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**SUMMARY OF THE HOUSING  
ALLOCATIONS  
POLICY  
(REVISED DECEMBER 2019)**

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## INTRODUCTION

This booklet is a summary of Tendring District Council's housing allocations policy. The full version is available as a download from the council's website [www.tendringdc.gov.uk](http://www.tendringdc.gov.uk).

## WHO CAN APPLY TO JOIN THE HOUSING REGISTER?

Anyone aged 18 or over can join the housing register if:

- The applicant can demonstrate they have a clear housing need; and
- The applicant has lived in the Tendring area continuously for the last 3 years.

If the applicant lives outside of the Tendring area they can only join the housing register if they have a clear housing need; and

- they meet the armed forces criteria; or
- they are a former resident of Tendring who were placed in specialist accommodation not available in the Tendring area; or
- they have an assessed need under the Right to Move criteria; or
- they are applying for housing on a Rural Exception site; or
- they have been accepted for a prevention, relief of main housing duty under the terms of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017; or
- they have been accepted for housing under the National Witness Mobility Scheme.

The following people will **NOT** be eligible to join the housing register:

- People from abroad who are subject to immigration control under the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, unless they are already a secure or introductory tenant of the council or an assured tenant of a registered provider, or in a class prescribed by regulations made by the Secretary of State.
- People who the council considers are unsuitable to be tenants of the council because they, or a member of their household, have been responsible for unacceptable behaviour.

Applicants should also note that due to a high demand for housing in the district, many people who are eligible may not obtain an offer of a home.

## HOW DO I APPLY FOR HOUSING?

To apply, an applicant needs to have an interview by telephone or in person with a member of the Housing Allocations and Solutions Team. If it is clear that the person is eligible to join the register and a housing need is established, the applicant will be sent an application form or be encouraged to complete an on-line application.

All applicants will be required to provide proof of their identity, and proof that they have lived in the Tendring District for 3 years or more, before they are added to the housing register.

## JOINT APPLICATIONS

An applicant may include anyone on their application form who is living with them. Couples will normally be treated as joint applicants. If one applicant qualifies to join the housing register and the other partner doesn't, a tenancy will only be granted the person who qualifies and meet the conditions on eligibility. If applicants want to live together but are currently living apart, the council will have regard to the extent of the accommodation available to both

applicants and their household at their separate addresses. Joint tenancies will only be granted to couples in a relationship or siblings.

## **DEPENDANT CHILDREN**

Applicants with a shared residence order or staying access for children are not entitled to bedrooms for their children. The general principle is that children need one home of an adequate size, and that the council will not accept responsibility for providing a second home for children. The shortage of housing locally means that extra bedrooms cannot be allocated in such circumstances.

## **HOUSING REGISTRATION**

Once an application has been received it will be assessed and entered onto the housing register and the applicant will receive an acknowledgement letter. The letter will:

- Explain which band the applicant has been placed in following the initial assessment. If they are subsequently assessed as having a medical or welfare need they will be advised separately after the assessment has been made.
- Confirm the size (and if applicable the type) of property the applicant is eligible for.
- Confirm the applicants' effective date.
- Include a reminder about informing us of any change in circumstances.
- Give details of appeal and review procedures.
- Give a registration number.
- If an applicant has reduced preference it will explain the reasons why.
- Advise the applicant to contact the council each year on the anniversary date of the application if they want to remain on the housing register.

## **ASSESSMENT OF HOUSING NEED**

The allocations policy provides a framework for allocating accommodation across the council's area, giving priority to those in greatest need.

Applicants will be placed into one of the following four housing needs bands, based on the information provided:

Band A	Households with an urgent housing need
Band B	
Band C	
Band D	Households with low priority

Priority within bands relates to an applicant's effective date. The effective date is usually the date the application is received, except:

- Where an applicant is moved from one band to a higher band. Their new effective date will be the date their circumstances changed.

- Where an applicant receives priority on medical or welfare grounds their effective date will be the date they were granted the award.
- Where an applicant has been accepted as homeless their effective date will be the date they were accepted as homeless, unless they already qualify for Band A or B with an earlier date.

## **HOUSING PRIORITY**

By law, the council is required to give a reasonable preference on its housing register to the following groups:

- people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness
- people who are overcrowded or live in poor conditions
- people who need to move on medical or welfare grounds or because of a disability
- people who need to move to a particular locality where failure to meet that need will result in hardship

The council will also give extra priority to applicants with a housing need if:

- They are approved for fostering or adoption and their housing needs can be met or;
- They are employed for at least 16 hours a week and they have worked for at least 12 months or;
- They are in the armed forces or have been honourably discharged in the last 5 years.
- They have been allowed to join the housing register under the Right to Move criteria.

## **REDUCED PREFERENCE**

The council will take into account the following factors in deciding the priority to be awarded on an application:

- The financial resources available to the applicants to meet their own housing costs, including any equity in a current home or capital received from the sale of a home;
- The behaviour of the applicants (or members of their household) which affects their suitability as tenants;
- Applicants who have deliberately made their housing situation worse.

For applicants that are in a low priority band the likelihood is that the council will not be in a position to offer them accommodation.

## **WHAT SIZE ACCOMMODATION AM I ELIGIBLE FOR?**

The following table advises how many bedrooms in a property an applicant will be entitled to.

1 bedroom for each of the following:

The applicant (and partner if applicable)
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Any person aged 16 or over
Any two children of the same sex under 16
Any two children of the opposite sex under 10 years old
Any other child

Applicants can only be considered for an extra bedroom if it is essential on medical grounds.

### **HOW WILL THE PROPERTIES BE ALLOCATED?**

Properties will generally be offered to the applicant who has asked for that type of property in its locality and who has been placed in the highest band for the longest period. There will be occasions where the property may be offered to another applicant, for example, because of an urgent homelessness situation or because the property needs to be let sensitively.

If an offer is made, the applicant will be written to setting out the terms of the new tenancy. Applicants can receive up to 2 offers of accommodation but not simultaneously. If both offers are refused and the council considers that the offers were reasonable, no further offers will be made for a period of 12 months. If a third and final offer is refused, the applicant will be removed from the housing register.

On refusing an offer of accommodation the council will ask applicants to complete a form to record the reasons why the property has not been accepted. Households accepted as homeless will only be entitled to one offer of suitable settled accommodation from the housing register.

### **IS THERE ANYTHING I NEED TO DO ONCE I HAVE APPLIED?**

Applicants must re-register their application once a year by sending their registration card to us or by taking it to the Town Hall in Clacton to be stamped.

If applicants do not renew their application, they will be removed from the housing register.

### **WHAT IF MY CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE?**

If an applicant moves home, they must contact the council so that their level of housing need can be assessed at their new address.

If an applicant's circumstances change for any other reason they must advise the council either by e-mail or sending in a change of circumstances form to enable their application to be reassessed and to see if there is still a housing need.

A change of circumstances could include the birth of a child, a change in medical condition or a threat of homelessness. We will need to see evidence to confirm any change of circumstances.

## **RIGHT TO A REVIEW**

Applicants have the right to request a review of any decision the council make about their application. Requests for reviews, including the reasons for the request must be made in writing within 21 days of the date of the decision to:

Housing Solutions & Allocations Manager  
88-90 Pier Avenue  
Clacton-On-Sea  
Essex  
CO15 1TN  
E-mail: [housingmail@tendringdc.gov.uk](mailto:housingmail@tendringdc.gov.uk)