



# **Wigan Council Allocations Policy**

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| <b>Responsible Manager:</b> | <b>Service Manager – Tenancy<br/>Management</b> |

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# SECTION 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Overview of Allocations Policy

- (i) This policy outlines the allocation of Wigan Council properties and nominations of applicants for properties owned by other partner landlords on behalf of Wigan Council.
- (ii) The allocations policy is the framework for:
  - The assessment of applications for Council housing including tenant transfers.
  - The allocation of Council property.
  - Nominations to a tenancy of a property owned by a Registered Social Landlord, or other organisation with which the Council has entered into a lettings or nominations agreement.
- (iii) The Objectives of the Policy are:
  - To meet housing need
  - To deliver the Councils statutory duties under the Housing Act 1996, Homelessness Act 2002, the Localism Act 2011 and other relevant legislation
  - To ensure the best use of housing stock
  - To maximise tenant mobility
  - To support the development of cohesive and sustainable communities through appropriate lettings

### 1.2 Legal and Policy Framework

- (i) The Housing Act 1996 Part 6, as amended, requires local authorities to have an allocations policy that sets out:
  - Who is eligible to apply for housing
  - How the Council prioritises applicants for rehousing ensuring that 'reasonable preference' is given to certain people who fall within the statutory preference categories set out in S167(2) of the 1996 Act
  - The basis on which the Council will allocate accommodation
  - The Councils policy on applicant choice and preference
- (ii) The definition of an Allocation for the purpose of Part 6, a housing authority allocates accommodation when it:
  - Selects a person to be a secure or introductory tenant of accommodation held by the authority
  - Nominate a person to be a secure or introductory tenant of accommodation held by another authority
  - Nominates a person to be an assured tenant of accommodation held by a private registered provider

The term assured tenant includes a person with an assured short-hold tenancy, include an affordable rented property, the term secure tenant includes a person with a flexible tenancy granted under section 107A of the Housing Act 1985.

- (iii) This Allocations Policy has been developed to comply with the requirements of Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996, as subsequently amended, in relation to the letting of social housing.

- (iv) The policy seeks to ensure that “reasonable preference” is given to those tenants and applicants in the greatest housing need and help applicants and tenants to be housed or rehoused in an area of their choice, as far as is reasonably possible.
- (v) This policy supports and complements other Council strategies and policies including, the Councils Corporate Strategy, Affordable Housing Policy, Anti-social behaviour guidance, Reduction in Temporary Accommodation Strategy, and the Empty Properties Strategy.

### **1.3 Choice for applicants and tenants**

- (i) The Council aims to maximise choice for applicants and tenants applying for housing or transfer. There are over 25,000 social rented sector properties throughout the borough and the Council will actively seek to form partnership arrangements with private sector providers. Applicants can express an interest (also known as bid) for any available accommodation that matches the needs of their household, in any part of the borough. There is no restriction on the number of bids placed at any one time, however if the applicant is ‘next in turn’ for two or more properties, the Council Allocations Team will decide which one to offer in the interest of effective management of housing stock.
- (ii) There will be a restriction on the number of property refusal an applicant can make. Three refusals of an offer of accommodation, without good reason, will result in the application being disqualified from the Housing Register for a period of 12 months.
- (iii) Information regarding the choice of properties available in each rehousing area can be found via our website at [Find a home \(wigan.gov.uk\)](http://wigan.gov.uk)

### **1.4 Monitoring and Review of the Policy**

- (i) The Allocations Policy will be subject to review from time to time, particularly in response to significant changes to legislation, housing market conditions and/or local circumstances.
- (ii) Any major changes to the policy, affecting more than half of all applications on the Housing Register will require consultation with all the relevant statutory and voluntary sector organisations and tenant representatives, and must be approved by the Council.
- (iii) From time-to-time minor changes may be required to the policy, such as applying special criteria to a small number of properties, introducing a Local Lettings Policy or amending the eligibility criteria for certain property types. Approval of these may be delegated to the Director of Place or such Council officers as he/she sees fit, in consultation partners as required.
- (iv) The Policy is supported by more detailed procedures that can be made available on request.

## SECTION 2

### ELIGIBILITY, QUALIFICATIONS AND RESTRICTIONS

#### 2.1 Eligible Applicants and Area Restrictions

- (i) All applicants from eligible applicants will be entered on to the Housing Register and prioritised under the group scheme details in Section 4. Once their application is active, applicants may then bid for available properties that meet the needs of their household in terms of size and facilities and any age criteria imposed.
- (ii) Applicants may be restricted from bidding for properties in a location where the Council consider it would be detrimental to the wellbeing or the local community or to the applicant themselves into live there. This may apply where either existing residents or the applicant (or members of their household) are considered to be especially vulnerable, or where there are serious concerns about discrimination against or intimidation of minority groups, or where there is a previous history of poor relations between the applicant and existing residents in that area.
- (iii) Applicants may be restricted from bidding for properties where it is considered they would be unable to management a tenancy successfully, or where there are issues of health and safety. For example, bids from wheelchair users would not be accepted for multi-story flats above the second floor because of the difficult of evacuating the premises in an emergency; or an applicant who is unable/unwilling to maintain a garden may be restricted from bidding for properties with private gardens. Some properties may also have restrictions on keeping pets.

#### 2.2 Ineligible applicants

- (i) The Council must not, by law, allocate housing to anyone (or jointly with someone) who is not an eligible person. The following persons are not, for the purposes of this policy, considered as eligible for Council housing or for nominations to a partner organisation with whom the Council has a nomination agreement.

#### 2.3 Person from Abroad

- (i) Person from abroad who are subject to immigration control and not reincluded by Regulations are not eligible to be offered Council housing or to be nominated on behalf of the Council.
- (ii) People who are subject to immigration control within the meaning of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 are not eligible to be offered Council housing or to be nominated on behalf of the Council.
- (iii) People who are not habitually resident in the Common Travel Area (which covers the British Isles including non-UK territories such as the Channel Islands and Ireland) are not eligible to be offered Council housing or be nominated on behalf of the Council. This may include British citizens.
- (iv) The Government may from time to time prescribe other persons as ineligible.

- (v) Ineligible person from abroad may be offered a tenancy directly by an RSL or private sector landlord as these organisations are not bound by the same laws. Persons from abroad who already have a Secure, Assured, Introductory or Starter tenancy with the Council or RSL are not subject to these eligibility rules.
- (vi) An asylum seeker living in the Wigan Borough will be allowed to register whilst ineligible, but their application will remain excluded awaiting a decision on their entitlement to remain in the UK. If they receive 'leave to remain' from the Home Office, their application will be made active from the date they submitted their housing application.

## **2.4 Disqualified Applicants**

- (i) Subject to the requirements not to allocate to person from abroad who are ineligible and expecting members of the Armed /Reserved Forces who cannot be disqualified on the basis of local connection, the Localism Act permits local authorities to determine which person are or are not qualifying persons for an allocation of accommodation.
- (ii) Disqualify applicants therefore are unable to access council accommodation or be nominated by Wigan Council to a Registered Social Landlord.
- (iii) Checks will be made when an applicant first applies for accommodation to determine whether they qualify for housing. These will be repeated at point of offer.
- (iv) If it comes to light that there are grounds for disqualification of an application after the applicant has been accepted as eligible to join the Register, we may make a decision that the applicant is no longer eligible for allocation.

**The following will be disqualified for an allocation:**

### **2.4.1 Applicant or member of the household who has a history of anti-social behaviour and or criminal activity.**

- (i) Any applicant or member of his / her household, who has caused anti-social behaviour and or criminal activity may be disqualified. This could include causing serious damage to a previous social sector tenancy for which a rechargeable repair bill has been raised.
- (ii) The onus will be on the applicant to prove that his/her behaviour has improved sufficiently and been sustained before consideration will be given to accepting the Applicant onto the Housing Register.

### **2.4.2 Applicants who use Illegal Drugs**

- (i) Applicants or members of their household who use illegal substances would normally be disqualified for an allocation until there is evidence to show that they are adhering to a drug reduction programme and the support provider confirms this.

### **2.4.3 Applicants owing a substantial housing debt**

- (i) Applicants who have housing debts of £500 or more would normally be disqualified for an allocation. This includes current and past debts from a Wigan Council tenancy or any other social sector tenancy.
- (ii) Such applicants would not normally be accepted onto the Housing Register until the debt had been brought below £500 and a regular payment pattern has been maintained thereafter for a minimum period of 6 months.
- (iii) Those who owe less than £500 would normally be disqualified until they have made regular agreed payments against the debt for a minimum period of 6 months.
- (iv) Once accepted onto the Housing Register, regular agreed payments should be maintained up to the point of offer of accommodation. If this is not the case, the applicant will be given 48 hours to make up the missed payments otherwise the offer may be withdrawn.
- (v) Social sector tenants would not normally be offered a tenancy until their debt is cleared.

### **2.4.4 Withholding relevant information or giving false or misleading information**

- (i) Each application will be considered individually to determine whether or the action taken by the applicant is considered to be fraudulent in order to gain priority for a tenancy or certain property type.
- (ii) The applicant will be disqualified for 12 months if it is found that the applicant withheld relevant information or gave false or misleading information.

### **2.4.5 Deliberately worsening circumstances in order to gain priority on the Housing Register**

- (i) For example, vacating a property in the private rented sector without good reason then moving in with family resulting in severe overcrowding. Each case will be considered individually and the penalty for this action will be 6 months disqualification.

### **2.4.6 Refusal of three offers of accommodation without any good reason**

- (i) If an applicant bids for, then refuses three offers of accommodation without good reason, their application will be disqualified for 12 months.

### **2.4.7 Not having the Mental Capacity to enter into a Tenancy Agreement**

- (i) If, in the opinion of the Service Manager for Tenancy Management, an applicant is unable to enter into a Tenancy Agreement, then the applicant will be disqualified for an offer of accommodation. In making that decision, account will be taken of information provided from other services and any other support that might be offered.

### **2.4.8 Exceptions to Disqualification**

- (i) Applicants who have an urgent medical or welfare need to move and have capacity to enter into a Tenancy Agreement.
- (ii) Applicants accepted as being owed the full homelessness duty where the Council is unable or unlikely to secure a property in the private rented sector (see 3.7)
- (iii) Where, by assessing income and essential expenditure, it can be clearly show that the applicant cannot afford to meet all outgoings but could if he/she were to move to alternative accommodation. This may apply to people on benefits who under occupy their tenancy.

#### **2.4.9 Right of Appeal**

- (i) All applicants disqualified for an allocation will be notified in writing of this and the reason(s) they have been disqualified. They will be given details of how to appeal this decision as detailed in Section 7 of this policy.



## SECTION 3

### THE POLICY POSITION AFFECTING INDIVIDUAL GROUPS

#### **3.1 Adapted properties or people needing an adapted property**

- (i) The Localism Act allows for Councils to transfer tenants from one property to another outside of the Allocations Policy (See 6.12) This power may be used when trying to free up an extensively adapted property for someone in urgent need on the Housing Register. It might involve a 'chain let' i.e. transferring one or more tenants to free up an adapted property.
- (ii) All of the transfers covered in this section might involve letting properties outside the allocations rules.

#### **3.2 Tenants in extensively adapted properties where adaptations are no longer in use.**

- (i) This would usually apply to properties with extensive adaptations such as a ground floor extension or through the floor lift. Such applicants would be afforded high priority on the Housing Register to help them move, allowing the adapted property to be let to an appropriate applicant. In addition, they may be offered a transfer outside of this allocations policy where there is an urgent need from one or more households needing an adapted home.
- (ii) If the tenant refuses to move, then as a last resort, the Council may seek possession of the property and may offer suitable alternative accommodation.

#### **3.3 Applicants needing an extensively adapted property**

- (i) In order to make best use of stock, applicants would not normally be offered a general needs property which would require extensive adaptations even if they have a high priority on the Housing Register. Instead, they would be considered for a suitably adapted property that might become available or a property that could be adapted at minimal costs i.e. less than £5000

#### **3.4 Tenants needing extensive adaptations to their home.**

- (i) If the recommendation from Occupational Therapy Team is that major adaptations are needed to a property, e.g. extension or through the floor lift; then rehousing will be considered as a first option.

Every effort will be made to find suitable alternative accommodation in the tenants areas of choice within 6 months of the Homefinder Team receiving the referral from the Occupational Therapist.

Where rehousing is not an option e.g. there are no suitably adapted properties in the tenants area of choice or close to their support network, then the adaptations will be carried out.

There may be other exceptional circumstances that warrant the adaptations being carried out as soon as possible. These will be considered by the Occupational Therapy Team and the Homefinder Team on an individual basis.

### **3.5 Applications from people living in a suitably adapted property**

- (i) Applications from people already living in a property which has been adapted to meet their needs and is suitable for them will normally be assessed as having low priority on the Housing Register unless there are special circumstances. If there is an accepted special need to move, the applicant will be considered for a suitably adapted property or one that can be adapted at minimal cost. The applicant would not be offered a property that would require extensive adaptations even if they were 'next in turn' for the property they had bid for.

### **3.6 Tenants transferring from a suitably adapted property then requiring further adaptations**

- (i) If a tenant with no established need to move takes up a new Council tenancy in a property which requires a fresh set of adaptations to meet their needs, the request will be considered by the Council's Occupational Therapy Team. Dependant on the extent of adaptations recommended by the Occupational Therapy Team, the Service Manager for Tenancy Management may deny the proposed adaptations and instead recommend rehousing into a suitable property
- (ii) The same will apply if a tenant in an adapted property which is suitable for his/her needs chooses to vacate the property, re-applies for accommodation at a later date, then secures a property that needs adaptations.

### **3.7 Applications from 16 and 17 year olds**

- (i) In law someone aged under 18 years cannot hold a legal estate in land and therefore cannot sign a Tenancy Agreement. If a young person is homeless, threatened with homelessness, is ready to leave local authority care, or there are other special circumstances then they will be offered advice and support and may be provided with accommodation under an appropriate form of tenure, until they are 18. It is expected that most young people aged under 18 will require some form of housing support or to be accommodated in specialist supported accommodation.
- (ii) Housing Services will work with Childrens Services to help them deliver their duties under the Children Act 1989 and to co-ordinate services.

### **3.8 Applications from people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness**

- (i) All applicants who are homeless or likely to become homeless in the near future are dealt with by specialist Officers in the Homeless Solutions Team. In the first instance, Officers will investigate whether it is possible to prevent homelessness occurring e.g. liaise with private sector landlord, mediate with parents. In any event, a Housing Register application will be completed and registered if all the relevant criteria for registration is satisfied.
- (ii) All applicants who are homeless or threatened with homelessness will be afforded the priority on the Register according to their circumstances at the time.

- (iii) Where it is established that, had the applicant been assessed under homeless legislation, he/she:
- Is eligible for homeless assistance
  - Would have a priority need for accommodation
  - Has not become homeless intentionally
  - Has a local connection to the Borough
  - Homelessness cannot be prevented and
  - The applicant is likely to become homeless within 2 months

Then a direct offer of accommodation may be made in addition to the applicant bidding for properties themselves.

- (iv) For those applicants accepted as being owed the full homelessness duty, this offer will be considered as a final offer from the Council in discharging its duties under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996. No further direct offers will be made, and their housing application will be reassessed if appropriate. If a request for a review is subsequently submitted a further direct let will only be made if the original decision is overturned.
- (v) For further details, see Homelessness and Prevention Procedures

### **3.9 Discharge of Homelessness duty in the private rented sector**

- (i) The Council reserve the right to offer accommodation, on a minimum 12 month assured short hold tenancy in the private rented sector for statutorily homeless cases. This might be where:
- A private sector landlord offers a property that is suitable for the applicant, for example is the right type, size and location for the homeless household.
  - There is a shortage of social sector properties of the right size, type and location for a homeless household, but there is availability in the private rented sector.
- (ii) This offer will be considered as a final offer from the Council in discharging its duties under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996. No further direct offers will be made, and their housing application will be reassessed if appropriate. If a request for a review is subsequently submitted a further direct let will only be made if the original decision is overturned.

### **3.10 Applications from people in hospital or in short term residential care**

- (i) Each application will be assessed on a case-by-case basis taking into account, matters such as:
- Whether the applicant can return home with relevant aids and adaptations, or support provided.
  - Whether the applicant cannot return home as their property is no longer suitable
  - If the applicant is likely to be homeless following discharge from hospital
  - If discharge from hospital is being delayed, for non-medical reasons, because there is no suitable accommodation for them to go to.

- (ii) Staff will follow Wigan Council's Hospital Discharge Protocol including where appropriate, visiting the applicant in hospital to assess their housing circumstances and taking the necessary action to ensure that the right level of priority is awarded on the Housing Register. This may involve liaison with NHS staff, Adult Services, Occupational Therapists and any other agency involved with the care of the applicant, as appropriate.

### **3.11 Applications from key Stakeholders to this Policy**

- (i) This applies to:
  - Employees of Wigan Council and their relatives
  - Employees of Registered Social Landlord
  - Councillors and their relatives
  - Housing Advisory Panel members and their relatives
- (ii) To ensure that allocations are made in accordance with this policy and no favour is given to applicants with close links to the Council, or any partner organisation, some offers must be specifically authorised.
- (iii) The Assistant Director of Housing Services will authorise any offers of Council tenancies or nominations to partner landlords to applicants who are Wigan Councillors, or their relatives.
- (iv) The Assistant Director of Housing Services will also consider and authorise allocations to Wigan Council staff or partner Registered Social landlords.

### **3.12 Wigan Council staff involved with Lettings & Allocations**

- (i) Wigan Council staff involved with assessing and awarding priority on the Housing Register should refer a case to their Line Manager where the applicant is personally known to them.
- (ii) Any member of the Lettings Team should not let a property to someone who is known to them. If the person selected for an offer of accommodation is known to the Lettings Officer in a personal capacity, the Lettings Officer should refer to their line Manager to deal with the letting of that property.
- (iii) In any event all employees are bound by the Wigan Council Employee Code of conduct.

## SECTION 4

### THE APPLICATION PROCESS

#### 4.1 Joint applications

- (i) This document refers to 'applicant' which includes joint applicants.
- (ii) Joint applications can be made by two or more adults wishing to form a household together and become joint tenants.
- (iii) For the purpose of assessing housing applications, Wigan Council may take other household members into account even if they indicate they do not wish to be a joint applicant.

#### 4.2 The application process

- (i) Subject to the details of this policy, anyone who is aged 18 or above and who is an eligible person (as defined in Section 2) can apply for housing. Applications from people who are aged 16 or 17 may be considered depending on their circumstances (see 3.7)
- (ii) All applications for housing or tenant transfer must be made in on line via [Find a home \(wigan.gov.uk\)](https://www.wigan.gov.uk) Free and confidential advice will be made available for people who may have difficulty making an application.
- (iii) All applications will be assessed to determine whether the applicant or tenant is eligible and qualifies for an allocation in accordance with Section 2 of this policy.
- (iv) All eligible households will be assessed in accordance with the Council's housing need group system outlined in Section 5 of this policy to determine their priority.
- (v) Registered applicants, including existing tenants, will be eligible to be offered a property of the type and size appropriate to their household's needs, in accordance with Section 6.10 of this policy.

#### 4.3 Managing Housing Applications

- (i) The application form will be assessed and given one of the following statuses:
  - Pending - additional information needed from the applicant before the application is made active on the Housing Register
  - Excluded - due to immigration status (see section 2)
  - Disqualified - the application will not be accepted onto the Housing Register (see section 2)
  - Active/Registered - the applicant can bid for properties or be made a direct off a tenancy
  - Cancelled – the applicant has failed to respond to the annual review letter, cannot be contacted or has informed Wigan Council that he/she no longer wants a property.

#### **4.4 Pending Status**

- (i) Applications will be held in 'pending' status – in effect meaning that the applicant is disqualified for an offer of accommodation until he/she provides additional information or takes action as requested by Wigan Council.

**Applications held in 'pending' are as follows:**

##### **4.4.1 Insufficient essential information provided on the Application form**

- (i) Meaning that Officers are unable to award any priority or assess the type of property needed for the household until the application form is fully completed.

##### **4.4.2 Provision of References (essential supporting information)**

- (i) All applicants that are not currently a Wigan Council tenant must provide two suitable references before they are accepted onto the Housing Register.
- (ii) Joint applicants need only provide two references between them unless they have lived together for less than 12 months in which case they should provide two references each.
- (iii) References are requested to try and make sure that new tenants are able to maintain a tenancy and keep to the tenancy conditions. The references will help in identifying any tenancy or support issues that the applicant may have.
- (iv) These should be from a landlord or former landlord, employer or former employer. If the person has never rented a property or been employed or is unable to obtain references from these sources, then a reference from a professional person will be accepted.
- (v) In cases where the applicant either cannot provide two references or the reference(s) they have provided is unacceptable, the applicant may be required to attend either:
  - an office interview to discuss their responsibilities as a tenant or
  - workshops to discuss how to establish and manage a tenancy
- (vi) Following this, unless there is a significant issue that causes their application to be disqualified from the Housing Register, the application will be made active and the applicant will then be able to bid for properties.
- (vii) If appropriate, a support service may also be offered to assist the applicant in setting up and managing a tenancy.
- (viii) An applicant who fails to provide two references, attend an office interview or workshops as requested, may have their application cancelled.

##### **4.4.3 Proof of Identification (essential supporting information)**

- (i) The applicant will be required to provide proof of identification before their application will be accepted. Evidence which will be acceptable is detailed in the procedures.

#### **4.4.4 Affordability Checks**

- (i) In light of the impacts of the Welfare Reform Act and in particular the withdrawal of Housing Benefit for certain groups of people who might under occupy a tenancy, affordability checks will be carried out on new applicants for housing.
- (ii) Some applicants will be required to complete an income and expenditure assessment form. If it is likely that their outgoings will be greater than their income if they were to accept a tenancy, then one of several options may be considered e.g.:
  - Refer to the Homeless Solutions Team or Money Advisor for budgetary advice and help in reducing spend on non essential items
  - Refer the applicant to a specific course on managing a tenancy and budgeting
  - Advise the applicant that they will not be offered a property that is too big for their needs.
- (iii) If it is clear that an applicant could not afford any property type, then their application will be held in pending status until they have complied with the recommendations made by an advisor. This might include clearing credit cards and loans or cutting back on non essential items.
- (iv) When the application form is made active on the Housing Register, the registration date will be the date the form was received provided all other essential supporting information has been provided.
- (v) For further details on Affordability checks, refer to procedures.

#### **4.4.5 Not yet ready to accept a tenancy**

- (i) Applications from people who apply for housing but are unable to or not yet ready to accept a tenancy will be held in 'pending' status until confirmation is received that the person is now able to accept a tenancy:
  - Prisoners. The application will be made active 2 months prior to the date of release
  - Members of HM Forces. The application will be made active 2 months prior to discharge
  - People in Supported Housing, including those in care of the local authority. The application will be made active on confirmation that the applicants has successfully complete a support plan and is now ready to move on, with or without further support.
- (ii) When the application form is made active on the Housing Register, the registration date will be the date the form was received provided all other essential supporting information has been provided within 28 days of the application

#### **4.4.6 Other Supporting Information**

- (i) Applicant may be required to provide other supporting information dependant on their circumstances. Their application will be accepted onto the Housing Register with reduced priority pending evidence of their housing circumstances e.g:
  - Local connection to the Borough
  - Equity expected from the sale of their home
  - Proof of demolition of their home
  - Date moved into the Borough

#### **4.5 Confirmation of Circumstances**

- (i) Depending on individual circumstances, the applicant may be asked for additional supporting information in order for the application to be assessed correctly on the list.
- (ii) Wigan Council staff may also need to conduct a home visit in order to check circumstances and housing conditions.
- (iii) Advice and support will be given to those applicants who are unable to provide the necessary documentation, and this is detailed in the Procedures.

#### **4.6 Active Applications**

- (i) The date the application is made active is known as the registration date. The registration date is the date the application form is received by Wigan Council, provided that all essential supporting information has been submitted within 28 days of the application.
- (ii) The registration date will determine how applicants are ordered within Group C and at each points level of Group B of the group priority scheme as detailed in Section 5.
- (iii) Active applicants in Group A will be ordered according to the date they were awarded the qualifying priority for this group.
- (iv) Applicants with an 'active' status will be contacted every 2 years to check their current housing situation and to see if they wish to remain on the Housing Register. This is known as a review.
- (v) If the applicant fails to respond to the initial review letter within 42 days, the application will be cancelled. If an applicant is known to be especially vulnerable, every effort will be made to contact them, either by telephone, visiting them at home or contacting a support agency to confirm whether a move is still required.
- (vi) The original application will not be re-instated, if it has been cancelled for longer than 3 months, unless the applicant has good reason why he/she was unable to respond within the timescale. Any re-instatement must be approved by a Senior Officer.



- (vii) When an application has been cancelled and is not reinstated, any subsequent application will be treated as a new application and therefore will have a new registration date.
- (viii) If an applicant is rehoused in suitable accommodation which meets their needs, by Wigan Council or a Registered Social Landlord, the application will be closed. Any request for a subsequent move would require a new application.
- (ix) If an applicant is rehoused in private sector accommodation which affords a less secure form of tenancy than with the Council or an RSL, the application may remain active on the Register, with the original registration/priority date, but will be re-assessed and may be given lower priority according to the circumstances of the case.
- (x) At the discretion of Wigan Council, where an applicant has been rehoused in accommodation which does not meet their needs adequately, their application may remain active on the Register, with the original registration/priority date and priority group/points and be eligible for further bids or direct offers.
- (xi) Applicants should inform Wigan Council of any change in circumstances, such as change of address, as this may affect their position on the Housing Register and may result in the application being cancelled if Wigan Council are unable to contact the applicant.
- (xii) If the application is held in 'pending' status but the applicant fails to respond to a request for additional information within 42 days, the application will be cancelled. If an applicant is known to be vulnerable every effort will be made to contact them, either by telephone, visiting them at home or contacting a support agency (if there is one) to obtain the relevant details to properly assess the application.
- (xiii) The registration date would not normally be before an applicant's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- (xiv) The registration date of an application that was previously excluded or disqualified will be the date the form is made active with the following exceptions:
  - asylum seekers who receive Refugee status and
  - Those disqualified having refused three offers of accommodation

Their registration date will be the date the application was received, subject to providing any essential supporting information as requested within the timescales outlined in 4.6.

- (xv) All circumstances relating to the application will be re-checked at the point of offer. The offer may be withdrawn if it is found that there have been any changes of circumstances that have a material effect on the application.

#### **4.7 Communication with applicants**

- (i) Wigan Council will:
  - Confirm receipt of an application for housing in writing or by email.
  - Notify applicants if a decision is made that the household is not eligible or does not qualify for an allocation and explain why.
  - Notify applicants if additional information or supporting evidence is required.
  - Provide applicants with confirmation of the housing priority group and points awarded if applicable.
  - Communicate by telephone, in writing, via email or where the applicant has indicated a preference, by text message.
  - Communicate with authorised agents, including support workers.

#### **4.8 Applications from vulnerable people**

- (i) A wide range of services are available to help vulnerable applicants access accommodation and live independently.
- (ii) Someone who needs additional help and support may be referred to Housing Services via a third party e.g. Adult Services or may contact the Housing Register Team direct. Assistance will be given in completing the housing application form and informing them of their housing options and the Homefinder scheme, which is managed by the Housing Register Team, if appropriate.

##### **4.8.1 Homefinder Service:**

- (i) The Homefinder Service is for those people who:
  - Do not have access to a computer or cannot use a computer and
  - Do not have family, friends or a support worker to help them search for suitable properties and
  - Have difficulty or are unable to use the telephone or call into the Life Centre on a regular basis.
- (ii) The Housing Register staff will arrange to place bids for suitable properties on the applicant's behalf and keep the applicant informed of progress. If/when the applicant is offered a property but indicate that they may find it difficult setting up and managing a tenancy, a referral may be made to the Housing Support Team.
- (iii) Housing Services will also make arrangements for decisions and assessments to be explained in person on request, or where it is apparent that the applicant or tenant may have difficulty in understanding the reasoning behind or implications of any decision made by Housing Services in relation to this policy.

#### **4.9 Applications from people experiencing domestic abuse**

- (i) The Council is committed to ensuring that all customers can access services easily and on equal terms. Domestic abuse often has consequences for the housing situation of those affected we will ensure that all staff offer advice,

guidance and assistance to customers experiencing domestic abuse. A place of safety may be offered immediately if the applicant is unable or unwilling to return home.

- (ii) Safety and confidentiality are paramount. Housing Services will only involve other agencies or divulge information to a third party with the consent of the person, unless required to do so by law or unless that information is necessary for the protection of people at risk or to help to prevent fraud.

## SECTION 5

### THE GROUP SCHEME AND PRIORITY CRITERIA

#### 5 Overview

- (i) Applicants and Council tenants will be placed in either Group A, Group B or Group C where they are able to demonstrate that they meet the appropriate criteria in either their permanent or temporary home.
- (ii) Three groups of applicants. Namely:
  - Applicants living outside of the Borough with no local connection • New entrants to the Borough with no local connection.
  - Homeowners who expect to receive equity of £65,000 or more from the sale of their home will have their points reduced to 2 if their application is held in Group B.

These groups of people will not attract additional points for 'waiting time' on the Housing Register. If applicants from these groups are adequately housed, their application will be held in Group C.

- (iii) Homeless applicants will have their application assessed based on their current housing circumstances. However, a direct offer of accommodation may be made to some applicants who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. See 3.8 above.

#### 5.1 Group A – Urgent Housing Need

- (i) Applicants in Group A will be prioritised by the date their application was placed in Group A. Where applicants have the same Group A entry date, they will be ordered by the date their application was made active.
- (ii) Applicants in Group A will be reviewed every 3 months to confirm that urgent housing priority is still warranted. If circumstances have changed or it is considered that the applicant is failing to bid for suitable properties without good reason, then Group A status may be withdrawn.
- (iii) Applicants with outstanding housing-related debts may be awarded Group A priority as long as they agree to a repayment plan. Failure to keep up with the agreed repayments may result in a review of this priority.
- (iv) Group A priority would not apply to applicants who have no connection to the Wigan Borough or are new entrants to the borough or expect to receive more than £65,000 from the sale of their home.
- (v) Applicants will not be awarded additional priority if they fall into two or more categories within Group A.

## **Qualifying criteria - Group A**

### **5.1.1 Regeneration schemes and demolition**

Applicable to tenants, owner-occupiers and verified lodgers living in the Wigan Borough in confirmed clearance areas or properties subject to Compulsory Purchase Orders (including those where a CPO could be made, but the owner agrees to sell their property to the Council by agreement) or subject to Prohibition, excluding emergency prohibitions, or Demolition Orders.

N.B. Residents subject to emergency Prohibition Notices will be supported under the Council's homelessness duties.

Applicable also to Council tenants and verified lodgers where the Council requires them to move, for example to demolish the properties.

### **5.1.2 Young People leaving Local Authority Care**

Group A status is applicable to young people who have been 'looked after' by Wigan Council and are due to leave their care home or foster home.

A rehousing and support plan may be agreed with the young person, which may include a stay in supported accommodation before moving on to independent living. The application will be held in 'pending' status until the Council's Children in Care and Care Leavers' Team confirm that the young person is ready for independent living. Group A priority is dependent on the young person continuing to engage positively with their rehousing and support plan and may be reviewed in consultation with the Council's Children in Care and Care Leavers' Team.

Each application will be considered on a case by case basis where the young person has been discharged from local authority care but not yet found suitable accommodation. In such circumstances Group A status may be retained for up to 12 months.

### **5.1.3 Former Armed Forces personnel leaving the services**

Group A priority is applicable to people who lived in the Borough prior to joining the Armed Forces or have a local connection to the Borough. Not applicable to people who have been dishonourably discharged from the Armed Forces.

Housing applications from Members of the Armed Forces will be held in 'Pending' status until evidence is supplied from the Commanding Officer of the date of discharge. On receipt of this, the application will be re-assessed and placed in Group A two months prior to discharge date or as soon as possible thereafter.

After 6 months from the discharge date, if the applicant has not bid for any available accommodation, the application will be re-assessed and given the relevant priority according to housing need, as any other applicant.

#### **5.1.4 Armed Forces, Reservists and bereaved spouses or Civil Partners**

Group A priority is applicable to a person who is in urgent housing need and is:

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

Urgent housing need for the purpose of this section is where:

- The person has urgent medical or welfare priority to move or
- The Council has accepted the full homelessness duty

#### **5.1.5 Household suffering severe hardship**

Group A priority is applicable to exceptional cases, at the discretion of Service Manager, Tenancy Management, where urgent rehousing is required, for example because their housing situation is life threatening or seriously damaging their welfare or community safety.

#### **5.1.6 Persons wishing to adopt / Foster carer / Supported Lodgings host**

Group A priority is applicable to people who have been approved by Wigan Council's People Directorate to adopt a child, be a Foster carer or Supported Lodgings host, but whose current accommodation is unsuitable to accommodate the household.

Written confirmation will be required from the People Directorate, along with details of why rehousing is required, e.g. to a larger property, a property with specific adaptations to accommodate a disabled child.

#### **5.1.7 Applicants needing rehousing who would be a high burden on the public purse**

Group A priority is applicable where it can be shown that a person needs to move from unsuitable accommodation to prevent them being a high cost to public services.

Written confirmation will be required from the People Directorate and or Health Service.

### **5.2 GROUP B - POINTS SCHEME**

- (i) Applicants in Group B will be prioritised by the number of points awarded. Where applicants have the same number of points, they will be ordered by the date their housing application was made active on the Register.

## Qualifying criteria for – Group B

### 5.2.1 Overcrowding:

- 5 points for each bedroom lacking or
- 20 points for applicants living in a two-bedroom social sector house and overcrowded by one or more bedrooms.
- Additional 2 points if applicant overcrowded in a one-bedroom property.

Applicable to households whose current accommodation has fewer bedrooms than are needed as defined in 6.10 below.

When calculating overcrowding, account will be taken of all persons in the household, including those who do not wish to move, where this applies. Applications from households which include a pregnant women will be assessed as though the baby had been born.

### 5.2.2 Priority for rehousing on medical grounds, including needs relating to a disability (20 or 10 points)

Applicable to people whose medical condition or needs are adversely affected by their current accommodation. Evidence will be required to establish the impact on the applicant's wellbeing, lifestyle and management of daily living activities and how rehousing may be able to resolve or alleviate the circumstances.

The applicant will be asked to complete a medical form, with assistance if required. This, together with any supporting information will be considered by a Senior Officer. A home visit may be arranged if considered appropriate. If he/she needs further advice about the medical condition, enquiries may be made with an external agency that specialises in housing and medical issues. Based on the information provided, the Senior Officer will make one of three decisions:

- Urgent housing need - 'Medical 1' (20 points) - the applicant needs to be urgently rehoused to reduce the impact of their current housing situation on their health or wellbeing
- High housing need - 'Medical 2' (10 points) - the applicant needs to be rehoused as a high priority to reduce the impact of their current housing situation on their health or wellbeing
- No Action - the applicant's current housing situation does not have a sufficient impact on his/her health or wellbeing to justify additional priority.

A restriction may be attached to the medical award - for example a 'Ground Floor' recommendation' in which case the applicant will only be considered for ground floor accommodation - or a first-floor flat which can be accessed by a lift - because of their health and mobility. If the applicant does not want to be tied to such a restriction e.g. wants to be offered a house, then the medical priority will be removed.

If there is a relevant change in the applicant's circumstances, for example a change of address, or the household member who was awarded the medical priority has died, the medical award will be removed, and the applicant's priority re-

assessed. It may be necessary to complete a fresh application.

Medical awards will be reviewed periodically and may be withdrawn if, for example, the applicant refuses an offer of accommodation or fails to make a bid on a property for a long period of time, without good reason.

### **5.2.3 Priority for rehousing on welfare or social grounds (20 or 10 points)**

Applicable to cases where the applicant's housing situation is considered to be having a detrimental impact on their safety or wellbeing which is not adequately reflected by their priority under the group and points scheme.

This priority can be used to reflect an applicant's need to move to another area where they are otherwise adequately housed in their current accommodation.

An applicant may request an award of welfare priority directly or it may be requested on their behalf by Wigan Council staff, their RSL/landlord, a Councillor or any other agency who provides support or is familiar with their circumstances. A welfare application form may be completed, although requests can also be made in writing or verbally and will be subject to a detailed assessment including consideration of supporting information where appropriate. Evidence will be required about the impact of the current situation and how rehousing could resolve or alleviate this.

Based on the information provided, a Senior Officer will make one of three decisions:

Urgent housing need - 'Welfare 1' (20 points) Where the applicant or tenant can demonstrate a need that requires urgent rehousing to resolve or alleviate the situation.

High housing need - 'Welfare 2' (10 points) Where the applicant's wellbeing would clearly benefit from a move.

No Action - the applicant's current housing situation does not have a significant impact on their wellbeing and/or the circumstances are adequately reflected in the priority or points they have been awarded.

Welfare priority may be reviewed at any time if there is a relevant deterioration or improvement in the applicant's circumstances after they register for rehousing.

Welfare awards will be reviewed periodically and may be withdrawn if, for example, the applicant refuses an offer of accommodation or fails to make a bid on a property for a long period of time, without good reason.

A Welfare 2 priority will automatically be awarded to an applicant who is of no fixed abode and provides evidence of having formerly served in the regular forces.

### **5.2.4 Making a Positive Contribution to the Economy or Community (5 points)**

Where it can be evidenced that any member of the household is either:

- In 'established' employment for a minimum of 12 months.
- Is studying at college for a nationally recognised award such as NVQ, BTEC or Diploma.

- Has an apprenticeship or work-based training for a minimum of 16 hours a week.
- A volunteer for a not-for-profit organisation or charity. Must have been a volunteer for a minimum of 6 months, working at least 28 hours a month.

The additional points can be retained for 3 months if:

- The applicant or member of his/her household loses their job for no fault of their own
- The College Course or Apprenticeship is completed

Discretion will be used in deciding whether additional points should be awarded or retained by following procedural guidelines. For example, where an apprentice has a period out of work, then goes on to secure employment.

The onus will be on the applicant to provide proof of their positive contribution. Only one award per housing application.

### **5.2.5 Insecurity of Tenure (8,6, or 4 points)**

Highest level (8 points) Applicable to people living in temporary accommodation provided by the Council and have been awarded the full homeless statutory duty. Additional points would not normally be awarded in these circumstances.

High level (6 points) applicable to households who are not tenants or owner-occupiers but who have no priority need under the Homelessness legislation who are living in a bed-and-breakfast hotel, living in non- residential accommodation (such as an office or shop) or who have no fixed abode.

High level (6 points) applicable to applicants who are lodging and have a child or children under 10 years old living with them.

Standard level (4 points) applicable to lodgers including adult children of tenants or owner-occupiers.

Standard level (4 points) applicable to people living in temporary accommodation provided by the Council, where the Council has deemed that it does not have (or no longer has) a statutory rehousing duty, including:

- Where, following investigation, the Council has determined that the
- applicant is not homeless.
- Where the Council's duty has been discharged - for example, the
- applicant has refused a suitable offer of accommodation.
- The applicant is found to have no 'priority need' under the Homeless
- legislation.
- The applicant is found to be 'intentionally homeless'.

Where an applicant is still living in temporary accommodation provided by the Council after a discharge of duty under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996, additional points would not normally be awarded under any additional category.



#### **5.2.6 Moving on from short term supported housing (10 points)**

Applicable to people who have successfully completed a support plan whilst in specialist accommodation and are now ready for independent living, possibly with ongoing floating support. The supported accommodation would normally be let on a short-term basis of no more than two years and the tenant initially. Evidence will be required from the accommodation provider that the applicant is capable of maintaining their own tenancy, and any on-going support needs.

#### **5.2.7 Split Households (6 points)**

Applicable to established couples or families who are obliged to live apart because there is no suitable accommodation available to them. The application will be registered in the name of one partner/parent as though both applicants are living in one property, and awarded priority according to whichever will give them the greatest priority.

#### **5.2.8 Lack of facilities / poor property condition (9 points)**

Applicable to people living in accommodation which lacks normal facilities such as for washing, cooking etc or where the property is in a dangerous or otherwise poor condition and efforts have been made to address this through the Private Sector team.

Wherever possible, the Council will seek to remedy the situation through negotiation and enforcement of standards, including legal action where necessary. Evidence will be required that in the view of an Environmental Health Officer, the situation is so severe - or the property owner has been unresponsive to enforcement measures, and these are likely to be protracted - that it is not reasonable that the applicant should continue to live in the property long-term.

This priority will not usually be applicable where facilities are adequate, but applicant is obliged to share them, e.g. house in multiple occupation.

#### **5.2.9 Under-occupation (10 points)**

Applicable to existing Council or RSL tenants who wish to transfer from a four bedroom house to any smaller suitable property type, subject to the general lettings principles detailed in 6.10 below.

#### **5.2.10 Child(ren) above ground floor level (6 points)**

Applicable to households with one or more children aged up to 7 years, living in a flat with a communal entrance, above ground floor level, where this is the child/children's main residence. (This would normally exclude two story cottage flats where there is a separate entrance to each flat).

#### **5.2.11 Social housing tenants who no longer need adaptations (20 points)**

Applicable to Council or RSL tenants whose current property has been significantly adapted (usually ground floor extension or through floor lift) to meet the medical or disability needs of someone who is no longer part of the household or who no longer needs the adaptations.

#### **5.2.12 Bedsit occupiers with child/ren (6 points)**

Applicable to people living in bedsit or 'studio' accommodation and who have frequent overnight access/custody of a child or children. This would include people occupying only one room in an HMO (house in multiple Occupation)

#### **5.2.13 The Following Groups will be awarded 3 points:**

- Prisoners who are due to be released within 2 months.
- Applicants occupying NASS accommodation who have been granted refugee status
- Applicants living in a hostel outside of the Wigan Borough

#### **5.2.14 Tenants and owner occupiers in Wigan Borough (3 points)**

Tenants and owner occupiers who expect to receive less than £65,000 from the sale of their home will be awarded 3 points

#### **5.2.15 Waiting Time (1-5 points)**

An additional point will be awarded to applications which are still active on the register 12 months after registering, and on each anniversary thereafter to a maximum of 5 points. Waiting time points cannot be accrued by applicants whose priority has been reduced for any of the reasons detailed in 5.2.16 to 5.2.17 below.

#### **Points reduction - Group B applicants**

The following groups will initially have their application assessed taking into account any level of housing need e.g. points for overcrowding etc. A reduction in points will then be applied to the application.

#### **5.2.16 Applications from households with no local connection to the Wigan Borough**

- (i) Applications from households who have no local connection with Wigan Borough will be accepted onto the Housing Register provided the household contains eligible persons but will have their housing need points reduced to 2 if they are placed into Group B on the list.
- (ii) Local Connection for applicants who live outside the Borough as defined by this policy is a connection the applicant has with the Wigan Borough because he/she:
  - a. Needs to give or receive support or
  - b. For employment where commuting is a problem and has lived in the UK for at least 5 years or
  - c. Was born in the Borough and spent most of their life in the Borough or
  - d. Lived in the Borough for at least 5 out of the last 10 years or
  - e. Has parents or siblings who have lived in the Borough most of their life, or
  - f. For hardship reasons or other special circumstances

Each housing application submitted by a person who lives outside the Borough will be considered on a case-by-case basis according to procedural guidelines which support this policy.

#### **5.2.17 New Entrants to the Borough**

Applicants who have moved into the Borough, will not be deemed to have a local connection unless he/she:

1. Was born in the Borough and spent most of their life in the Borough  
or
2. Lived in the Borough for at least 5 out of the last 10 years or
3. Has parents or siblings who have lived in the Borough most of their life  
or
4. For hardship reasons or other special circumstances.

#### **5.2.18 Financial Resources**

- (i) All applicants who own one or more residential properties must provide evidence of the expected profit, once all mortgages and charges have been cleared, that would be realised on its sale. Until this evidence is obtained, owner-occupiers in Wigan Borough will be placed in Group C or in Group B with 2 points (if there is a housing need).
- (ii) After the assessment of the application is complete, (and if the applicant qualifies for Group B priority), a reduction to 2 points may be applied where the applicant has equity expected to exceed £65,000 in a property the currently own or have sold within the preceding 12 months.
- (iii) Where the applicant has a special need for certain property types, facilities or support services that can only be provided in social rented housing however, Wigan Council may at its discretion waive this reduction.

#### **5.2.19 Modifying factor: Behaviour - debt**

- (i) A reduction will be applied for any outstanding housing-related debts accrued in the private or public sector, including current rent arrears, former tenancy arrears, sundry debts relating to damages or re-charges on a property, Court Costs, warrant fees and Council Tax arrears.
- (i) Adjustments will be made in favour of those applicants whose payments are made direct to their rent account e.g. via direct debit, whereby their account exceeds £100 during the period but is cleared when the monthly payment is received.
- (ii) Points will be deducted on a sliding scale, according to the level of debt:
  - £100-£199 owing - point deduction is 2
  - £200-£299 owing - point deduction is 4
  - £300 - £399 owing - point deduction is 6And so on in steps of £200 until points are reduced to 1.
- (iii) Points will be incrementally re-instated when the debt is reduced within the above thresholds. So, for example if the debt is reduced from £320 to £280 the points deducted will reduce from 6 to 4.

- (iv) The applicant will be expected to enter into and maintain an agreement to reduce the debt before their application can be accepted onto the Register (see 2.4.3 above). An offer of accommodation will not normally be made unless the repayments made are in line with the agreement or are brought up to date at the point of offer.
- (v) Current Council or RSL tenants will not normally be allowed to transfer until all housing debts are cleared as referred to in section 2 above unless there is an issue of affordability or acute housing need.

#### **5.2.20 Modifying factor – Anti Social Behaviour or Criminal Activity**

- (i) Points will be reduced to one where any applicant or member of his/her household has caused anti social behaviour and/or criminal activity, but this behaviour is not considered serious enough to warrant exclusion from the Register.
- (ii) The onus will be on the applicant to prove that his/her behaviour has improved sufficiently and been sustained, before the points reduction will be lifted.

#### **5.3 GROUP C – No Housing Need**

- (i) Applicants in Group C will be prioritised by the date their housing application was made active on the Register.
- (ii) Group C is applicable to people who wish to be rehoused in social rented property but are considered to be adequately accommodated. This group will comprise:
  - Owner occupiers who expect to receive more than £65,000 from the sale of their home
  - Applicants who live outside the Wigan Borough
  - New entrants to the Borough with less than 5 years residency

## 5.4

### Summary of the Grouping Scheme

| Group A   |             |
|---|-------------|
| Demolition / regeneration scheme resident   |             |
| Young People leaving local authority care   |             |
| Leaving the UK armed forces   |             |
| Armed forces, Reservists and bereaved spouses or Civil Partners   |             |
| Severe hardship   |             |
| Potential adopters: foster carer or Supported Lodgings host requiring a move  |             |
| Elderly people needing rehousing to prevent them going into residential care or other high-cost public purse cases  |             |
| Group B   |             |
| Overcrowding: each bedroom lacking  | 5 points    |
| Overcrowding: additional points for one bedroom property  | 2 points    |
| Overcrowding in a two bedroom social sector house   | 20 points   |
| Medical 1: Urgent priority  | 20 points   |
| Medical 2: High priority  | 10 points   |
| Welfare 1: Urgent priority  | 20 points   |
| Welfare 2: High priority  | 10 points   |
| Welfare 2: no fixed abode and served in the regular forces  | 10 points   |
| Community Contribution  | 5 points    |
| Insecure tenure: highest level  | 8 points    |
| Insecure tenure: high level   | 6 points    |
| Insecure tenure: standard level   | 4 points    |
| Moving on from supported  | 10 points   |
| Split family couple   | 6 points    |
| Poor property conditions  | 9 points    |
| Under-occupation: releasing 4-bedroom house   | 10 points   |
| Child(ren) above ground floor level   | 6 points    |
| No longer require adaptations   | 20 points   |
| Bedsit occupier with parental access to child/ren   | 6 points    |
| Prisoners, NASS, hostel outside the borough   | 3 points    |
| Tenants or owners (less than £65,000) in Wigan Borough  | 3 points    |
| Waiting time  | 1 point     |
| Group B – Points Reduction  |             |
| Lack of local connection or new entrant to the Borough of less than 5 years residency   | To 2 points |
| Financial resources – equity over £65,000   | To 2 points |
| Behaviour – housing debts (incremental)   | To 1 points |
| Anti-social behaviour or criminal activity  | To 1 points |
| Group C   |             |
| No housing need:  |             |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicant living outside of Borough with no local connection</li> <li>• New entrants to the Borough of less than 5 years residency</li> <li>• Owner occupiers with equity of more than £65,000 expected</li> </ul> |             |

## **5.5 Lettings Quotas**

- (i) Approximately 90% of advertised properties will be let on a 'needs basis', that is, according to the applicant's position in the Grouping Scheme as shown above.
- (ii) Approximately 10% of advertised properties will be let to Wigan Council tenants as detailed below:

## **5.6 Tenant Transfers**

- (i) 10% of available properties to be let to Wigan Council tenants who can demonstrate 'a good tenancy record': i.e.
  - There is no history of involvement in anti social behaviour in the last 5
  - years by any household member or their visitors
  - There has been a clear rent account for at least 12 months prior to the date of the offer (NB: arrears which occur due to the Housing Benefit application being processed will not be taken into account where this results in a clear account when benefit is awarded)
  - There is no outstanding Council debt including current arrears, former tenancy arrears and Council Tax at the time of the offer
  - There are no other breaches of tenancy conditions.
- (ii) Bids from qualifying applicants for these properties will be prioritised in order of their registration date.

## **5.7 Sheltered Accommodation - special preference**

- (i) When a property in a Sheltered block of flats becomes vacant, first consideration will be given to transferring any existing residents wishing to move within the scheme, e.g. from a first floor flat to a ground floor flat, provided that the move will benefit their health and wellbeing. (This would not normally apply to Grouped bungalows)
- (ii) If two or more residents in similar circumstances wish to move, priority will be given to the person who has lived in the scheme the longest.

## SECTION 6

### THE ALLOCATION OF HOUSING

#### 6.1 Choice – Based Lettings

- (i) Most available properties will be advertised on a weekly basis, usually from Thursday at 9.00am to the following Tuesday at 5.00pm. Applicants will be invited to bid for available properties and must normally satisfy the general lettings principles (see 6.10).
- (ii) Every property that is advertised will be labelled as either:
  - Needs based – Groups A to C (90%).
  - Time based – For existing council tenants only (10%)
- (iii) Details of currently available properties can be found on Wigan Council's website [www.wigan.gov.uk](http://www.wigan.gov.uk)
- (iv) Applicants can access the website by entering their unique reference number and surname and can then place bids for suitable properties. Alternatively, they can contact the Housing Register team for a staff member to place bids on their behalf.
- (v) Final checks will be made prior to the formal offer being made to ensure that all the details are up to date and correct. This may include a home visit.

#### 6.2 Priority Lets

- (i) Some properties that are advertised may be let direct and not necessarily to the person next in turn on the Housing Register. This is to ensure that applications from homeless households or those threatened with homelessness are dealt with speedily to resolve their situation (see 3.8 above).
- (ii) Priority Lets may be made in other exceptional circumstances e.g. where a person is left in possession in a property that is larger than they need and so an offer of a one-bedroom flat is made. (see 6.19 below).
- (iii) The 'priority let' status may be withdrawn if the applicant refuses an appropriate offer of accommodation without good reason.

#### 6.3 Multiple offers

- (i) In order to speed up the letting's procedure, the first applicants who bid for a property that is considered to be of medium or low demand will be contacted to see if they are still interested in the property. The offer will be made to the person 'next in turn' who responds to the letter within the timescale given.

#### 6.4 Prioritising Needs Based Applicants (Group A-C)

- (i) Properties that have been advertised under the choice-based lettings system will be offered to the bidder whose application has been in Group A the longest, provided they satisfy the 'property criteria' (see 6.10). If there are no bids from Group A applicants, the property will be offered to the bidder in Group B with the highest number of points. If two applicants have the same

- number of points, the property will be offered to the person with the earliest registration date. If there is no-one in Group B, the property will be offered to the person who has been in Group C with the earliest registration date.
- (ii) If the offer is refused or withdrawn, the next highest priority applicant on the bid list will be made the offer, and if that is refused, the next applicants, and so on.

#### **6.4.1 Number of bids**

- (i) Applicants are encouraged to only bid for properties they are genuinely interested in. There is no limit on the number of bids an applicant can make in any one week, however, if the applicant is 'next in turn' for two to more properties, Housing Services will decide which property to offer in order to best match available properties to the needs of applicants.

#### **6.4.2 Number of Offers**

- (i) If an applicant refuses three offers of accommodation, without good reason, then the application will be disqualified for 12 months.

#### **6.7 Council and RSL Tenant**

- (i) Tenants will be permitted to transfer to alternative accommodation if the following transfer standard is met:
- The property is in a clean condition and satisfactory state of decoration.
  - The property shows no signs of damage caused by the tenant, members of their household or visitors to their home.
  - Any garden is reasonably cultivated and free from rubbish and/or overgrowth.
  - There is a clear rent account.
  - The tenant or any members of their household are not involved in criminal activity or anti-social behaviour.
- (ii) Tenants may be exempt from the above requirements in the following circumstances
- Disabled or vulnerable tenants with a need to move
  - Current tenants who have been awarded 20 points due to their medical or welfare circumstances
  - Where there is a risk of violence to the tenant or member of their household
  - Where there are clear issues of affordability and transfer to a smaller property would alleviate the financial difficulties

Wigan Council will have the discretion to waive the transfer standard

- (iii) Tenants who have sufficient priority to be offered the available property but who do not meet the transfer standard will be contacted by Housing Services and given the opportunity to address any issues within a reasonable timescale, depending on the circumstances.



## 6.8 The Size and type of accommodation to be offered

- (i) Wigan Council will take into account the household size, age, composition and circumstances of each application to determine the size and type of accommodation that the applicant or tenant may bid for, in order to make best use of available stock.
- (ii) Applicants may be considered for properties that are larger than they need but they will have to demonstrate that they have sufficient income to cover the rent and other essential outgoings.

## 6.9 Housing Association Nominations

- (i) Details of up to 5 applicants who are 'next in turn' for a property owned by a Housing Association will be forwarded to the Association. The Association will then let the property in accordance with this policy.

## 6.10 General property types/size entitlement principles:

| Type of Property   | Household Composition   |
|--|---|
| Studio flat/bedsit   | Single Person   |
| One bedroom flat   | Single person or couple – including those with access to a child,   |
| Two bedroom flat* on the ground floor                              | Single person, council, two adults, a person who has access to one or more children or family who need two bedrooms.  |
| Two bedroom block flat or multi story flat* above the ground floor | Single person, couple, two adults, a person who has access to one or more children or family who need two bedrooms and the youngest child is at least 12 years old.   |
| Two bedroom, two storey cottage flat* above the ground floor       | Single Person, couple, two adults, a person who has access to one or more children or family who need two bedrooms.   |
| One bedroom bungalow   | Single person or couple. At least one of the occupants must be over 60 years or where it can be proven that no other property type can meet their needs.  |
| Two bedroom bungalow   | At least one of the occupants must be over the age of 60 years and the size and nature of the household means that two bedrooms are required.<br><br>Or<br><br>Where it can be proven that no other property type can meet their needs and the size and nature of the household means that two bedrooms are required. |
| Sheltered accommodation (bedsit flat)                              | Single person over the age of 60  |
| Sheltered accommodation (one bedroom flat or bungalow)             | Single person or couple. At least one occupant must be over the age of 60 years.  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Sheltered accommodation (two bedroom flat or bungalow) | At least one of the occupants must be over the age of 60 years and all occupants over the age of 50 years. The size and nature of the household means that two bedrooms are required |
| Two bedroom house                                      | Families who need two bedroom accommodation.   |
| Three bedroom house*                                   | Families who need two or three bedroom accommodation   |
| Three bedroom parlour houses                           | Families who need three or four bedroom accommodation  |
| Four bedroom or more houses                            | Families who need at least the number of bedrooms in the house   |
| Properties purpose built or adapted for the disabled*  | A member of the household must need the adaptations.   |

\*Applicants are encouraged to only bid for properties where they will maximise use of bedrooms. Applicants may bid for properties larger than they need (\*) but must demonstrate that they have sufficient income to afford the outgoings.

**Notes:**

- (i) Two bedroom bungalows. If there is no household in urgent need – that is, in Group A or with 20 points or more in Group B – who can use all the bedrooms, the property will be offered to an applicant in urgent housing need but who may not make use of the all the bedrooms. If there are no applicants with 20 points or more, the property will be offered to the ‘next in turn’ irrespective of whether they require two bedrooms – subject to affordability assessment if appropriate.
- (ii) Where there is a medical/disability need, Housing Services will register households for up to one additional bedroom, e.g. to accommodate a carer, or where a couple require two bedrooms to sleep apart or to accommodate medical equipment. In doing so Housing Services must be satisfied that the prospective tenant can afford the property.
- (iii) ‘Families’ are households comprising one or two parents with one or more children of any age including fostered and adopted children; or an applicant who is expecting a child – the applicant will qualify for a house once proof of pregnancy is received.
- (iv) Council or RSL tenants living in a four-bedroom property, but who only need one bedroom can be considered for a one-, two- or three-bedroom property provided they prove that they are able to afford it.
- (v) Provided it will not constitute statutory overcrowding (which is a stricter standard than the council’s overcrowding definition) and should the applicant agree, in certain circumstances the council will allow a household to occupy a smaller property than they would be entitled to under this policy. This would normally apply to households needing 5 bedrooms or more. Tenants will be entitled to housing need points in the normal way should they subsequently reapply for a transfer.
- (vi) Adapted properties may not always be offered to the bidder with the highest priority under the group scheme. The household who has the greatest need for the specific

adaptations, and number of bedrooms which the property has, will be taken into account.

- (vii) Houses with four or more bedrooms or parloured 3-bedroom properties will not always be offered to the bidder with the highest priority under the group scheme. The size and type of their current property and the composition of the household, including any special needs of any of its members, will be taken into account.
- (viii) If there is no demand from families for houses, then the property on offer will be let to the any other household type, in accordance with this policy, provided they show they are able to afford the outgoings.
- (ix) An assessment of suitability will be carried out for an applicant who want sheltered accommodation before an offer of accommodation is made
- (x) The criteria may be widened if there is no demand for a specific property EG sheltered accommodation may be offered to someone under the age of 60 years provided that an assessment of their needs shows that they would benefit from sheltered accommodation.
- (xi) Properties in high demand and short supply such as four bedroom houses and extensively adapted properties may be let on a fixed term flexible tenancy.
- (xii) If a local lettings policy (See 6.15) is applied to any property this will be indicated when it is advertised.

#### **6.11 Rules on room sharing: Housing Allowances Size Criteria**

- (i) This set of rules relate to both:
  - How initial applications for accommodation are assessed to determine the extent of overcrowding and under occupation and
  - the number of bedrooms needed by the household in their new home.
- (ii) The Housing Allowance size criteria allows one bedroom for:
  - Every Adult couple
  - Any other adult aged 16 or over
  - Any two children regardless of gender aged under 10
  - Any two children of the same gender aged up to 15
  - Any other child
- (iii) Children of an appropriate age and sex within the same household are expected to be able to share a bedroom regardless of relationship, e.g. step-children, foster children. Children from different households (.e.g. in lodging situations) will not be expected to share in this way for the purposes of calculating overcrowding and the appropriate size of property to be offered.
- (iv) In assessing the number of bedrooms needed by the household in their new home, account will be taken of any unborn child (as if the child had been born).

#### **6.12 Main caring responsibility for children**

- (i) In cases of separated or divorced parents, Housing Services will decide on a case by case basis, which parent has the main caring responsibility for the child/ren. Evidence will be required to demonstrate residents and access arrangements and/or any court orders affecting these. Applicants who have the main caring responsibility for children will be entitled to bid for a family sized property. Applicants who have access to children but do not have the main caring responsibility may bid for 'non-family flats' with one or more bedrooms (See 6.10) but will usually not be eligible for a house unless there is no demand from families.
- (ii) Child(ren) will not be taken into account (e.g. For overcrowding/child above ground floor priority) when assessing an application from a separated parent who does not have full parental access, although points will be awarded if the applicant is living in a bedsit/studio flat.

### **6.13 Transfers**

- (i) Wigan Council tenants wishing to transfer are included within this allocation scheme.
- (ii) There may be occasions however when the council needs to withdraw properties from allocations under this policy, or move people from their homes for special reasons e.g. major repairs programmes ("decants"), to meet strategic priorities, or following disaster or emergency.
- (iii) Alternatively the Council may make judicious allocations that help to reduce the call on the public purse for example:
  - Give preference to transfer a tenant in order to release a property and relet their home to an applicant in high housing need,
  - to create a chain of let's which meets high housing need or a strategic priority.
  - Instigate transfers to make best use of stock e.g. to aid those wishing to downsize
  - Or to resolve other issues where housing is a practical solution
- (iv) In such cases, the Council reserves the right to withdraw suitable properties from the allocation scheme and/or transfer tenants to resolve specific housing circumstances.

### **6.14 Tenants with lodgers**

Current tenants who have lodgers residing in their property, who do not wish to move with them, will not be allowed to transfer to alternative accommodation unless the tenant has confirmed that the lodger will leave when they transfer.

The lodger must have left the property before the tenant enters into a tenancy agreement for a new property or moves with them to a suitably sized property.

### **6.15 Local Lettings Policies**

- (i) Section 167 ( E) of the Housing Act 1996 enables housing authorities to allocate accommodation to certain categories of applicant, whether or not they

fall into the 'reasonable preference' categories. When operating local lettings policies, housing authorities will need to ensure that overall reasonable preference for allocations is given to applicants in the statutory categories set out in the Housing Act 1996; and that local lettings policies do not discriminate, directly or indirectly, against minority groups or women.

(ii) Local Lettings Policies may be operated for:

- **New build and/or regeneration schemes**
- **Affordable Rented Tenancies**
- **A group of properties of a particular type or in a particular neighbourhood in the following circumstances:**
  - a) Reducing the minimum age criteria for certain hard to let bungalows or sheltered schemes.
  - b) Imposing temporary restrictions, e.g. a minimum age, on new tenants in a block of flats which may have been subject to anti- social behaviour from former tenants.
  - c) Introducing an upper or lower age limit on a block of flats to help prevent a clash of lifestyles.

(iii) Local lettings policies, were adopted, may apply to properties owned by the council, or any other partner organisation with whom the council has a nominations agreement. Where the local lettings policy is likely to affect 50 or more properties in a neighbourhood comprised predominantly of existing council or RSL tenants, for example the first round of let's on a new build scheme, consultation will be carried out with elected members for the ward.

(iv) Detailed local lettings policies are available for new build schemes and affordable rented tenancies and can be made available on request. All local lettings policies will be regularly reviewed to monitor effectiveness against their aims and objectives.

(v) Wigan Council will ensure that when vacant properties which are subject to a local lettings policy are advertised, the criteria applying will be made clear on all publicity materials and staff will be in a position to advise inquirers about these.

## **6.16 Sensitive Lettings**

Where Wigan Council is able to demonstrate that an allocation to the household who had the highest priority for the available property would have a detrimental effect on existing residents or to the applicant as defined in 2.1 above, the property it may be allocated to the next highest priority applicant.

Where the highest priority bidder is not offered the available property, a record will be kept of the reasons for this decision, which must be authorised by the team manager, for monitoring purposes and discussions held with the applicant as to why the action was taken.

## **6.17 Available Now properties and general offers**

(i) Some areas or properties may be designated as 'available now' if there is only

a very small number, or no interested applicants on the register.

- (ii) If a property has been advertised without attracting a bid, housing services staff will proactively seek out potential tenants for the property, even though they may not have bid for the property. Such lettings will be considered as 'choice-based lettings' and not direct lettings

#### **6.18 Private Sector properties**

- (i) From time to time, properties belonging to private sector landlords may be advertised alongside social sector properties. The management of these properties will have been accredited by the council and there will be clearly indicated. Housing services staff will advise interested applicants of the lettings criteria that the landlord will use to allocate these properties and the differences from social sector tenure and services that they could expect if they were to accept the tenancy.

#### **6.19 Allocation to non – tenant occupiers**

- (i) A person left in possession of a property because the tenant is no longer there, may or may not have the legal right to remain in the property. However, subject to satisfying certain criteria, a person who does not have the statutory right to succeed to the tenancy may be granted a new tenancy. This could be in the property they currently occupy or another property.
- (ii) See separate policy and procedures dealing with
  - Succession
  - Assignment
  - Persons left in occupation (which should be considered as an extension of this policy)

#### **6.20 Termination of a joint tenancy by one of the joint tenants**

- (i) Where one joint tenant has terminated the tenancy, by serving four weeks' notice to quit on the council, and the other joint tenant remains in their home, consideration will be given to creating a new tenancy to the remaining former joint tenant. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will not always result in a new tenancy being created.

## SECTION 7

### APPEALS, REVIEW AND COMPLAINTS

#### **7 Appeals and the review process**

- 7.1.1** All applicants including existing tenants have the right to appeal against decisions made by Officers of Wigan Council in any part of the application process, including:
- The facts of their case and their Group/points assessment.
  - If they have been found not eligible for an allocation due to their immigration status
  - If they have been disqualified for an allocation
  - A decision made in respect of a medical or welfare award.
  - Any decision to cancel an application.
- 7.1.2** A request for a review must be made within 28 days of the date of the decision or assessment. It may be submitted by the applicant or a representative of the applicant.
- 7.1.3** All such requests must be in writing to Housing Register Team via [houreg@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:houreg@wigan.gov.uk) outlining the reasons for requesting the review. Requests for review can also include any supporting evidence or information to help the case, including statements from agencies providing a support service to the applicant.
- 7.1.4** Where appropriate, applicants will be given assistance in requesting a review by Wigan Council staff. They may also approach an independent advice agency, e.g. Citizens Advice Bureau, for help and Wigan Council will liaise with their advisor, subject to consent being given by the applicant to exchange the relevant information.
- 7.1.5** The formal review under this policy will be carried out by an Officer in Wigan Council who was not previously involved in the application or assessment and who is senior to the officer who made the original decision.
- 7.1.6** Applicants will be informed in writing of the decision on review and the grounds for that decision. will usually complete the review process within 4 weeks of receiving all the necessary information. If it is not possible to gather all the necessary information in a reasonable time, the applicant will be informed in writing and offered the opportunity to have the review carried out with the information that is available.
- 7.1.7** If the applicant remains dissatisfied with the decision on review, an appeal can be made within 28 days of the being notified of the decision to:

Allocations and Accommodation Team  
Housing Services  
Place Directorate  
Wigan Town Hall  
Library Street  
Wigan  
WN1 1YN

The appeal will be considered by a Service Manager or Assistant Director of the Council and the applicant will be notified of the outcome within 6 weeks of receiving all the necessary information to consider the appeal.

## **72 Homeless applicants**

- 7.2.1** Applicants who have requested housing assistance under the terms of the Homelessness legislation have additional statutory rights to ask for a review of decisions made about their case, including their eligibility, the duties that may be owed to them, their local connections and any referral made or received from another local authority, the provision of temporary accommodation, and/or any offers of permanent accommodation in discharge of homelessness duties.
- 7.2.2** Wigan Council will comply with all statutory requirements to notify and advise applicants about homelessness assessment decisions, the reasons for decisions and the applicant's rights of review.
- 7.2.3** Appeals or requests for review of homelessness decisions, or offers of accommodation under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 should be addressed to the Homeless Solutions Team.

## **73 Complaints**

- 7.3.1** Applicants may also use Wigan Council's Corporate Complaints procedures if they feel:
- Something has been done wrong
  - something has not been done that should have been done
  - the service has not been delivered in accordance with the policy and procedures
  - they have been treated in an impolite or discourteous manner
- 7.3.2** All customers who make a complaint will be treated fairly and objectively.
- 7.3.3** Any complaint received will be responded to within 10 working days of receiving the complaint.
- 7.3.4** If the applicant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint or the way their case has been dealt with, after they have exhausted Wigan Council's complaints procedure, they have redress by reference to the Housing Ombudsman (Social Sector tenants) or the Local Government Ombudsman (other applicants on the Housing Register) or they can apply for a judicial review.



## **Appendix 1**

### **Confidentiality and Data Protection**

- 1 All information provided by applicants on the application form, and/or provided by a third party in connection with their application will be used for the sole purpose of enabling Wigan Council to assess the application for housing in accordance with this Policy and comply with The Data Protection Act 2018.
- 2 Applicants and tenants are entitled to see any information that Wigan Council holds on them, except information provided in confidence by a third party or confidential information regarding a member of their family and/or household. Applicants will need to make their request for information in writing, and there may be a charge to reflect any additional work involved in providing this information.
- 3 The duty of confidentiality may be waived in circumstances where the disclosure is considered to be in the wider public interest e.g. the prevention or detection of crime, or in the provision of relevant information at ward or wider geographical level.

### **Freedom of Information Act 2000**

- 4 Anyone can request 'recorded information' from Wigan Council in any format, e.g. paper, e-mail and reports.
- 5 Advice and information will be available free of charge to all applicants and tenants on a variety of issues relating to housing, and in a range of formats.
- 6 Some information is exempt from public access under the Freedom Information Act 2000 (FOIA 2000). Certain data will be absolutely exempt while other information will be withheld or released subject to a qualified decision whether the public interest is best served by withholding or releasing the information requested.
- 7 Personal data requests by the applicant or tenant are exempt from the disclosure provisions of the FOIA 2000 and are instead dealt with under the Data Protection Act 1998.
- 8 Personal data requested by someone other than the applicant are dealt with under the FOIA 2000. However, such requests are likely to infringe the data protection principles and, therefore, this data would be exempt information under the FOIA 2000.

## Appendix 2

### Service Standards for Applicants

Wigan Council will consider every application received and:

- ❖ Make sure we meet the Council's legal obligations in allocating accommodation.
- ❖ Provide free advice and information about the right to apply for accommodation.
- ❖ Provide free assistance to applicants who may have difficulty when making an application including help for any applicant to complete the application form if they need assistance.
- ❖ Make sure any information provided is easy to understand and is readily accessible.
- ❖ Outline and explain how the Council will offer choice and the ability for applicants to express a preference for an area/s.
- ❖ Provide information to all applicants of what types of accommodation are available throughout the district.
- ❖ Provide information about how long an applicant is likely to have to wait before being allocated accommodation.
- ❖ Make available a full copy of this Allocation Policy to all households who request it and will always provide a summary of the scheme to all who are accepted as being owed a full duty as statutory homeless.
- ❖ Treat each applicant equally in accordance with their need, regardless of race, religion, or creed, ethnic or national origin, disability, gender, sexual orientation or marital status.
- ❖ Regularly monitor ethnic origin and disability of applicants who apply for accommodation.
- ❖ Ensure that all information provided by applicants will be treated in strictest confidence.

## Appendix 3

### Officer Roles and Responsibilities

Under Section 167 Housing Act 1996 as amended by 2002 Homelessness Act - "Every local Housing authority shall have a scheme (their allocation scheme) for determining priorities and as to the procedure to be followed, in allocating housing accommodation. For this purpose 'procedure' includes all aspects of the allocations process, including the persons or descriptions of persons by whom decisions are to be taken."

The procedures that accompany this scheme detail which officers (in terms of post and level of responsibility) will take decisions under the Council's Allocation scheme. This can be summarised as follows:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Wigan Council - Housing Services, Place Directorate <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Housing Register Team</li><li>❖ Homeless Solutions Team</li><li>❖ Sheltered Housing Team</li><li>❖ Housing Support Team</li><li>❖ Homefinder Team</li></ul> | Responsible for all procedures from initial application up to offer of accommodation and nominations to Registered Social Landlords   |
| Wigan Council - Housing Services, Place Directorate <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Allocations Team</li></ul>  | Responsible for shortlisting and offering a property  |
| Wigan Council, Housing Services, Place Directorate <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Homes and Communities Team</li></ul>   | Responsible for persons left in occupation of a property with no legal right to remain there.<br>Joint tenants where one party has served notice to quit.   |
| Wigan Council - Housing Services, Place Directorate <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Service Manager – Tenancy Management</li></ul>  | Responsible or: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dealing with appeals against decisions</li><li>• Authorising minor amendments to the policy</li><li>• Approving Local Lettings policies</li></ul> |

## Appendix 4

### Local Lettings Policies

#### Age restrictions on Council properties

##### a) Sheltered Accommodation

This accommodation is specifically designed for older people and is usually built as a self-contained scheme of properties, with communal facilities and the services of a Support Manager also available to the residents. The minimum age restriction is therefore not usually reviewed unless there is an issue with marked increased or reduced demand for this type of housing. There are 42 Council sheltered accommodation schemes in the borough, comprising 1222 properties (5% of the total stock).

| Scheme Name        | 3 bed bung | 2 bed Flat | 2 bed bung | 1 bed flat | 1 bed bung | Bedsit |
|--------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------|
| Acton House        |            |            |            | 12         | 7          | 1      |
| Alexandra House    |            |            | 1          | 12         | 6          |        |
| Bevington Street   |            |            |            | 20         |            |        |
| Blakeborough House |            |            |            | 6          |            | 4      |
| Brookdale Court    |            | 1          |            | 25         |            |        |
| Cherry Trees       |            |            | 1          |            | 75         |        |
| Clifton House      |            |            |            | 13         | 14         |        |
| Devonshire Road    |            |            |            |            | 18         |        |
| Dunoon Road        |            |            |            |            | 19         |        |
| Eldervale**        |            | 3          |            | 48         |            |        |
| Frodsham Close     |            |            |            |            | 10         |        |
| Furness Crescent   |            |            |            |            | 35         |        |
| Gantley Court      |            |            |            | 3          | 26         |        |
| Greenbank Court    | 1          |            |            |            | 31         |        |
| Greenfields        |            |            |            | 45         |            |        |
| Greenwood Road     |            |            |            | 8          | 23         |        |
| Hesketh Manor      |            |            | 2          | 26         | 7          |        |
| Hollydene          |            |            |            | 17         |            |        |
| Kildare Grange     |            |            |            | 37         |            |        |
| Leonard Court      |            |            |            | 14         |            | 8      |
| Linden Court       |            | 1          |            | 8          | 10         |        |
| Little Lane **     |            | 6          |            | 33         |            |        |
| Manor Court        |            |            | 1          | 37         |            |        |
| Mealhouse Court    |            |            |            | 20         | 6          |        |
| Mossbank Court     |            |            |            | 35         | 14         |        |
| Northfield Court   |            |            | 12         | 8          | 12         |        |
| Oakland Court      |            |            | 2          |            | 29         |        |
| Pagefield Court    |            |            |            | 11         | 10         |        |
| Peter Street       |            |            |            |            | 25         |        |
| Pool Street        |            |            |            |            | 22         |        |
| Prodesse Court     | 1          |            |            |            | 34         |        |
| Regency Court      |            | 1          |            | 22         |            |        |
| Roadside Court     |            |            |            |            | 27         |        |
| Roman Close        |            |            |            |            | 5          |        |
| Samwoods House     |            | 1          |            | 12         |            | 2      |
| Station Avenue     |            |            |            |            | 17         |        |
| The Hollins        |            |            | 10         |            | 40         |        |
| The Rowans         | 2          | 2          | 8          | 18         | 71         |        |

|                                   |          |           |           |            |            |           |
|-----------------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Thorburn House                    |          | 1         |           | 16         |            |           |
| Westfield Road                    |          |           |           |            | 15         |           |
| Westwood Grange                   | 1        |           | 2         |            | 31         |           |
| Wharfdale**                       |          | 2         |           | 54         |            |           |
| Winsten House                     |          | 2         |           | 20         |            |           |
| Withington Grange                 |          |           |           | 34         |            |           |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>5</b> | <b>20</b> | <b>39</b> | <b>614</b> | <b>639</b> | <b>15</b> |
| <b>Total number of units 1332</b> |          |           |           |            |            |           |

\*\* extra care scheme with on-site care provider.

#### b) Non-sheltered bungalows

Allocations to non-sheltered bungalows are currently restricted throughout the borough to applicants/tenants over 60 years, with these exceptions:

| Management Area         | Address   | Properties |  | Min Age |
|-------------------------|---|------------|--|---------|
| Pemberton               | Marsh Green (mixture of bedsit & 1-bedroom bungalows)   | 18         |  | 30      |
| Pemberton(Worsley Hall) | Worsley Hall<br>Broom Road (29)<br>Bulsteel Street (17)<br>Logwood Avenue (6)<br>Laithwaite Road (10)<br>Plane Avenue (6)<br>Crabtree Road (9)<br>Sherwood Drive/Grove (24)<br>Closebrook Road (8)<br>Hamilton Court/Square (31)<br>Marigold Street (2)<br>Ridyard Street (1) | 143        |  | 30      |
| Pemberton (Norley Hall) | Montrose Avenue (8)<br>Norley Hall Avenue (4)<br>Flakirk Grove (4)<br>Selkirk Grove (19)<br>Calder Place (2)<br>Humber place (2)<br>Avon Road (1)<br>Ambleside (12)   | 52         |  | 50      |
| Wigan (Scholes)         | Knowles Place (6)<br>Kenderick Place (6)<br>Isabella Square (11)<br>Stanley Place (7)   | 30         |  | 50      |
|                         |   | 243        |  |         |

#### C) Blocks of flats (general needs)

Allocations to these designated blocks are restricted to applicants/tenants above the specified minimum age in order to prevent a clash of lifestyles and to reduce the likelihood of anti-social behaviour.

| Management Area | Address   | No of Properties | Min Age |
|-----------------|---|------------------|---------|
| Atherton        | 34-44a Bag Lane   | 12               | 40      |
| Atherton        | 8-30 Bolton Road  | 35               | 30      |
| Atherton        | Mealhouse Court –<br>3,4,5,8,12,13,16,17,18,21,26,30,34, 41 | 14               | 40      |

|           |   |     |    |
|-----------|---|-----|----|
| Atherton  | Walsh House 1-12  | 12  | 30 |
| Atherton  | Loveless House 1 - 10   | 10  | 30 |
| Atherton  | The Courts area in Tyldesley Town Centre<br>Castleton Court (20)<br>Georgia Court (10)<br>Elizabethan Court (12)<br>Charleston Court (14)   | 56  | 30 |
| Atherton  | The Willows   | 12  | 40 |
| Atherton  | Samuel Street block flats   | 29  | 30 |
| Hindley   | Hancock close   | 10  | 40 |
| Hindley   | Riding Close  | 25  | 50 |
| Leigh     | Lancaster Court   | 35  | 55 |
| Leigh     | Leonard Place 1a, 2a, 3a  | 3   | 40 |
| Leigh     | 1-27a Hope Carr Lane (28)<br>284-290a Warrington Road (8)   | 36  | 30 |
| Leigh     | 2-16a Young Street  | 16  | 30 |
| Leigh     | 1-7a Coral Grove  | 8   | 30 |
| Leigh     | 2-12a Kilburn Close   | 12  | 30 |
| Leigh     | 5-15a Chaucer Grove<br>6-16a Chaucer Grove  | 20  | 30 |
| Leigh     | Westwell Street, (8)<br>Westwell Grove, (12)<br>Northwell Street (16)   | 36  | 30 |
| Leigh     | Richmond Drive 11-39a. (34)<br>Imperial Drive 9-27a. (18)<br>Coronation Drive 9-13a. (5)<br>Sunningdale Grove 1-7a. (8)<br>Carisbrooke Road 9,9a,11,11a,13,13a, 42.(6)<br>Waverley Grove 5-7a. (4)<br>Coronation Drive 132 - 138a (8) | 83  | 40 |
| Leigh     | Manor Court (Even numbers 2-60)<br>Golborne Road (5,11,13,19,21)  | 29  | 40 |
| Leigh     | Etherstone Street, Leigh, WN7 4FS   | 12  | 55 |
| Pemberton | Thursby House   | 27  | 25 |
| Pemberton | Elton House Thursby House   | 18  | 25 |
| Pemberton | Gantley Crescent - 3, 7, 11, 15, 19, 23<br>Gantley Avenue - 8, 12, 16, 20, 24, 28   | 12  | 40 |
| Wigan     | Multi Storey Blocks.<br>Douglas House (120)<br>Woodcock House (101)<br>Crompton House (102)<br>Brook House (103)<br>Derby House (101)<br>Mannion House (103)  | 630 | 40 |
| Wigan     | Block flats Morris Street & 40 Scholes.   | 24  | 50 |
| Wigan     | Block flats 40 Scholes  | 19  | 50 |
| Wigan     | Lower Longshoot Flats   | 16  | 40 |
| Wigan     | Bolton Square Flats   | 30  | 40 |
| Wigan     | Central flats   | 4   | 40 |
| Wigan     | Cemetery Road Flats   | 6   | 40 |
| Wigan     | Kendal House Flats  |     | 30 |

|       |  |    |    |
|-------|--|----|----|
| Wigan | Sullivan way   | 14 | 40 |
| Wigan | Longridge Nook, Standish, Wigan, WN6 0LJ                 | 8  | 55 |
| Wigan | Almond Green Avenue 99, 101, 103, 105, 109, 111          | 6  | 25 |
| Wigan | Almond Brook Road, Standish 80, Fla1, 82, Flat 2 82, 82a | 4  | 55 |
| Wigan | Moore Street   | 4  | 50 |
| Wigan | School Avenue  | 2  | 50 |
| Wigan | Old School Court   | 6  | 50 |

This Local Lettings Policy currently applies to 1,176 properties throughout the borough, comprising 5% of total Council stock. These restrictions will be reviewed regularly to ensure continued fit with overall strategic aims and in the context of changing housing needs in the borough. Analysis of applications and lettings from people of all age groups is undertaken as part of the review to ensure that these age restrictions do not disproportionately exclude younger people from being able to access social rented flats.

### **New Build Properties and Affordable Rented Tenancies**

All Schemes are subject to separate Local Lettings Policy and can be made available on request.

## **Appendix 5**

### **For comments on the Allocation Policy contact:**

Assistant Director of Housing Services  
Place Directorate  
Wigan Council  
Wigan Town Hall  
Library Street  
Wigan  
WN1 1YN

Tel

Email

### **For general enquiries on the housing application process please contact;**

The Allocation and Accommodation Team  
Place Directorate  
Wigan Council  
Wigan Town Hall  
Library Street  
Wigan  
WN1 1YN

Tel 01942 486183

Email [houreg@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:houreg@wigan.gov.uk)