

Housing Allocations Scheme

January 2023

EALING COUNCIL

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INTRODUCTION

Ealing Council's Housing Allocation Scheme (referred to as the scheme) establishes who can apply to join the housing register for consideration for social housing and how we prioritise applications to ensure that those in the highest need have an opportunity to be housed. The Council is required to have a scheme by section 166A (1) of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and to ensure the scheme is lawful and fair in determining the eligibility for and priorities in the allocation of social housing. The Council last reviewed the scheme in 2012 with some minor administrative amendments revising the scheme in 2013.

The Housing Act 1996 (as amended) requires local authorities to give reasonable preference in their allocations policies to the following main groups are:

- (a) people who are homeless within the meaning of Part 7 of the 1996 Act (including those who are intentionally homeless and those not in priority need)
- (b) people who are owed a duty by any housing authority under section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) of the 1996 Act (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any housing authority under section 192(3)
- (c) people occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions
- (d) people who need to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability, and
- (e) people who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the housing authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or others)

The scheme may also be framed so as to give additional preference to particular descriptions of people within one or more of paragraphs (a) to (e) (being descriptions of people with urgent housing needs). The scheme must be framed so as to give additional preference to a person with urgent housing needs who falls within one or more of paragraphs (a) to (e) and who –

- (i) is serving in the regular forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person's service,
- (ii) formerly served in the regular forces,
- (iii) has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of that person's spouse or civil partner who has served in the regular forces and whose death was attributable (wholly or partly) to that service, or
- (iv) is serving or has served in the reserve forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person's service.

For this purpose "*the regular forces*" and "*the reserve forces*" have the meanings given by section 374 of the Armed Forces Act 2006.

The scheme also takes into consideration other relevant legislation and guidance including but not limited to, Children Act 2004, Localism Act 2011, Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, Equality Act 2010 and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, and relevant guidance and regulations provided by Central Government. We also take into consideration the Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy, Tenancy Strategy, and Mayor of London's Housing Strategy, and any relevant caselaw. The scheme also provides procedures

used in the administration of the housing register and which Council Officers have specific powers and decision-making under the scheme.

In developing and agreeing the scheme, a public consultation was undertaken with Registered Providers, with whom the Council has nomination arrangements and relevant stakeholders such as Council departments, Ealing borough residents and voluntary sector service providers between 9 December 2019 to 6 March 2020. Following the consultation process, the scheme was delayed as a result of the Covid pandemic and eventually submitted to the Council's Cabinet in January 2023, when the revised scheme was approved.

The Council is committed to ensuring that the scheme is fully compliant with relevant equality legislation and best practice in all its services. The Council wishes to ensure that the scheme and its policies and procedures are operated in a manner which is fair to all sections of the community regardless of colour, race, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, marital status, sexual orientation, age, gender, gender reassignment or disability, all of which form protected groups under the Equality Act. All applicants for housing or rehousing will be asked to provide details of including but not limited to ethnic origin, sexuality, disability and other qualities information. However, this will not be a requirement for acceptance of an application or an offer of social housing. Equalities information assists the Council to monitor on a systematic basis that offers of social housing are being offered and allocated fairly in accordance with stated objectives and does not discriminate or disadvantage any particular group.

Lettings Plan

The Council is faced with a substantial demand for social housing, and an insufficient supply to meet this demand. An annual review of anticipated demand for and supply of housing will be undertaken; from this, a plan for all lettings will be set for the coming year. This will contain targets for identified priority categories to receive a percentage of the available housing resources where applicable and take into consideration the following:

- Statutory and contractual obligations
- Financial considerations including the cost of temporary accommodation and other housing settings for certain groups
- The Council's responsibility as a landlord
- The need to make the best use of Council stock
- Maintaining progress on Council estate regeneration projects to allow demolition and construction of new housing
- The housing situation within the borough
- Relevant case-law
- Other matters in the Council's interest as they arise

The Lettings Plan is an internal guide for Council Officers and is not a published document, as the plan can be altered at any time through the year for operational circumstances.

Choice Based Lettings and Allocation of Property

The Council want to ensure that how we allocate social housing is fair and transparent and, where possible, we give applicants as much choice of in the properties that they wish to live in. To facilitate this, the Council will, in the main, allocate property by the use of an advertised choice-based lettings approach via an online IT system. At present the IT system used is called Locata and is also utilised as a common tool by most of the Council's partner Private Registered Providers (mainly housing associations) and other West London Local Authorities. Properties are uploaded on a daily basis for applicants to consider bidding for, with additional property information including rental charge, location, property size and any other relevant details. Applicants can bid for properties in their assessed bedroom size or a bedroom size smaller. The bidding process will be time limited and upon closure of bidding, the Council establishes a

shortlist of the higher priority applicants who will be invited to view the property, with the highest priority applicant offered the property. More detailed information can be found later in the scheme.

Delegated Authority

The scheme will be monitored on a regular basis, primarily on an annual basis in accordance with the Lettings Plan and targets set. The Council will also be mindful of any legislative and regulatory changes that occur during the life of the scheme and the impact of any new case law that may require changes to the scheme.

In consultation with the Lead Member responsible for Genuinely Affordable Homes, the Strategic Director for Housing and Environment has the delegated authority to approve minor amendments to the scheme which are not considered major amendments. Should the amendments be considered major ones, the Council would be required to undertake a new public consultation and consult with relevant parties including Private Registered Providers before any revision of the existing scheme.

The scheme is available on the Council's website for applicants and other parties to download if they so wish. Additionally, the scheme can be printed free of charge to applicants if they write to Ealing Council, Perceval House, 14-16 Uxbridge Road, London W5 2HL or email Locatahelp@ealing.gov.uk. A copy can be printed off at Perceval House for applicants to take away and read if they wish to do so.

Applying for Housing

There is a significant shortage of social housing supply available to the Council to let each year. This means that for many applicants, the option of social housing is likely to be very limited with a significantly long wait for an offer of social housing if at all. To maximise the available housing options, there are a number of alternative schemes which may provide a housing option which meets the individual household needs. It is also important to note that housing through the Housing Register will not meet immediate or emergency housing needs, which sometimes result in a household becoming homeless or their current accommodation becomes unsuitable. We suggest that households with an immediate housing need contact the Council's Housing Demand department for a more detailed discussion of your housing options. There is more information and contact details on the Council's website www.ealing.gov.uk.

For tenants of a Private Registered Provider, in the first instance it is best to speak to their Housing Officer as likewise they will be able to advise on housing options, which may include access to schemes to which the Council does not have access to. It may be more beneficial to apply to the social landlord's own transfer list as they may be awarded greater priority for housing under their respective Allocations/Transfer scheme and many Private Registered Providers have considerably greater amounts of housing stock than the Council.

Eligibility to join the Housing Register

The Council maintains a Housing Register of applicants who wish to be considered for social housing by means of an assessment. Upon receipt of a completed Housing Register Application, the Council firstly has to consider if the applicant is **eligible** to join the housing register. This primarily depends upon their immigration status. The applicant is required to provide the required documentation to demonstrate that they meet the eligibility criteria.

The following persons are not eligible for entry onto the Housing Register for the allocation of social housing, which is set out in S.160ZA (2) or (4) of the Housing Act 1996 or in regulations made by the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State has determined that the following groups are not eligible to access social housing because of their immigration status:

You will not be eligible for entry onto the register if you are not entitled access to public funds due to your immigration status. This includes households who, by law:

- are subject to immigration control,
- only have a right to reside in the UK because they (or a member of their household) are a jobseeker,
- are not habitually resident in the UK,
- have a right to reside in the UK of less than three months.

If you are eligible for housing but your partner is not eligible because they fall into one of the above groups, you will be able to bid for accommodation, but if you are successful in securing a tenancy, you will not be able to have a joint tenancy with your partner.

Applicant or joint applicants, where a homeless duty and/or a social care duty has been accepted by another Local Authority, who are placed into the Borough of Ealing, will not accrue residency rights as the applicant will be expected to be assisted with longer term housing options by their placing Council.

Who Qualifies to be on the Housing Register

Once the Council has determined whether an applicant is **eligible** to join the register as set out above, the Council will then decide whether they **qualify** to be placed on the housing register – these are qualifications imposed by the Council. The Localism Act 2011 allows for significant local control over who qualifies for housing and the priority given to national and locally determined groups that are assessed as being in housing need. These flexibilities are now reflected in the scheme.

The applicant must satisfy all the following qualification rules to be allowed to join the register:

Age

- The applicant or joint applicants must be a person or persons aged eighteen years old and over.

Residency

- The applicant or joint applicants have resided in the Borough of Ealing continuously for the past 5 years up to the date of application to the Housing Register, save for the exceptions listed below.
- The applicant or joint applicants are Council tenant(s).
- The applicant is fleeing violence and harassment, and/or domestic abuse and it would be unsafe for them to remain in the area where they lived
- The applicant or joint applicants have been placed outside of Ealing Borough into temporary accommodation or by way of a private rented sector offer under our statutory homeless duties and powers. The applicant or joint applicants are person or persons placed in care placements by Ealing Council Social Services outside of Ealing borough.
- The applicant or joint applicants are person or persons in hospital or prison, whose last settled address was in the borough of Ealing and met the 5-year residency criteria prior to moving to hospital or prison.
- The applicant or joint applicants are person or persons accepted by the Council, under particular housing schemes or regulation, such as the Right to Move, Housing Moves, National Witness Protection Scheme, Safer London reciprocal scheme or other regional/national mobility schemes that the Council may participate in.
- The applicant or joint applicants are person or persons who are serving member(s) of the Armed Forces and former Service personnel, where the application for housing is made within five years of discharge, including bereaved spouses and civil partners who are required to leave Services Family Accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner.
- The applicant or joint applicants are person or persons who are a member or former member of Reserve Forces who have served in the last 5 years, and are applying for housing and are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to that service
- The applicant or joint applicants are person or persons who the Council considers on a case-by-case basis should be eligible, due to exceptional circumstances, which may include lack of residency in the UK prior to making an application or a transient lifestyle where the required proof of residence is difficult to provide to the Council.

Behaviour

- Where the applicant or joint applicants or any member of their household, has been found to have a history of reported serious anti-social and/or criminal behaviour, and the Council considers that they are unsuitable to be a future tenant as a result, including but not limited to where:-

- They, or any member of their household, have a conviction or an injunction is being sought or has already been obtained for the assault of a member of staff of the Council or body working in partnership or contract with the Council in the last 5 years.
- They, or any member of their household have been subject to an antisocial behaviour injunction order, closure order or possession order reliant in part at least on anti-social conduct in the last 5 years
- Where the applicant is a tenant, they or any member of their household has breached their tenancy agreement, including but not limited to allowing their property to be used for illegal or immoral purposes, and a court has made a possession order in respect of the property, whether outright or suspended, in the last 5 years.
- Where the applicant or joint applicant is an Ealing or former Ealing council tenant and they have allowed the condition of the property to fall into significant disrepair such that a possession order, whether outright or suspended, has been made in respect of the property in the last 5 years.
- Where an applicant or joint applicant has significant rent arrears which are outstanding at the point of application, and where there is no repayment plan in place to evidence the reduction and eventual clearance of the arrears amount within a reasonable period of time.
- The applicant, joint applicant or any member of the household who have knowingly given false or misleading information, or withheld information which has been reasonably requested as part of the allocation process within the last 5 years.
- Where the applicant or joint applicant has previously lost a social housing tenancy on the grounds that the property was sublet as a whole, or as part without the permission of the landlord within the last 5 years.

Income and Assets

- Where an applicant or joint applicant or a member of the household being considered as part of the application currently owns or has an interest in a property either in the UK or anywhere else in the world or has sold/passed on their ownership and/or interest in a property in the last 5 years. Applicants who have sold or passed on a property in the past 5 years will be required to provide details of the sale or property valuation at the time of passing the accommodation on, any financial capital gained from sale and what arrangements were made for alternative housing.
- Where an applicant or joint applicant and their household who are part of the application has capital/financial assets of more than £24,000 which includes but is not limited to monies held in savings/bank accounts; shares and investment funds; trust funds for other family members; premium bonds and other financial products. The Council will investigate cases to ensure that financial assets have not been deliberately reduced below the financial limit for the purposes of being eligible to join the housing register. The Council will consider exceptional circumstances of an asset level, e.g., a person who is awarded compensation or redundancy which is not a standard asset which a person receives, however we will consider the amount and whether an applicant can reasonably access other housing types and tenures to meet their housing needs.
- Where an applicant or joint applicant and their household have a joint income greater than the allocated maximum income level for the respective bedroom size. This includes all household members on the application and not just the applicant or joint applicant alone. The maximum income levels for each bedroom size are
 - Studio and 1 Bedroom – maximum income £35,000 per annum
 - 2 bedroom – maximum income £45,000 per annum

- 3 bedroom – maximum income £50,000 per annum
 - 4 bedroom or larger – maximum income £60,000 per annum.
 - Households that bid down a bedroom size, e.g., a household assessed as being a 3-bedroom housing need who bid for a 2-bedroom property will be assessed at the maximum income level of their assessed housing need, in this case a 3-bedroom need.
- Where the applicant or joint applicant have no demonstrable housing need after the assessment process has been completed. This means that applications that have no housing need and are considered adequately housed will not qualify to join the housing register. With the current imbalance of a lack of supply and a high level of demand for social housing, it is unrealistic for applications assessed as having no housing needs should be on the register, however they can seek advice on available housing options from their landlords if they are a social housing residence or the Council's Housing Demand department. The only exception to this is persons aged 60 years and over, who wish to be considered for sheltered housing only.

The Council will inform any applicant who is being excluded from the Housing Register detailing the reasons in writing. Applicants have a right to ask for a review of a decision to refuse or remove their application.

The Council retains the option, in exceptional circumstances or to avoid discrimination, to exercise its discretion when making decisions with regard to including persons on the Housing Register even where they do not satisfy one or more of the qualification requirements. Such cases will be referred to the Social Welfare Panel for consideration, which can only be made by a relevant professional, e.g., Housing Officer, Social Worker, Health worker. The panel may request additional information be provided to assess the individual merits of the application and taking into consideration the prevailing housing conditions within Ealing in terms of the supply of and demand for social housing from all applicants on the Housing Register.

For those not eligible or qualifying to join the Housing Register even where their application has been considered by the Social Welfare Panel/and or a review being undertake, the Council will consider a fresh application if:

- the applicant's immigration status has changed
- the applicant can demonstrate that arrears such as rent, council tax and other relevant payments have been made and the remaining arrears have been cleared.
- the applicant's financial circumstances change, and income and capital assets reduce below the maximum thresholds, except where the council is satisfied that the income and assets have been deliberately reduced below the financial limit for the purposes of being eligible to join the housing register.
- after the required period of time the five-year local connection with Ealing can be demonstrated with the required evidence.

Who can be considered part of the household and be included on the application?

- The applicant.
- The applicant's spouse/civil partner or partner who is living together with the applicant as a spouse/civil partner.
- The applicant's dependent children – including children born since the Housing Register application date, and dependent children under the age of 18 in and/or joining the household,

where the applicant is the sole legal guardian and that there is no other available option for housing.

- A dependent relative who has joined the household because they are unable to live independently, and there are no other available options for the family, e.g., the relative owns a property, or occupies a property, large enough to accommodate the family. Advice will be sought from relevant professionals, including the Council's Medical Adviser on whether the relative needs to live with the family. Where this is not considered essential other options, such as sheltered housing, will be discussed with the family before a decision is made by the Head of Allocations and Accommodation as to whether the relative should be included in the application or advised to make a separate Housing Register application. Normally only adults in receipt of Personal Independence Payment and/or Attendance Allowance, which includes the higher rate care component, or those receiving Attendance Allowance, at the higher rate, will be included. The dependent relative must be eligible for an offer in order to be considered.
- A carer, where the applicant can demonstrate that a live-in carer is required by a qualified health care professional and who has been identified and has moved in with the applicant or is ready to do so when accommodation is made available, and where the Council's Medical Adviser recommends that such a carer is essential, and this is agreed by the Council.

Exceptions to the above household's criteria point are:

- If an applicant has been accepted as statutory homeless by Ealing Council, then the household will include all members who genuinely live with the applicant, including adult children.
- Where an applicant is an existing Ealing Council secure tenant and is required to move as part of a planned regeneration programme, where their existing property will be demolished, and they are required to transfer to alternative social housing. The Council may split a household by offering two or more properties if the availability of accommodation within the social stock would make the rehousing of the whole household in one property a serious operational difficulty and the number of bedrooms the household is entitled to will be determined and confirmed to the household.
- Where an applicant is an existing secure Ealing Council tenants who require a transfer, the household includes persons who have continuously been part of the household since the start of the tenancy, and are still in occupation

Applicants and members of a household on an application cannot be part of another application, e.g., an adult son or daughter applying in their own right to the register and being part of their parents' application for housing. In such cases, both applications will be suspended until such time that either a change or circumstances and/or an application is completed, reviewed and amendments made including changing the family composition which may impact on the priority banding and/or closing of an application.

The Council will not consider members of the household who are not resident in the UK at time of application. Such person can only be added to the application once lawfully resident in the UK.

Applications for children to be added to the application where there is shared custody will require the relevant legal evidence to confirm the living arrangements, e.g., formal residence agreement and/or relevant court papers. The Council will assess both parents' housing circumstances and generally consider one parent as the primary person with parental responsibility and therefore their accommodation as the primary residence of the child/children and will generally not accept the child/ren as a permanent part of the other parent's housing application.

Validation of Application

All applicants are required to complete the online application via the Locata IT system – www.locata.org.uk (click on the link for Ealing) to be considered for the Housing Register. Applicants are asked basic eligibility questions before completing the main part of the application to ensure they meet the relevant criteria as set out in the scheme.

If the Council is satisfied that the applicant is an eligible person, he/she will be registered and notified that they have been registered with the relevant reference number and advice on how to bid for accommodation. If the applicant is not eligible to join the register, they will be notified in writing, giving the reasons for the decision, and the right to request a review of this decision.

In exceptional circumstances an eligible person may be registered without an application at the Council's discretion, e.g., a referral from Social Services however this must be agreed by the Head of Allocations and Accommodation.

Eligible persons are required to submit, when requested, passport photographs, and proof of identity for all persons on the application, and proof of residence and immigration status for all persons aged 16 or over included on the application, covering the last ten years. The Locata IT system allows applicants to submit the information online directly to the Council for consideration in assessing the housing register application. Examples of acceptable proof would be original or certified copies of the following:

- Passport
- Marriage certificate
- Birth Certificate
- Television Licence
- Driving Licence
- Immigration Documentation
- National Insurance Number card
- Proof of DWP benefit entitlement (online print out acceptable)
- Mortgage statements (online print out acceptable)
- Council and/or Housing Benefit letter P60
- Payslips (online print out acceptable)
- Bank statements (online print out acceptable)
- Letters from health care professionals

Where the applicant(s) is unable to provide the above documents, e.g., the applicant has recently arrived from abroad or is unable to provide due to age i.e., below the age of 16, the Council will not register the person and/or application until the necessary information is submitted and the Council is satisfied that the person is eligible.

The Council will take all necessary steps to guard against misrepresentation and fraud and ensure that it administers the public resource of social housing appropriately. Enquiries will be carried out with relevant agencies at any time, either at the application stage or subsequently including the granting of tenancy. An applicant who obtains accommodation by making false or misleading statements, or

withholding relevant information, or who has failed to inform the Council of any material change in their circumstances, may be prosecuted. Possession proceedings will be taken to recover any tenancy granted to such persons.

Registration of initial assessment

An initial assessment is made based on the information on the online application form and any other information available. All eligible persons will be assessed, placed in the appropriate 'bedroom category' and in one of the three priority Bandings in order of date of their original register application.

Eligible persons will be notified in writing that they have been registered, and that they can bid for homes through the system. They will also be provided with a membership pack which will contain the following information:

- Housing Register Application Number – referred to as a Locata Identification Number (LIN)
- Their Band and reason for their inclusion on the housing register
- Their priority date
- Their bedroom size requirement
- If applicable, any additional information in regard to their housing need, e.g., sheltered housing only, requiring an accessible unit of social housing, etc.,

If the application is not considered eligible to join the register, for example does not meet residency criteria, or assessed as being adequately housed, the applicant will be advised in writing of the decision and will be allowed the right to request a review the Council's decision. The housing register application will be closed at this time. If the review decision or subsequent legal actions overturn the initial decision now allowing the applicant to join the register, the old application will be reopened and actioned accordingly.

Change of circumstances

Applicants must inform the Council via the online IT system of any changes in their circumstances, which can include members of the households joining or leaving, a change of address, a change in income/asset levels or other information of which the applicant wishes to inform the Council. The Council will review the information and reassess the application if required to do so. If this results in a change to the housing register application, e.g., a change in the priority band and/or date, and/or removal from the register, the applicant will be informed in writing. If an applicant is not contacted for a shortlisting viewing because the information on the housing register has not been updated by the applicant, this is the responsibility of the applicant and not the Council.

If a change of circumstance becomes apparent during the shortlisting or offer process, the Council may as appropriate, withdraw an applicant from a particular shortlisting process and suspend the application until such time the Council is satisfied that it has all the relevant information to reassess the application. It is also unlikely that any property shortlisting will be delayed allowing the assessment to take place. Applicants will also be informed of their right to request a review of any such decisions although should the applicant be successful in the review/legal process, it is likely that the particular property the applicant was shortlisted for has been already let to another applicant, and the Council may consider other remedies to assist the applicant, for example a direct offer of social housing.

Re-registrations/renewal of Housing Register Application

The Council will require applicants to comply with re-registration requests that are undertaken from time to time in an effort to maintain an accurate housing register which contains applications for those requiring housing. Many applicants complete an application form however do not bid for accommodation and/or their circumstances change including finding a longer-term housing solution elsewhere and therefore no longer need to be registered with the council. Applicants will be required to access their housing application online and confirm that their circumstances are the same or provide up to date information to the Council so that it is possible to review and where applicable reassess their application. Applicants are given a set period to respond to the re-registration request, then if no action is taken, the application is hibernated on the IT system for a further set period of time, which the applicant can reinstate by logging on and providing the required information. If the applicant does not log on during the hibernation period, the application will be removed from the housing register and applicants will need to re-apply, and there is no requirement for the Council to inform the applicant that their application has been removed, as they will have had sufficient time to activate their application during and post reregistration periods. The respective time periods will be confirmed in the re-registration requests sent to applicants.

Removal and Suspension from the Housing Register

An applicant will be removed from the register if:

- it is found that he/she has never been, or ceases to be, an eligible person
- it is found that he/she was not a qualifying person
- fails to comply with the re-registration process
- if the applicant's circumstances change to an extent that they are not awarded a priority band as set out on the scheme and therefore considered to be adequately housed
- the Council considers there are good reasons, and sufficient grounds. Such reasons would include but not be limited to supplying false information to support an application; an applicant who has been imprisoned for 12 months or longer, the Council being advised that the applicant has left the United Kingdom permanently, the applicant being included on a Police Missing Persons list; an applicant attempting to exert undue or inappropriate influence on a Council Officer or other professional.
- The applicant or a member of their household being the subject of actions being taken by the Council or some other body on the grounds of alleged anti- social behaviour which has led to a conviction, an injunction, possession or a closure order.
- The application is suspended for a period of time and the applicant fails to comply with the request to provide the required document to allow the council to complete the verification process.

Applicants will be notified in writing of their removal from the register, with the reasons for this, and their right to request a review of the decision.

An applicant will be suspended from the Housing Register if they:

- bid for and refuse three or more reasonable offers of social housing, which will result in a 12-month suspension from the register.
- fail to attend a verification interview or provide requested verification documents, with suspension removed once the applicant has completed the verification process and explaining why they did not follow this process at the time the Council requested the documentation.

- are applicants in temporary accommodation placed by Ealing Council who have rent arrears of more than 6 weeks with no payment plan in place and no evidence of payments made towards the arrears. Other council related debts will be taken into consideration such as council tax arrears and housing benefit overpayments that have not been paid back to the Council. The suspension will last until such time the arrears are cleared fully or at list by 50% of the total amount owed, a payment plan in place and the required payments have been made for at least 3 months.
- fail to provide requested documentation during the initial validation process within a ten working day period after a formal request for such documentation. The application will be suspended until the documents are received.
- they or a member of their household are the subject of actions being taken by the Council or some other body on the grounds of alleged anti-social behaviour. The suspension period will depend on the nature of the ASB.
- applicant that has been made a direct offer of accommodation and are not allowed to bid at the same time. The applicant will be considered as offered and will not be able to be considered for other social housing at the time the remain offered to a particular social housing offer.

Applicants who are subject to suspension will have the ability to exercise their right of review.

Assessed housing needs including priority band and date, and bedroom size criteria.

Ealing Council administers its Housing Allocation Scheme via a banding system based on an assessment of the applicant's housing needs once the eligibility to join the register has been confirmed. Applicants will complete the application form online and provide additional relevant information for the Council to assess, include medical, social and relevant professional reports, so that the Council can fully assess the needs of all members of the household that wish to be housed.

The Council must lawfully ensure that certain applicants are given a reasonable preference when considering the priorities to allocate social housing to, in accordance with S166A (3) of the Housing Act 1996. The below list of reasonable preference groups is included within the priority banding system used in the scheme with different levels of priority awarded based on the individual housing need circumstances of the applicant and their household. This includes

- Applicants who are homeless or at risk of homeless
- Applicants who are living in overcrowded or insanitary housing conditions
- Applicants who need to move because of medical and/or welfare reasons
- Applicants who need to move due to hardship including those considered under the Right To Move criteria
- Applicants who are current or previous members of the British Armed Forces who are in housing need.

Where possible the scheme will aim to assist those applicants that fall into the reasonable preference groups with a priority which will allow them to bid and be successful at some point in being considered for an offer of social housing. Other non-reasonable preference groups are also given priority within the scheme to allow the Council to make best use of its available housing stock and freeing up units for others in housing need to move into properties that become available, e.g., moving an under occupying council tenant into a smaller social housing property, freeing up a larger property for another household to move to.

The priority banding system definitions are as follows

Band A: Emergency and Top Priority

Band B: Urgent need to move

Band C: Identified Housing need

Applicants who apply to the Housing Register and are assessed as having no housing needs will not be allowed to join the register. Housing advice and assistance is available from the Council either in person in the housing hub offices or in relevant public venues such as libraries located across the borough, on the Council's website, via general housing advice telephone lines, via the relevant email address Locatahelp@ealing.gov.uk and the Locata website.

Priority dates

When an applicant applies and is accepted onto the Housing Register, they are informed of their priority band and priority date. The priority date is of particular importance when bidding for social housing, as where there are multiple households bidding from the same band, so the applicant with the oldest priority

date will be in a higher position in a bidding shortlist than an applicant with the same priority band but with a much more recent priority date. The key principle is that no applicant shall overtake an existing applicant when they are placed into a higher Band or have a later (more recent) priority date when placed into a lower Band.

For example, when moving up a Band (from C towards A) the priority date will be the date when the higher priority was awarded. When moving down a Band (from A towards C) the new priority date reverts to the date applied when the member was previously in that Band, or any earlier date when they were in a higher Band. The principle is that when moving down they should be awarded the earliest date that they were in the new lower Band, or in a higher Band.

The Council may determine that, in certain circumstances, an earlier priority date can be awarded to better reflect the needs and waiting time of the household, superseding the later date already issued. See examples below:

Example 1	Priority Date
Member applies to register in January and is awarded Band C	January
In February member is awarded Band B	February
In March member is awarded Band A	March
In April member is downgraded to Band C	January

Example 2	Priority Date
Member applies to register in January and is awarded Band C	January
In February member is awarded Band A	February
In April member is downgraded to Band B	February

Priority Categories

Medical – Band A, B or C

Applicants who indicate that they have a medical illness or disability, which is affected by their current home, or who may be vulnerable due to physical or mental health grounds, and in need of settled accommodation, can be considered for medical priority banding. It is important that the applicant is able to demonstrate the medical illness or disability is being worsened by the conditions of the accommodation that they are residing in, that the current accommodation cannot be improved to mitigate the impact on the medical conditions, such as aids and adaptations and that being moved to alternative accommodation will significantly improve the noted medical conditions.

Applicants are required to complete the online medical assessment form through the housing register IT system and provide supporting evidence from qualified clinicians and health care professionals which clearly shows the relationship and impact of the medical conditions and current accommodation. The information submitted will be assessed by the Council's Medical Adviser who will provide a recommendation to the Council. The purpose of this assessment is to provide a recommendation to inform subsequent decisions by the Council. This assessment is a desktop exercise and the Medical Adviser will not see applicants directly. The emphasis of the process is for applicants to engage with their health care professionals, and to provide the necessary documentation for the Council to assess their circumstances. The Medical Adviser may consult the health care professional involved with the applicant as appropriate in their consideration of the case. The Council will not pay for medical reports and any such fees must be paid by the applicant.

The relevant Council Officer will consider the Medical Adviser's recommendation and the information utilised by the Medical Adviser and consider what the priority band should, which can include no medical priority band awarded. The medical assessment outcome may be referred to the Council's Regulatory Services and/or Aids and Adaptation services, where the possibility to inspect the accommodation may

be considered an appropriate action prior to the completion of the medical assessment or as a post assessment action. The Council will only reassess the medical circumstances on receipt of new medical information and will not re-assess information already considered by the Council in a previous medical assessment.

Medical assessments are made on the applicant, or members of their household, in relation to the effect present housing may have on their state of health. If there is an adverse effect, due to current housing, the Medical Adviser will consider whether the overall effect on the household is of a nature to warrant the recommendation for inclusion in a higher Band. Simply having a medical illness or a disability is not a guarantee of being awarded medical priority as the Council may consider that despite the noted conditions, your accommodation is suitable for your continued occupation.

Social Welfare – Band A, B or C

Social welfare priority is assessed by a panel, who consider and award additional priority to applicants where a household is experiencing severe or significant hardship as a result a combination of different factors which make the need for rehousing more urgent than when considered separately. The panel will be chaired by the Head of Allocations and Accommodation (or another appropriate senior officer as required) and include at least two other managers from within the Housing Demand division.

The remit of applications considered by the panel are likely to be varied in both circumstances and housing need, and it is envisaged that the panel will consider cases involving but not limited to unforeseen circumstances and those involving a previously long association with the borough which has recently been broken. The panel will also review and take decisions on the status of cases which had previously been subject to a panel decision which resulted in an increased priority banding. The panel will also consider other exceptional cases, including but limited to requests to join/remain on the register where an applicant does not meet the eligibility criteria, requests for a different sized property if not on the grounds of medical circumstances and consideration of cases referred under the Fostering and Adoption priority category.

The panel will also consider cases referred under specific housing schemes such as the National Mobility Witness Scheme, Safer London reciprocal scheme and similar schemes to ensure consistency in assessment and decision making against similar circumstance cases.

Referrals to the Panel are to be made by Council officers and other professionals only, and the Panel will not accept direct referrals from applicants or members of their household. Supporting evidence including professional reports, needs and risk assessments, legal and/or court papers and other documents which support the referral will be required to be submitted. Following its deliberations, the Panel will reach a decision and inform the applicant/referring organisation in writing.

Under-occupation and succession – Band A

This priority band is only for Ealing Council Secure Tenants who reside in permanent social housing owned by Ealing Council. The priority will be awarded to

- Ealing Tenants who are living in Council accommodation that is larger than their current household composition and they wish to move to smaller accommodation.
- Ealing Tenants who are living in adapted accommodation which they no longer require, the adaptations have been assessed by the Council as being required by other households on the Housing Register with mobility needs who would benefit from the accommodation and the Tenant wishes to move to alternative accommodation, which may be the same or smaller size than the current accommodation.
- Applicants who have been agreed as a statutory successor but are residing in Council accommodation which is larger than what they are eligible to be offered and need to move to smaller accommodation.

Permanent Decant – Band A or B

The priority bands will be awarded to Ealing Council Secure Tenants who are required to vacate their property as they are residing on a Council regeneration project which is subject to demolition and/or major refurbishment required vacant possession of the property.

The bands will also be awarded to Ealing Council Secure Tenants who are required to move because their accommodation is requiring urgent essential repair work and that the works will take a considerable period of time to complete. The Tenant may be considered for a temporary decant to allow them to return home once the works are completed, however in some cases the Tenant may not wish to return and may prefer to move to alternative accommodation permanently.

Band A is awarded when vacant possession of an Ealing council property is required within the next 6 months or where essential repair works are required and the Council Tenant will not be returning to their property. Band B will be awarded to those who are required to move within the next 12 months.

Unauthorised Occupants and Non-Council Tenants requiring a move on a Council Regeneration project – Band A, B or C

For Ealing Council Secure Tenants, the Council will allow one statutory succession for a property. The Council will then consider additional succession requests for the same property should the new tenant die, considering the applicant as an Unauthorised Occupant. The Council will consider the request for a non-statutory succession and where this has been agreed, will consider whether the current accommodation is suitable for the current applicant to be awarded a tenancy at the property.

Unauthorised occupants, for the purposes of this scheme, are categories of persons set out in a), b) and c) below, who were residing in a Council property at the time the previous tenancy ended. Any other unauthorised occupiers, not falling within these categories, must be referred to the Housing Demand Service and advised to seek independent housing advice.

a) Persons not entitled to take over a tenancy from a secure tenant by succession following the death of the previous tenant. If, following the death of the secure tenant, the unauthorised occupant was residing in the property at the time the secure tenant died and appears to meet one or more of the criteria below, an Officer from the Council will interview the applicant:

- Where it is in the Council's interest to offer a tenancy, e.g., where the applicant is vulnerable or has dependent children, or where to rehouse into a smaller unit would release a large unit quickly.
- gay partners of deceased tenants who would have qualified for succession if they had been heterosexual.
- persons who would have qualified for succession had there not previously been a succession, are not in priority need, but have been living with the deceased tenant continuously for 20 years or more.
- former carers of deceased tenants who have undertaken caring responsibilities and have done so whilst residing at the property for at least 12 months prior to the death of the tenant and have evidence of providing care, such as carers assessment, carers allowance and/or confirmation from Ealing Council Social Services.

b) Persons holding over following the termination of the tenancy by Notice to Quit, Surrender or other reasons whom meet the criteria set out below.

- Spouse.
- Children.
- Partners (including gay partners) who have resided in the property continuously for 20 years or more.
- Carers of the former tenant who have undertaken caring responsibilities and have done so whilst residing at the property for at least 12 months prior to the departure of the tenant from the

property and have evidence of providing care, such as carers assessment, carers allowance and/or confirmation from Ealing Council Social Services.

c) Former Joint Tenants holding over. In cases where a joint tenancy is due to end, or has been ended e.g., where one party has served a Notice to Quit, and an application for continued accommodation is received from the ex-tenant left, or to be left, in occupation after the tenancy has ended, the Council will interview the ex-tenant. The Officer will provide a report, and a completed application form by the applicant, to Head of Allocations and Accommodation for a decision. In reaching a decision as to whether an allocation will be made, the following will be taken into account:

- whether the remaining ex-tenant has dependent children whether the ex-tenant is vulnerable on medical or other grounds, such as to be likely in priority need if they were homeless
- whether they held the previous tenancy for 20 years or more

All applicants in categories must complete an application form, which will be referred to the Housing Demand Service, if the applicant appears to meet the criteria. The applicant is registered by a Housing Demand Service, and then may be invited for an interview and verification, before being referred to the relevant Officer to check eligibility. In reaching a decision the Officer will consider how they meet the criteria above, including the age of the applicant, whether the applicant would likely be in priority need if they were homeless, and any other relevant consideration. If a decision is made that an allocation of housing should be made to the above members, the Head of Allocations and Accommodation will decide whether to grant the tenancy of the property, occupied by the applicant, or whether they should be placed in a Band to bid for alternative accommodation in line with the guidelines below:

If the Council agrees to considering a non-statutory succession however the applicant household size does not match the property they are currently residing, to facilitate a move, the Council will award priority accordingly. If the applicant is required to move from the property they are currently under occupying, i.e., the current property is too big for their household, they will be awarded Band A. Where the property is the same size as their assessed housing need but may not be suitable then Band B will be awarded. If an applicant requires a larger property than the current accommodation, Band C will be awarded to be consistent with the general priority band award for overcrowded households.

The Council will award Band B only to household members of an Ealing Council secure tenant who have been agreed for a split household move on an existing regeneration scheme to allow the whole household to be rehoused to allow for the required vacant possession and subsequent demolition/refurbishment to occur and where this applicant is not the Ealing Council Secure Tenant who will be considered under the Permanent Decant priority category. The priority award to a household member must be confirmed by the Council's Regeneration Managers and the member must not be part of the primary Ealing Council secure tenant application.

Statutory Homeless: owed full duty – Band B or C

An applicant will be eligible for the award of the statutory homeless priority if they have been assessed and accepted as homeless within the meaning of part VII of the Housing Act 1996, are owed a homeless duty by Ealing Council under the Housing Act 1996 Part VII Section 193(2) by Ealing Council

An applicant will be awarded Band C once they have applied to the Housing Register and a homeless duty has been accepted by Ealing Council. An applicant will be moved to Band B once they have been accepted for 5 years or more by the Council so as to prioritise those who have been waiting longest for longer term accommodation then their current housing circumstances.

Other Homeless Households– Band C

An applicant will be eligible for the award of other homeless households' priority if they are persons other than those owed the full housing duty of section 193(2) but who are homeless within the meaning of Part 7 or owed a duty under section 189B, 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) will be placed in Band C.

In order to support households owed a duty by Ealing Council under the Housing Act 1996 Part VII Sections 189B, 193(2) or 195(2) by Ealing Council who have accepted a private rented sector offer discharging that duty, the Council will allow for a limited time of 2 years from the date the household moved to alternative accommodation, a Band C priority award (if no other priority category is relevant) for the household to remain on the housing register. After the 2 years have passed and if there have been no changes to the household's circumstances, the housing register application will be closed.

In all such scenarios under this priority category, the proof required to be considered must be the official decision letter from Ealing Council department, and priority award will end once a change of circumstances occur. In terms of a private sector offer, proof required is the offer letter from Ealing Council and the new tenancy agreement to allow for the priority to be awarded.

Overcrowding – Band B or C

The Council will assess the number of bedrooms an applicant needs in accordance with the number and make-up of the household as set out in the Bedroom Size eligibility table. We will assess the household size against the current accommodation, including all rooms which can be used as a bedroom and will then be able to assess whether the applicant is currently overcrowded in their current accommodation. Band C will be awarded if the Council assesses them as being overcrowded.

For Ealing Council Secure Tenants only who have been assessed as statutorily overcrowding as defined in Part X of Housing Act 1985, the application will be awarded Band B.

The Council reserves the right to not award this priority category if the applicant moved into the property knowing that their household size was larger than the property when they moved into it and can provide no justifiable reason as to why they did so.

Ex-Council Service Tenants – Band B

The Council will award Band B to ex-service tenants employed by Ealing Council and to whom the Council has a contractual obligation to rehouse upon completion of their employment service and are retiring or being made redundant, and their current accommodation was provided as part of the employment for the better performance of their duties (e.g., caretaker in a school). Upon nearing the end of the service, the Council's Human Resources department will inform the Housing Demand Department that an Officer requires rehousing, and the usual application and eligibility process is followed, which includes financial assets and income levels.

The ex-service tenant will have three months from the date of acceptance of the application to exercise choice by bidding for appropriate properties unless they request to be made direct offers. If they fail to secure accommodation within the given period, their application will be reviewed, and they will be made two direct offers as part of their service conditions. If they refuse both offers, no further assistance will be provided, and the application will be closed. Whilst a number of ex-service tenants reside in accommodation provided as part of their employment, any accommodation offer is based on their assessed bedroom sized eligibility and is not a like for like accommodation offer in terms of size.

The Council will not rehouse a service tenant who has been dismissed from their council role for misconduct or where they have taken up an offer of alternative employment either within the Council or with another employer where there is no requirement to provide accommodation for the new post.

Move On Priority – Band B

The Council wishes to ensure that applicants who are currently residing in certain supported housing and/or under the care of Ealing Council Social Services are assisted to move from their current living

arrangements into social housing. Applicants will be required to evidence a sufficient level of independent living skills and the ability to maintain a general needs tenancy in social housing awards with their social worker or housing support worker completing the referral information along with any supporting evidence required. In general, the applications will be made on behalf of the applicant by relevant professionals, for example social worker or supported housing officer.

The Head of Allocations and Accommodation will set an annual quota amount from the Lettings Plan and relevant Council and Supported Housing services will be informed of their quota allocation. It will be for the respective services to send the required documentation for assessment by the Housing Demand department to ensure the applicant is suitable and able to live independently.

Fostering and Adoption – Band B and C

The Council recognises the contribution that foster carers and adopters residing in Ealing make towards supporting children in care to grow up in a settled home. The Council will award Band B or C for applicants who meet the eligibility criteria including residency in Ealing and written evidence from Ealing Council Social Services only that they have been approved to foster and/or adopt a child or children that are under the care of Ealing Council Social Services such as Special Guardians, and a larger property is required to facilitate the placement of the child or children into a new living environment. Each case will be considered on a case-by-case basis via the Social Welfare Panel as to whether an award of the banding priority is appropriate and if agreed, which priority band.

Insanitary Housing Conditions – Band C

The Council will award Band C to applicants who are living in accommodation which has serious long term poor property conditions which put the applicant at serious risk of harm or to health and where the Council is satisfied that there is no prospect of the property including the hazards being addressed and resolved within a reasonable time period. This may include the following scenarios as guidance as to conditions which could be award the priority band, including but not limited to

- Insanitary conditions that cannot be addressed by Environmental Health action, including lacking one or more of the following:
 - Food preparation facilities (i.e., sink and space for a cooker)
 - Inside WC
 - Bathing and personal washing facilities.
 - Hot and cold water, electricity, gas or adequate heating
- Other Unsatisfactory Housing Conditions: e.g., substantial disrepair or a demolition order (as assessed by Environmental Health Officers, Regulatory Services Private Sector Housing Team or other relevant legal orders).
- Properties in Ealing Borough that contain Category 1 hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System as assessed by the Council's Private Sector Housing Team.

The Council will require reports from relevant professionals and/or teams such as a qualified Environmental Health Officer; Chartered Surveyor; technical officers within the Council or Registered Providers or Officers from the Council's Private Sector Housing or Building Control Teams to verify the information provided by the applicant as to the extent of the problems with the current property and to confirm timescales and works required to make the property habitable to consider whether the priority category should be awarded. If works are completed to a satisfactory standard after the priority award is made, the Council will remove the priority award as the property will be considered habitable.

The Council reserves the right to not award this priority category if the applicant moved into the property which was already in a poor condition knowing that there were problems with said property and that the Landlord has not taken the appropriate actions to ensure the property was habitable when let to the applicant.

Right To Move – Band C

The Government introduced regulations regarding the Right to Move in April 2015, which intends to help existing social housing tenants to move to either to another area in their local authority area or to another area outside of where they are currently living and where they have been offered employment, and to not be able to move would cause hardship to the applicant and their household.

Applicants would generally not be eligible if they did not meet residency criteria, however, will be considered by the Social Welfare Panel once the relevant employment contract/evidence of employment is provided to the Council to confirm the applicant meets the required criteria as set out in the regulations. The remaining eligibility criteria will still be considered to ensure that the applicant meets the criteria for Ealing as set out in the scheme.

Members of British Armed Forces – Band C

The Council will award priority to Members of the British Armed Forces and Reserve Forces, and Bereaved spouses and civil partners of Armed Forces Members against the following criteria, and where they have not been dishonestly discharged.

- Member of British Armed Forces who is currently serving and will be discharged within 6 months of applying to the housing register or has served in the past 5 years and applies for housing
- Member or former Member of British Armed Forces or British Reserve Forces who has served in the last 5 years, is applying for housing and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to that service,
- Bereaved spouses or civil partners of Members of the Armed Forces leaving services family accommodation following the death of their service spouse or partner and the death was wholly or partially attributable to their service.

The Council will require relevant proof of service documents from the British Armed Forces to be able to consider the priority award.

Working Households – Band C

Applications will be considered and prioritised for households who are working but are in receipt of a low income which means that sourcing housing including private rented sector and owner occupation may be difficult, but nonetheless are working and making an important contribution to the community and wider economy. The priority category will be awarded in its own right for households where

- at least one member of the household on the application is employed
- the total income of the household does not exceed the income levels as set out in the qualifying section of the scheme (page 8) including any salary and welfare benefit entitlement, e.g., working tax credits, universal credit.
- One member of the household works a minimum of 24 hours a week consistently during 12 out of the last 18 months. This can be a salaried position with an employment contract or a self-employment with proof of hours worked verified by proof of contracts or supporting documents from an employment agency.

Evidence of employment will be required in the form of an employment contract, HMRC tax returns, wage slips, P60, copies of employment contract and/or any other suitable proof as requested. Self-employed applicants will need to provide accounts verified by a qualified accountant with relevant confirmation from HMRC for the past 18 months at the point of application and also at the point of verification for an offer of social housing. The application must show that a member has been working and meeting the priority category through the period of the time on the housing register and should they stop working after joining the register must complete a change of circumstances for the Council to reassess the application.

Sheltered Housing priority – Band C

Sheltered housing provides specific accommodation for older persons who wish to live in accommodation which meets their housing needs, and often benefits from having additional facilities including communal areas, laundry, lifts and access to an on-call warden service. The accommodation is for people aged over sixty years old or fifty-five years if registered disabled. Applicants have to be able to live relatively independently, with possible supporting services such as home care services, but not require high levels of care. Applicants are required to be able, and prepared, to live within a community without presenting unmanageable risks to self and others.

An applicant may indicate on the application form if they wish to be considered for sheltered accommodation. When an application is assessed and the applicant may be deemed suitable for sheltered accommodation, they will be put forward for this option. Applicants who meet the age criteria who approach as homeless to Ealing Council and where a statutory duty is owed are automatically referred for sheltered housing.

The relevant Council Officer will complete a Sheltered Assessment Form and submit it to the Sheltered Housing Panel. The panel will review the information and form a decision as to whether sheltered and/or elderly designated accommodation is suitable for the applicant. The applicant or the applicant's advocate will be informed as to the panel's decision. If agreed, applicants for sheltered housing will be awarded Band C, or higher Banding if they qualify on other grounds, e.g., homelessness, medical, under-occupation. If an applicant is accepted to join the register on exceptional circumstances through the Social Welfare Panel and is agreed for sheltered housing, they will only be allowed to bid for sheltered accommodation and not general needs housing.

Elderly Persons Dwelling (EPD) accommodation is also available but is different to Sheltered housing. This accommodation type is general needs accommodation for people aged over 50 years old, who can live independently and do not need the services of additional services such as the on-call warden service and many of the EPD properties are flats on the first or second floor without a lift. Those eligible for sheltered housing will be able to bid for such accommodation when it becomes available although the accommodation must be suitable for the applicant to be able to reside in independently.

The Sheltered Housing Panel referral form and procedure is available by contacting the Allocations and Application Team at the Council.

Bedroom size eligibility

The maximum number of bedrooms, for which applicants are eligible to bid, is determined by the size of their household but, as there is a shortage of large homes, applicants may be advised to bid for smaller sized accommodation than they would prefer.

Ealing Council allows applicants to bid down a bedroom size, e.g. they are assessed as a 4 bedroom need but they can also bid for 3 bedroom properties, although some Registered Providers will not allow households to be considered for a property smaller than their assessed household size, so applicants are advised to check the property advert in detail for information about whether the property belongs to a Registered Provider, and where appropriate contact the Registered Provider before making a bid to confirm if they are allowed to bid for a property which may be smaller than the size of property the Council has assessed their household size for.

The bedroom size that applicants can bid for or is allocated is set out below:

Lone person	Studio flat or one-bedroom
Couple without children	Studio flat or one-bedroom
Pregnant woman (with or without partner)	One-bedroom
Parent/s with child under 18	Two bedrooms

Parent/s with two children of same or different sex both aged under 10	Two bedrooms
Parent/s with two children, same sex of any age	Two bedrooms
Parent/s with two children of opposite sex (one 10 years of age or over)	Three bedrooms
Parent/s with three or four children	Three or four bedrooms (depending on ages and sexes of children)
Parent/s with five or more children	Four bedrooms

An additional bedroom may be allocated in exceptional circumstances and will require supporting evidence from relevant professionals such as qualified health and social care professionals and where the Medical Adviser and/or Social Welfare panel recommends that this is essential and is agreed by the Council Officer assessing the application. This can include the applicant or household member requiring permanent and substantial overnight care on a regular basis, which is supported by social care professionals or carers assessment and proof of receipt of carers allowance where the person caring does not have accommodation. Applicants should complete the online medical assessment and provide the relevant supporting evidence from qualified professionals for the Council to assess.

Advertising, Bidding for and Shortlisting for Properties and Verification

The Council lets social housing primarily through a process called choice-based lettings. Social housing properties which are vacant and ready to let are advertised using the Locata website. Applicants are able to bid for properties which they would like to move to. The Council also lets a small number of social housing units through a direct offer to an applicant, which is explained in more detail later.

Locata is an IT company which is solely owned by 5 Councils and 3 Registered Providers all working in the West London area. Ealing Council is a founding member of Locata.

Labelling properties for advertising

The Council will describe and label properties which are ready to let and place them on the Locata IT system. Properties are loaded onto the system on a daily basis and will usually remain live for applicants to bid on for 5 working days, so it is important to regularly check the Locata website. The description will include property related information and on some occasions which priority category a property has been prioritised for in line with the annual Lettings Plan. The description will feature information such as:

- minimum and maximum numbers of persons allowed to reside in the property
- age-limits/restrictions
- mobility standard for disabled applicants
- if property is prioritised for a specific priority category in line with the Lettings Plan
- whether or not pets are allowed
- if a property is sheltered or elderly person designated
- the Landlord
- the weekly rent including any other charges
- type of tenancy to be offered
- likely letting date

Properties which are designed and/or adapted for households with particular housing needs, for example a property that is accessible for an applicant and/or household member who uses a wheelchair. Such properties will be labelled as being prioritised for applicants that have been assessed based on information provided to the Council including but not limited to medical and OT reports. Therefore, applicants who may have a higher priority band but don't have the specific housing needs that require a particular housing type will not be considered.

Advertising properties

All social housing properties are advertised online on Locata at www.locata.org apart from those properties that are used for Direct Offers by the Council. Properties are loaded onto the Locata website on a daily basis, with usually a 5 working day bidding time period for applicants to express their interest by bidding. Where possible pictures of the property, the block it is located in if it is a flat and floor plans will be added to help applicants choose whether a property is suitable for their family and assessed

housing needs, although some pictures especially for new builds may be artist impressions rather than the actual building/property being advertised.

Bidding for properties

Eligible applicants can bid for three properties at any one time. As soon as a property shortlist is closed, applicants who have not been shortlisted will be released from the bidding list and can bid for other properties that are advertised. The Locata IT system checks that bids comply with eligibility rules and disregards ineligible bids although an applicant may have bid for a property.

To be eligible, a bid must satisfy the following criteria:

Rule	Notes
Not offered elsewhere	Making an offer to an applicant makes all other bids from that member ineligible whilst the offer is live.
Not suspended	An applicant will be disregarded if they are suspended from the register for any reason.
On correct housing list	The applicant's housing list must match that of the property, including the preferencing of the property.
Bid before cut-off	The bid must be processed before the short list is closed.
Maximum persons	The applicant's household must have no more than the maximum number of persons for the property.
Minimum persons	The applicant's household must not have less than the minimum number of persons for the property.
Maximum beds	An applicant cannot bid for a property with more bedrooms than they are assessed as needing*.
Minimum age	The applicant must satisfy the age requirement on the property label.

* This may not apply to under-occupiers, who may be allowed to over-occupy, by one bedroom on a case-by-case basis.

When bidding, Applicants will need to take into consideration many matters when choosing whether a property is suitable or not for their household. Of particular importance when bidding for properties that are on a higher floor is that applicants and their families will need to be able to self-evacuate in the event of an emergency. By this, applicants will need to be able to ensure that their entire household is able to leave their property without assistance. It is important that applicants ensure that the Council is fully aware of their entire household circumstances and housing need and recommend that applicants complete the Medical Assessment form to ensure that the Council is fully informed, and it may mean that the Council may not consider an applicant suitable for a certain property they have bid for as a result of the information provided by the applicant and considering the property that is available.

Selection and shortlisting

All eligible applicants who bid will be placed into priority order for each property they have bid for. The priority order is decided first by priority band (e.g., A, B and C); secondly by date order within each priority band (i.e., when the applicant was awarded their priority Band); thirdly by registration date of the housing register applicant and finally by random selection if two applicants had exactly the same priority criteria. If the property is prioritised for a certain group, e.g., medical, the shortlisted is revised to select this certain group first and work through the priority order explained in this paragraph.

The shortlist of applicants for a property is passed to either to the Council's Voids Team for council properties and to the respective Registered Provider for other social housing offers who then contact the applicants and advises them of the next steps in the shortlisting process, which can include viewing date,

any documentation required prior to viewing and to answer any questions the applicant may have at this time.

If there are no eligible bidders for a property, either a direct offer to another applicant who the Council considers suitable for the will be made, or the property will be relabelled and advertised again immediately.

Offers

The landlord will contact a number of shortlisted applicants to attend a viewing of the property, which may range from 1 household to up to 6 placed applicants. Applicants are required to bring proof of identity to viewings. Viewings may be actual viewings of the property in person or can be virtual viewings using relevant IT systems to be able to give the applicant a detailed picture of the property being offered.

At the viewing, the highest priority applicant present is asked whether they wish to accept the property and sign a tenancy. If the highest priority application accepts, the other applicants are withdrawn from the shortlisting, and are free to continue to bid on other properties.

In exceptional circumstances, the highest priority applicant may advise the landlord that they are not able to attend the viewing but would like to move into the property, for example the applicant is in hospital. In such cases, the landlord is likely to want to discuss the offer of the property with the applicant in more detail to ensure that the property is suitable and to discuss next steps and timeframes including verification. Additionally, the landlord will be required to discuss the case with the relevant Housing Demand Team Manager at Ealing who oversees social housing allocations to confirm the matter can progress.

If the highest priority applicant refuses, the property is offered to the next highest priority applicant at the viewing, and so on until an applicant accepts the property. If, following a viewing an applicant refuses a property, such an action will be classed as a refusal and the landlord will contact the next highest priority applicant to offer the property.

If an applicant refuses a property on three occasions, they will be suspended from bidding for further properties for a 6-month period. Failures to attend viewings will be classed as refusals and count towards any suspensions – including where an applicant may have bid for a property which for whatever reason they subsequently were not willing to accept.

If an applicant to whom Ealing Council have accepted a homeless duty to refuses one offer of accommodation, the Council will consider whether it should discharge its legal duty. By bidding and viewing a property, the applicant has generally considered that the property is suitable for their assessed housing needs, as they will have had additional information on the property from the Locata website and opportunity to visit the property and/or surrounding area to it prior to the organised viewing of the property with the landlord's representatives. Unless there is a genuine error on behalf of the landlord, e.g., the wrong property size or floor level which would make the offer unsuitable, the refusal by the applicant will be processed and they will be advised to contact the Allocations Team. An initial assessment of whether the offer is suitable will be undertaken and the applicant will be advised of their right to request to review, and that they can accept the offer of accommodation and progress the review at the same time.

Verification

The Council is required to ensure that all social housing is allocated to eligible persons in line with the scheme. At the point of an applicant applying to join the Housing Register, the Council will request relevant documentation to help assess their application and confirm their eligibility to join the register. It may be a long period of time, sometimes many years before an applicant can be made an offer of social housing and therefore the personal circumstances of the applicant and their household may have changed and the Council needs to complete the verification process again to ensure that the applicant is

still eligible and in the correct priority banding category in case the applicant has not completed a change of circumstances forms when they should have done if their housing circumstances changed.

Therefore, the Council is required to verify an applicant's details during the social housing offer process and generally completes the verification process once an applicant has been shortlisted for a property. The verification process requires the applicant to provide documentation to evidence their application. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all information supplied is correct, current and truthful. The applicant is required to submit information and potentially attend Council offices to meet with an Officer to provide the required documentation, which they will have previously been advised to provide and on occasions a home visit by a Council Officer may also be undertaken. The documents which may be required as part of the verification process have been listed in the validation of application for housing part of the scheme. All of this documentation is required to be provided to the Council within 48 hours of request.

Applicants can be refused a property at the point of verification if found not to be eligible for a number of reasons, which may include but not limited to the following circumstances:

- The financial resources available to an applicant to meet his/her housing costs have changed
 - Applicants who are found to have sufficient financial resources to obtain accommodation for themselves in the private sector. These are households whose income exceeds the respective income and/or assets levels set out in the scheme.
 - Council Tenants who have a current application to buy their dwelling under Right to Buy or Registered Providers under Right to Acquire or purchasing a property through shared ownership.
- The applicant no longer meets the 5-year continuous residency criteria and has moved out of Ealing borough at the point of offer or within the last 5 years and has failed to update their housing register application.
- Behaviour of a person which affects his/her suitability to be a tenant:
 - Applicants who have any rent arrears with no evidence of reducing the arrears and/or a repayment agreement in place.
 - Applications who are Council Tenants or Registered Providers Tenants and who have been served notice of its intention to seek possession, or have been notified of an intention to serve such a notice
 - Applications where an injunction has been obtained, due to breach of one or more of the tenancy conditions.
 - Applicants or new applicants, or any member of their household, who have attacked or threatened staff, or those with a history of anti-social or criminal behaviour.

Where an applicant has been refused the offer of a property, the Council will review the application at the next time when shortlisted and an offer is made, to see if the required behavioural improvements with relevant evidence has been made by the applicant.

If the applicant fails to get the required paperwork together in time for the verification, this will be considered a refusal by the applicant. At the point of being made aware of being on a shortlist, the onus is on the applicant to collect the relevant paperwork in a timely manner.

Money owed to the Council including rent arrears at point of offer/verification

The Council will refuse an offer a property to an applicant at verification stage if the applicant is found to have substantial current and/or former rent arrears for a Council property or other debt to the Council. This can include monies owed to the Council for charges for property and rectifying unauthorised works in a Council property.

The Council will refuse an offer if the applicant owes more than 6 weeks of their current net rent liability. At its discretion, the Council may take into consideration any repayment plan in place and the applicant's adherence to the plan over the previous 6 months. Irrespective of the arrears levels, if the applicant is able to clear all outstanding arrears within 48 hours of any offer, the Council will proceed with the offer of the property. Additionally, the Council may refuse an offer if an applicant owes the Council outstanding monies more generally, including council tax payments, parking fines and other potential charges which have not been paid.

The Council will consider exceptions with regards to rent arrears, where there are circumstances occasioned by factors such as illness or welfare benefits. Such cases will be considered, and a course of action decided by the Head of Allocations and Accommodation. There will be no appeal against any such decisions outside of the Councils complaints procedure.

Feedback on let Properties

All properties that have been let are listed on the Locata website and applicants can review the specifics of bidding outcomes for a particular property.

Direct offers of social housing (outside the bidding process)

The Council in some circumstances may use its discretion to allocate properties directly when bidding is unlikely to yield a result in the Council's interest within a reasonable period or where it is in the Council's strategic or financial interests to do so. The following are illustration of the circumstances in which the Council may exercise this discretion:

- applicants assessed as under occupying their current home and moving the household will release a larger/adapted unit of social housing for another household in housing need.
- accepted Homeless applicants, where the duty is owed by Ealing Council and urgent vacant possession is required of their current temporary accommodation which if not achieved would leave the Council open to possible financial penalties.
- ex-service tenants who have not utilised choice after 3 months.
- Ealing Council Secure Tenants on regeneration projects where it is in the Council's urgent interest to obtain vacant possession.
- cases where Ealing Council Secure Tenants covered under Request to Return in line with Decant Policy
- where the Social Welfare Panel considers immediate rehousing for the welfare of the applicant and Council interests.
- where a Court Order requires alternative housing and is agreed by the Council's Housing and Legal departments as requiring an immediate move.
- allocations to accessible specially adapted units, e.g., wheelchair accessible accommodation.

- offers of accommodation to households under certain housing schemes such as the National Witness Mobility Scheme, Housing Moves, the Safer London reciprocal scheme or similar schemes.
- where a sensitive let is required to a property that has become available, e.g., there was considerable ASB and tenancy management issues caused by the previous occupant or high level of vulnerable residents in the surrounding accommodation who may be susceptible to different forms of exploitation.
- where a property has failed to let through the standard choice-based lettings process.

In administering direct offers, the Council may adopt a system of auto bidding for applicants, whereby the Locata system automatically bids for properties that the applicant would have been eligible to bid for.

Refusals following direct offer

Applicants will be required to submit any reasons for a refusal in writing.

The Council will consider the reasons for refusal. If there is a clear mismatch e.g., where the applicant or property details were recorded incorrectly, the offer will be withdrawn, and the applicant notified.

If there is no obvious mismatch, the Council will investigate the reasons for refusal, and make a recommendation to the Housing Demand Team Manager as to whether the offer was reasonable. The Council will inform the applicant as to its decision. If the offer is not reasonable, the offer will be withdrawn.

If an offer is to an applicant to whom a homeless duty has been accepted, the reasons for the refusal will be considered in conjunction with the homelessness duty owed, which if the offer of accommodation is deemed suitable, may subsequently lead to a discharge of a homeless duty. There is a statutory right of review, for accepted homeless households, in relation to suitability.

If an offer is to an applicant where there is a requirement to consider and make available aids and adaptations, the Council and/or the Register Provider will try and assist, however we may require applicants to make compromises, that some works may have to be completed with the applicant having moved in to ensure that the adaptations undertaken meet their essential housing need.

Generally, with respect to refusals the Council will take the following actions upon refusal of a direct offer.

- If the offer is to an applicant who is prioritised in the Move On category, the applicant will be advised that their quota status has been removed and they will be placed in the appropriate Band and/or removed from the Housing Register.
- If the offer is to a temporary/permanent decant, Landlord Services will be advised in order for possession proceedings to commence.
- If the offer is to an under-occupier who has succeeded to the tenancy and where the Council can obtain possession by offering alternative accommodation, Landlord Services will be advised in order for possession proceedings to commence.
- If the offer is to Management Priority Transfer, the applicant will be advised that their priority has been removed and they will be placed in the appropriate Band or removed from the Housing Register.
- If the offer is to an ex-service tenant, and they have not exercised choice in the bidding period granted by making any bids for properties, the Council will make two separate offers of social housing will be made, and if both are refused, the Council will remove the relevant ex-service

tenant priority category and the application will be reassessed and the Council's Human Resources department will be notified.

Right to Review

The Housing Act 1996 gives applicants the right to request a review of certain decisions made under the scheme. Under S.166A (9) (c) of the Housing Act 1996, applicants have the right to request a review of the following and to be informed of the decision on the review and the grounds for it:

- 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 to them; and
- Any decision made under S160ZA (9) of the Housing Act 1996 that they are either;
- Ineligible for an allocation by virtue of S160ZA (2) or S160ZA (4) of the Housing Act 1996 or
- Not a qualifying person

Applicants must request a review within 21 days from the notification of the Council's decision and will be notified in writing of any decision taken under S160ZA (9), the grounds for the decision and the administrative arrangement for exercising their right to request a review

Homeless applicants have an additional right to review under S202 the Housing Act 1996 regarding the suitability of the offer of accommodation made to them should they consider it not suitable for their housing needs. Applicants can still move into the property whilst the review is being completed as should the outcome of the S202 be that the offer was suitable, it is unlikely that the offer of social housing will remain available in order to avoid an unreasonable delay in the property being let.

Applicant Information and Rights

All applications, supporting information and correspondence sent by applicants will be treated in accordance with the Council's confidentiality and data protection procedures, mindful of relevant legislation including the General Data Protection Regulations and Data Protection Act 2018. The Council has a corporate Information Security and Data Management Policy which sets out in greater detail and is available on the Council's website.

Applicants have the right to access information in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 that the Council holds about them, and this information can be requested using the Subject Access Request process, which is explained in more detail on the Council's website. In certain circumstances, the Council may refuse access to certain information including but not limited to information provided by a third party where there is no consent to disclose information or is being held in regard to legal matters and relating to detection of crime/criminal proceedings. A list of the types of information held by each organisation, known as the 'register of notifications', is held on the [Office of the Information Commissioner](#) website. You will see from the list the broad types of information Ealing holds. You will need to type in the registration number: Z5696801.

Corporate complaints procedure

All applicants have the right to complain if they feel that they have not been treated fairly or consider that the Council has not administered their housing application in the best way. This is different to the review process which is a statutory right of review if say for example an applicant is assessed as being ineligible to join the register or disagrees with the council's decision on their medical circumstances, where the review process is the correct way of challenging the Council's decision.

The Council's Corporate Complaints Policy and Procedure is available on the Council's website, however it is usually best in the first instance to try and resolve the matter by contacting the Housing Demand department and discussing any concerns with an Officer in the Team, as further advice and assistance can be provided which may resolve and/or further explain the status of the housing application without the need to progress through either the respective complaints or review processes.

Other Housing schemes

Local Lettings Plans

The Council may allow for a local lettings policy to be implemented for a particular geographical area or a regeneration estate/project within the borough, which is permitted under S 166A(6) of the Housing Act 1996.

Housing Moves

The Council participates in Housing Moves, a pan-London mobility scheme for social tenants. The Council will agree with the Greater London Authority, who administers the Housing Moves schemes to provide a quota of properties each year. This scheme is separate to those units advertised on the Locata system and the Council does not administer the allocation of properties to applicants, but rather the selection of properties which Ealing contributes to the scheme.

The decision as to which properties will be put forward will be made by the relevant Housing Demand Team Manager. This process is dependent on need within the borough at that time and will be up to a maximum of 5% of total re-lettable properties based on previous years letting percentages.

Safer London Pan London reciprocal

The Council participates in a Safer London, a pan London scheme which aims to reduce crime and disorder within London through partnership working. This scheme is separate to the LOCATA system. Applicants eligible for the scheme will have been assessed within the scheme guidelines by staff from the Safer London Partnership and will be referred to respective Councils on a case-by-case basis.

National witness protection scheme

The Council participates in the National Witness Mobility Scheme, which is intended to assist the rehousing of witnesses who have given evidence in civil and criminal cases. This scheme is separate to the LOCATA system. Applicants eligible for the scheme will have been assessed within the scheme guidelines by staff from the Safe and Secure Partnership and will be referred to respective Councils on a case-by-case basis

APPENDIX A – Priority Categories and Banding

Band A	Emergency and Top Priority	
Transfers	Homeseekers	Defining Features of Applicant or circumstances of application
Medical	Medical	<p>Where an applicant and/or a member of the applicant's household has a life-threatening condition, which is seriously affected by their current housing or a terminal illness with a lifespan of less than 12 months and rehousing is required to meet substantial care provision.</p> <p>Additionally, where the housing conditions and/ or other circumstances are directly contributing to significant deterioration of an applicant or household member's health condition as to warrant emergency priority and rehousing will alleviate that effect, supported by clinical evidence.</p>
Social Welfare	Social Welfare	<p>Exceptional circumstances and/or multiple needs which is assessed by the Social Welfare Panel as warranting emergency priority which may include but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extreme violence and/or harassment as verified by professionals and statutory organisations • Exceptional problems where current accommodation is not suitable
Permanent Decants		<p>Where a Council property is imminently required to be vacated, for example to allow demolition, major refurbishment or for essential major works and the Council Tenant will not be returning to the property. The Tenant must have an Ealing Council Secure tenant to be eligible. For properties on Council Regeneration, the priority can be awarded 6 months before vacant possession is required.</p>
Under occupation and succession	Unauthorised occupants (non-statutory successors) agreed for rehousing	<p>An Ealing Council secure tenant who currently resides in a larger property than they require and wish to downsize to a smaller property. The tenant may be considered exempt from minimum occupation criteria.</p> <p>An applicant who has a legal right to succeed an Ealing Council tenancy and is currently residing in a larger property than they are eligible for under the minimum occupation criteria and are required to move to smaller accommodation.</p>

		An applicant who is currently an unauthorised occupant in an Ealing Council social housing property and has approved for move to smaller sized accommodation but who cannot for other reasons remain in their present accommodation. This is a discretionary decision undertaken by the Head of Allocations and Accommodation.
Adapted Property Release		An Ealing Council secure tenant who is willing to move to alternative accommodation and is releasing a property with significant aids and adaptations, and there is a demand for this property type from existing applicants on the Housing Register.

Band B	Urgent need to move	
Transfers	Homeseekers	Defining Features of Applicant or circumstances of application
Medical	Medical	Where an applicant and/or a household member's housing circumstances is not suitable and are having a major adverse effect on their medical condition(s) and this can be alleviated by rehousing, supporting by clinical evidence. It will not apply where the effect of housing conditions on health is comparatively moderate, slight or variable.
Social Welfare	Social Welfare	<p>Applicants with an urgent need to move from their current accommodation as agreed by the Social Welfare Panel, which may include may but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evidenced persistent harassment and/or violence of a serious but no life-threatening nature as confirmed by professionals and statutory organisations. • significant problems where current accommodation is not suitable and/or the need to move to provide/receive care and where there are no other care service options available. • people who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (including any grounds relating to a disability). • people who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others)
Succession	Unauthorised occupants (non-statutory successors) agreed for rehousing	<p>An applicant who has a legal right to succeed an Ealing Council tenancy and is currently residing in same sized property that they are eligible for under the minimum occupation criteria, but it is not considered suitable for their assessed housing needs or do not require any special features of the accommodation such as aids and adaptations.</p> <p>An applicant who is currently an unauthorised occupant in an Ealing Council social housing property and has approved for move to similar sized accommodation, but it is not considered suitable for their assessed housing needs or do not require any special features of the accommodation such as aids and adaptations. This is a discretionary decision undertaken by the Head of Allocations and Accommodation.</p>

Permanent Decants		Where a Council property is required to be vacated in due course, for example to allow demolition or major refurbishment; and where the Council Tenant will not be returning to the property and there is 12 months or less before vacant possession is required. The Tenant must have an Ealing Council Secure tenant to be eligible.
	Split Household as part of Permanent Decant	Applicants who are part a household in an Ealing Council secure tenancy on a Council Regeneration Scheme and it has been agreed with Council Officers that the household can be split to allow for rehousing to ensure vacant possession prior to demolition. Applicant will not be an Ealing Council secure tenant, but the split household rehousing option has been agreed by the Director responsible for Housing Regeneration.
	Homeless households owed the main duty by Ealing Council under sec.193 (2) of the 1996 Act or sec.65 of the 1985 Act and where a duty has been accepted continuously for 5 years or more.	Applicants who have been owed a full homeless duty by Ealing Council within the meaning of part VII of the Housing Act 1996 as amended Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 for five consecutive years or longer, whether making their own temporary accommodation arrangements or occupying temporary accommodation provided under the Housing Act 1996 Part VII Section 193(2).
Statutory Overcrowded Households		Where an applicant is an existing Ealing Council Secure Tenants who are statutory overcrowded as defined in Part X of Housing Act 1985.
	Ex council service tenant	Where the Council has a contractual obligation to rehouse to a Council employee when their employment with the Council ends and rehousing agreement is confirmed by the Council's Human Resources department.
Fostering and Adoption	Fostering and Adoption	Where an applicant has been approved by Ealing Council to become a foster carer or adopt a child/children under the care of Ealing Council and where rehousing will assist being able to start or continue providing care. Applications will be assessed by the Social Welfare Panel.

	Move-on scheme to assist those under Ealing Social Services care and/or in agreed supported housing schemes	Applicants under the care of Ealing Council Children Services and Adult Services or living in specific supported housing projects in the borough and have been assessed as ready to live independently and have not been disqualified under the outlined ineligibility criteria – e.g., for involvement in criminal, anti-social behaviour or gang related activity, have high levels of rent arrears.
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Band C	Identified Housing Need	
Tenants	Home-Seekers	Defining Features Of Applicant
Medical	Medical	Where an applicant and/or a household member's housing circumstances is not suitable and are having a moderate effect on their medical condition(s) and this can be alleviated by rehousing, supporting by clinical evidence.
Social Welfare	Social Welfare	<p>Applicants with an identified housing need to move from their current accommodation as agreed by the Social Welfare Panel, which may include may but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evidenced harassment and/or violence of a serious but no life-threatening nature as confirmed by professionals and statutory organisations. • evidenced problems where current accommodation is not suitable and/or the need to move to provide/receive care and where there are no other care service options available. <p>Applicants considered and agreed under the Pan London reciprocal scheme, Housing Moves and National Witness Protection Scheme will be awarded Band C.</p>
Succession	Unauthorised occupants (non-statutory successors) agreed for rehousing	<p>An applicant who has a legal right to succeed an Ealing Council tenancy and is currently residing in smaller sized property that they are eligible for under the minimum occupation criteria, but it is not considered suitable for their assessed housing needs or do not require any special features of the accommodation such as aids and adaptations.</p> <p>An applicant who is currently an unauthorised occupant in an Ealing Council social housing property and has approved for move to smaller sized accommodation, but it is not considered suitable for their assessed housing needs or do not require any special features of the accommodation such as aids</p>

Band C	Identified Housing Need	
		and adaptations. This is a discretionary decision undertaken by the Head of Allocations and Accommodation.
	Homeless households owed the main duty by Ealing Council under sec.193 (2) of the 1996 Act or sec.65 of the 1985 Act and where a duty has been accepted continuously for less than 5 years.	Applicants who have been owed a full homeless duty by Ealing Council within the meaning of part VII of the Housing Act 1996 as amended Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 for less than five consecutive years, whether making their own temporary accommodation arrangements or occupying temporary accommodation provided under the Housing Act 1996 Part VII Section 193(2).
	Homeless households owed a duty by Ealing Council under sec.193 of the 1996 Act or sec.65 of the 1985 Act; Homeless households assisted by Ealing Council under the Homeless Prevention and/or Relief duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017	<p>Applicants other than those owed the full housing duty of section 193(2) but who are homeless within the meaning of Part 7 or owed a duty under section 189B, 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) will be placed in Band C.</p> <p>Applicants owed a duty by Ealing Council under the Housing Act 1996 Part VII Sections 189B, 193(2) or 195(2) by Ealing Council who have accepted a private rented sector offer discharging that duty, the Council will allow for a limited time of 2 years from the date the household moved to alternative accommodation, a Band C priority award (if no other priority category is relevant) for the household to remain on the housing register. After the 2 years have passed and if there have been no changes to the household's circumstances, the housing register application will be closed.</p> <p>In all such scenarios under this priority category, the proof required to be considered must be the official decision letter from Ealing Council department, and priority award will end once a change of circumstances occur. In terms of a private sector offer, proof required is the offer letter from Ealing Council and the new tenancy agreement to allow for the priority to be awarded.</p>

Band C	Identified Housing Need	
Overcrowded households	Overcrowded households	<p>Overcrowded Households lacking a minimum of 1 bedroom, based on the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A single person or couple may be offered a studio (bedsit) or a single bedroom property • Pregnant women do not qualify for a bed space for their unborn child until the birth of the child. • Adult siblings of the same sex and generation, who are children, of the applicant are expected to share a bedroom regardless of age. • Children of opposite sex where at least one is over 10 years old should not have to share a bedroom • A second reception room will generally be deemed as available for use as a bedroom • Box rooms which could reasonably be used by a child will count as a single bedroom • Co-habiting couples – Studio or 1 bedroom • Each independent adult who is not a child of the main applicant(s) (21yrs +) - 1 bedroom if assessed that this adult needs to reside with the household e.g., providing or requiring care and the required evidence is provided and assessed accordingly.
Unsatisfactory housing conditions	Unsatisfactory housing conditions	Housing conditions that cannot be addressed by enforcement action taken by the Council's Regulatory Services or similar departments and contain Category 1 hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System that cannot be repaired /improved to a satisfactory standard within a reasonable timescale, or where a relevant statutory notice or court order issued by the Council that a property is unfit for habitation and is to be demolished.
Elderly approved for Sheltered Housing	Elderly approved for Sheltered Housing	Applicants over the age of 60 years old who have been assessed and agreed as needing sheltered housing.
Low Income Working Household	Low Income Working Household	Applicants who meet the Council's working household criteria, including the income and assets levels as set out in the Scheme and have evidence of their employment through a contract and/or approved set of financial accounts if self-employed.

Band C	Identified Housing Need	
	Unauthorised occupants (non-statutory successors) agreed for rehousing	Unauthorised occupants approved for move to larger sized accommodation but who cannot for other reasons remain in their present accommodation. This is a discretionary decision undertaken by the Head of Allocations and Accommodation.
	British Armed Forces	<p>Band C status for British Armed Forces if served previously in last 5 years or due to be discharged in next 6 months, including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Former Members of British Armed Forces apart from those who have been dishonourably discharged from service. • Serving Armed Forces or Reserve Force members who need to move because of serious injury, disability or medical injury sustained in service. • Bereaved spouse and civil partners of British Armed Forces leaving Services Accommodation following death of Armed Forces family member.
Fostering and Adoption	Fostering and Adoption	Where an applicant has been approved by Ealing Council to become a foster carer or adopt a child/children under the care of Ealing Council and where rehousing will assist being able to start or continue providing care. Applications will be assessed by the Social Welfare Panel.
Right to Move	Right to Move	Households who have been assessed as eligible under the Right to Move criteria to move within or to Ealing as a result of an employment option and are currently a social housing tenant. Applications will be assessed by the Social Welfare Panel.

