Band C priority to this cohort in these circumstances.
4.2 Additional Priority A customer may be awarded additional priority if one or more of the criteria below are met. This will be awarded by backdating their band start date by 12 months. • For sole applications, a customer has been employed for at least 12 months for a minimum of 24 hours per week; • for joint applications, both customers have been employed for at least 12 months for a minimum of 37 hours per week;	4.2 Additional Priority A customer may be awarded additional priority if one or more of the criteria below are met. This will be awarded by backdating their band start date by 12 months. • For sole applications, a customer has been employed for at least 12 months for a minimum of 24 hours per week; • for joint applications, both customers have been employed for at least 12 months for a minimum of 37 hours per week;	As part of our review into best practice for Armed Forces veterans engaging with the Housing Service, it is proposed to grant this additional priority, by backdating the band start date of a customer in this cohort, to recognise their service to the country.

• a customer is unable to work due to medical issues and has been unable to work for the last 12 months. Evidence must be provided from the DWP that a customer is receiving the support component of ESA or they have proof from the DWP stating that they have been assessed and are unable to work. As applications are verified at the point of offer, the onus will be on a customer to provide evidence of the above should it apply. If evidence is not provided a customer Housing Allocations Policy will not receive this additional priority. Customers will be advised of this requirement when making their online application. Backdates in priority will not be awarded should a customer not provide the necessary evidence when applicable.	• a customer is unable to work due to medical issues and has been unable to work for the last 12 months. Evidence must be provided from the DWP that a customer is receiving the support component of ESA or they have proof from the DWP stating that they have been assessed and are unable to work. A customer who has served in the Armed Forces who has joined the Housing Register as they have a housing need, however, are not currently homeless, will be awarded additional priority. This priority will be awarded by backdating their band start date by 2 years. As applications are verified at the point of offer, the onus will be on a customer to provide evidence of the above should it apply. If evidence is not provided a customer Housing Allocations Policy will not receive this additional priority. Customers will be advised of this requirement when making their online application. Backdates in priority will not be awarded should a customer not provide the necessary evidence when applicable.	
5.2 Domestic Abuse	The Domestic Abuse Caseworker role to be mentioned within Section 5.2 of the council's Housing Allocation Policy. Customers engaging with the Council's Domestic Abuse Caseworker who have experienced domestic abuse may be awarded welfare priority. Where appropriate, information may be requested	To confirm to customers that the Council employs a specialist Officer to provide support to victims of domestic abuse engaging with the Council.

	from relevant professionals supporting a customer.	
5.10 Extra Room for a Carer If an extra room is required for a carer, supporting documentation must be provided stating that a live in carer is required for the customer's care needs. This information must satisfy the Housing Supply Team. This may be referred to the Council's Independent Medical Advisor.	5.10 Extra Room for a Carer If an extra room is required for a carer, supporting documentation must be provided stating that a live in carer is required for the customer's care needs. This information must satisfy the Housing Supply Team. This may be referred to the Council's Independent Medical Advisor. If an additional bedroom is approved by the Housing Solutions Manager, the customer must provide evidence that they receive the benefits needed to cover its cost, to ensure affordability if they become benefit dependent. This evidence must be submitted before they can bid on larger properties.	This clarification has been added to help customers understand the affordability criteria set by our Registered Providers. Whilst a working household may be able to afford a larger property without any help from any benefit entitlement, Registered Providers will not accept a nomination for a property with an extra bedroom to the household's requirement unless that household is eligible to receive the relevant benefits to cover the rental amount. In the event that the household becomes benefit dependant in the future, without the correct benefit entitlement within the household, the extra rental amount required to cover the additional room in the property would not be provided, therefore, making the property unaffordable for the household.
5.11 Ground Floor Flats Priority for ground floor flats may be given to customers in Bands A to C with a medical need for ground floor accommodation. This will be clearly stated in the advert.	5.11 Ground Floor Flats Priority for ground floor flats may be given to customers in Bands A to C with a medical need for ground floor accommodation. This will be clearly stated in the advert. If priority is granted for ground floor accommodation, the customer will only be considered for	This additional text has been included to improve clarity for customers. The Council has had a number of applications where ground floor priority has been awarded to an application where the customer has attempted to debate with Officers that whilst they are unable to manage an external staircase, they are

	accommodation of this type (no external or internal stairs)	able to manage internal staircase. The purpose of this priority is to identify those customers who require ground floor, step free accommodation, not those who 'may' be able to use internal stairs. Therefore, this addition is required.
The council's Senior Housing Options Officer is referred to throughout the Policy	Wherever this title is mentioned it has been changed to the council's Housing Solutions Manager.	Title changed to reflect the new title of this role .
No exception to the local connection criteria for care leavers	Care leavers under the age of 25 will have an exemption to the council's local connection criteria.	Added to ensure adherence to updated Government legislation