



# Housing Allocations Policy

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(Updated February 2021)



# 1.0 Allocations policy overview

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

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## 1.1 Introduction

Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) is committed to allocating all social and affordable housing within the borough to those in most need and ensuring people have the best possible chance of sustaining their tenancy. This Housing Allocations Policy sets out how we prioritise applications for council and housing association homes based on a person's circumstances and level of housing need.

To deliver this, we manage a choice based lettings system in Dacorum and households wanting to apply to be on the Council's housing register will need to complete an application form online at [Moving with Dacorum](#). Whilst Moving with Dacorum advertises all social and affordable housing options, this policy only applies to the allocation of council-owned homes.

Support is available to those applicants who are unable to submit their application online by either visiting the customer service unit at The Forum or by requesting a paper application. Each housing association within the borough will have its own allocations policy, which may have different rules about who is eligible. These policies should be available on their website or by contacting the housing association directly.

DBC no longer maintains a deferred housing register. Applicants who are not accepted to the housing register are encouraged to re-apply if and when their circumstances change.

## 1.2 Aim(s) of the policy

The aims of this policy are to:

- Ensure we allocate homes appropriately and fairly to those in need;
- Ensure we make best use of local housing stock;
- Create sustainable communities; and
- Set out our approach to eligibility for and qualification to DBC's housing register.

## 1.3 Links to council's corporate aims

This policy supports the council's corporate priorities of providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need; and building strong and vibrant communities. Our corporate priorities are set out in ['Delivering for Dacorum – Corporate Plan 2015-2020'](#).

## 1.4 Equality and diversity

The council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity in housing services and has procedures in place to ensure that all Applicants and Tenants are treated fairly and without unlawful discrimination in line with the Equality Act 2010.

## 1.5 Policy Statement(s)

Applicants will need to meet eligibility and any applicable qualification requirements in order to be active on the housing register (see 2.0).

We will administrate the housing register and allocate homes by adhering to a fair and transparent process (see 3.0).

Points will be awarded to applicants based on their housing need and priority group status (see 4.0).

We will offer additional priority to applicants who fit specialist criteria (see 5.0).

There are a number of exemptions and exceptions to the guidelines laid out in this policy (see 6.0).

## 2.0 Eligibility and Qualification



## 2.0 Eligibility & Qualification

As a local authority, we must adhere to all legal requirements that affect who we allocate social and affordable housing to. We are required to consider an applicant's eligibility at the time of their initial application and again when they have been successful in bidding for a property in order to allocate them a home. If an applicant is found not eligible at any time during this process, the allocation cannot continue and neither a sole nor a joint tenancy can be granted.

Under this policy, an applicant is *not eligible* if:

- They are subject to immigration control (unless covered under the exceptions stated in the Housing Act 1996, Part 6).
- They are prescribed as being 'persons from abroad' as defined in the Housing Act 1996, Part 6.

Where an applicant lacks capacity, the housing service will liaise with the relevant appointed representative to ensure that their housing needs are fully assessed and appropriate arrangements are made to meet future accommodation needs. This may include liaison with alternative housing agencies to provide specialist packages of support.

In addition to eligibility, applicants must also meet the criteria outlined within the rest of this policy in order to qualify for the housing register and bid on homes. Eligible but non-qualifying applicants will not receive a sole tenancy under this policy; however, they will be able to enter into a joint tenancy as long as the other applicant is both eligible and qualifying. The qualifying criteria do not apply to applicants to whom a reasonable preference must be given under the Housing Act 1996 and Regulations made by the Secretary of State.

### 2.1) Age

Applicants must be 18 or over, unless age 16 or 17 and are either entitled to a reasonable preference under Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 or are otherwise considered as part of a high risk property group (see 4.0).

### 2.2) Local Connection

Subject to the exceptions outlined below, applicants must meet the local connection criteria by providing evidence of at least one of the following:

- A 10 year residency within the borough at some point in their lifetime;
- Family connection where an immediate family member (parents, children, siblings) has continuously been a resident within the borough for 10 years immediately preceding the date of application;
- Currently in permanent employment within the borough boundary, consisting of 16 hours a week or more, and which has been continuous for the last 24 months.

Additional local connection criteria apply to certain villages within the borough; applicants will need to meet criteria above for the specific village and applicants with a connection to the specified village are given priority at the short listing stage (see 5.2). There are however a number of circumstances which mean that an applicant may not need to meet the local connection criteria in order to qualify, these are as follows:

- Current council or housing association resident living within the borough;
- Applicants for sheltered housing aged 60 and over or between 50 – 59 when there is a medical or social isolation need recognized by the internal housing panel;
- Members of the armed forces where the application is made within 5 years of discharge (includes bereaved spouses and civil partners leaving service family accommodation following the death of their partner);
- Existing social housing tenants seeking to transfer from another local authority district in England because they work in the district, need to avoid hardship or need to move to take up an offer of work in the area (see below 'Right to Move')
- Where the requirement of a local connection may infringe equality and diversity legislation (e.g. Equality Act 2010). These applications will be considered on a case by case basis by the Housing Panel; or
- Residents living in refuges within the Dacorum area.

## 2.0 Eligibility and Qualification

### 2.3) Right to Move

Applicants applying for housing within Dacorum from another local authority due to an offer of work within the borough must demonstrate a genuine intention to take up the offer. Evidence can include a contract of employment, wage slips or bank statements, tax/benefit information and a formal offer letter. Any contracts must be for more than 12 months, consisting of 16 hours or more a week. Voluntary work does not qualify for the right to move. We must also be satisfied that the required move is based on applicants' needs, rather than wishes. Things considered when assessing this include (but are not limited to):

- Distance / time to travel between work and home;
- Opportunities available closer to home;
- Impact on opportunity to improve employment circumstances (e.g. promotion);
- Availability and affordability of transport.

The council may contact the employer to verify an application at the point of joining the housing register or before making an offer.

### 2.4) Home Ownership

Applicants must not own the freehold or leasehold to any property within the UK and/or internationally. This does not apply to supported housing applicants aged 60 or over. However, if a supported housing applicant has sufficient means (including financial interest in a property) to purchase suitable accommodation for their needs in the Dacorum area they may not qualify for an allocation. If exceptional circumstances preclude this from happening they may still be eligible for supported housing. Such applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis

and will be signed off as an exception to policy by the Assistant Director of Housing.

### 2.5) Financial Means

Applicants will not qualify if they have the financial means to meet their own housing need. We define this as the applicant and/or their partner having in excess of £60,000 gross income or £16,000 in savings (except where a lump sum has been paid to a current or former member of the armed forces as compensation). Supported housing applicants will be exempt from this criteria if it is evident that their financial means is £250,000 or less.

### 2.6) Anti-Social Behaviour

Applicants will not qualify where there is evidence that legal or other serious action has been taken against any member of the household due to anti-social behaviour (ASB) within the 2 years immediately preceding the date of application. Applicants with any of the below legal orders will not be considered to qualify and will be unable to access the housing register for a period of 1, 3 or 5 years (see below):

- Acceptable Behaviour Contract (1 year);
- Community Protection Notice (1 year);
- Legal Undertakings (3 years);
- Anti-Social Behaviour Injunction (3 years);
- Premise Closure Order (5 years); or
- Criminal Behaviour Order (5 years).

In addition, applicants will also not qualify if they or any members of their household:

- Have been evicted on the grounds of ASB in the 5 years immediately preceding the application;
- Have held a demoted tenancy due to ASB in the 2 years immediately preceding the application; or
- Are a person known to be or have been involved with serious ASB within the 2 years immediately preceding the application, as per the advice of the council's ASB team.

### 2.7) Rent Arrears

Applicants will not qualify where there is evidence that they or a member of the household has property-related arrears owed

to the council (including council tax), a housing association or a private rented sector landlord, unless six months of regular repayments have been made and these repayments have been shown to reduce the arrears debt. This includes both current and former arrears. Applicants will also not qualify if they or any member of their household:

- Have been evicted on the grounds of rent arrears from a council or housing association property in the five years immediately preceding the application; or
- There is an existing notice or a possession order on the property.

Exceptions may be made in certain circumstances, e.g. a current tenant downsizing to make rent payments more manageable, which will be considered at the discretion of the internal housing panel. When exceptions are made, and an applicant with arrears is permitted to move, any debt owed to the council will still be required to be paid.

### 2.8) Deliberately Worsened Circumstances

An applicant will not qualify if there is evidence that they have deliberately changed their circumstances in order to qualify to and/or receive additional priority on the housing register.

### 2.9) False, Misleading or Withheld Information

Applicants will not qualify if they have deliberately provided fraudulent information by:

- Giving false information;
- Not disclosing all information required; or
- Not informing the housing service of any important changes to their situation.

If an applicant is found to have provided any false or misleading information or they have withheld information that is relevant to their housing application, their current and any future applications will be suspended. Action may also be taken against the applicant by the corporate anti-fraud team. This may result in prosecution.

## 2.0 Eligibility and Qualification

## 3.0 Administration of the Housing Register

### 2.10) The Household

As part of the application, applicants will be required to prove they have lived at their current address for a minimum of 12 months immediately before application and give details of all members of their household.

Any non-dependent children (aged 18 or over) or other adults who are considered part of applicants the household must have lived with the applicant for a minimum of 12 months and continue to do so. Any changes to the household may affect the level of priority afforded to them under the qualification criteria.

Subject to a review of supporting evidence by the council's independent medical advisor, dependent adults who have joined or wish to join a household because they are unable to live independently are not required to have lived with the applicant for the minimum of 12 months.

If an applicant holds responsibility for residency of a child through a court decision, the child is immediately considered part of the household.

Residency arrangements agreed by parents require the applicant to provide supporting evidence of the arrangement, including evidence that the child has been living as part of their household for a minimum of 6 months and any documents required by Housing Benefit to support this claim.

Any child residency arrangements submitted as part of a housing application will be checked throughout the

application process and the period of the tenancy.

A child is not part of the household if:

- The applicant has staying contact with the child for less than 50% of the time; or
- In the case of equal contact time, the property will not be the child's main or principal home.

A baby will be considered a household member from the date of birth, and not during the pregnancy.

However, some housing associations will consider an unborn baby as a household member at the point that the mother receives her MATB1 certificate. For this reason, the council will still take a record of the MATB1 and in these cases an applicant may be able to bid for larger housing association properties prior to the birth.

Where the applicant is eligible (see 2.0) but other members of the household are not eligible, they may be considered as part of the application if they are dependent. This applies to both adults and children.

Applicants applying as part of a couple will need to decide who is the primary applicant as both partners will be considered as members of the household and will not be able to hold an active application in both names. These applications are assessed on the primary applicant's housing need only.

## 3.0 Administration of the Housing Register

### 3.1) Bidding

Applicants who have applied to be on the housing register, are eligible, and qualify can then begin bidding on properties through [Moving with Dacorum](#). Alternative options for bidding include:

- Over the phone on 0300 111 3570;
- By text message to 07786 201131; or
- In person at The Forum, Hemel Hempstead.

Due to the operation of a choice based lettings system whereby applicants pick which properties they wish to bid for, we consider it reasonable to expect that where an applicant has been successful in bidding for their chosen property, they will accept the offer of that property.

Therefore, successful applicants will only receive one property offer. A refusal of a property will only be considered if the applicant can provide evidence of a valid reason, of which the Independent Reviewing Officer shall be the final arbiter, as to why they cannot accept it. Examples of reasons which are unlikely to be considered valid include (but are not limited to);

- Location, size or layout of property;
- Condition of property; or
- Lack of garden and/or parking facilities (unless required under a medical needs assessment).

Where an applicant can provide evidence to support their refusal, and this is accepted by the Independent Reviewing Officer, they will be able to continue bidding on other properties. Where an applicant cannot provide evidence to support their refusal of a property, their offer can be cancelled and they may be unable to bid on any future homes for 6 months.

### 3.2) Property Adverts

All properties (except supported housing), advertised through Moving with Dacorum will be made live on any given weekday. They will then remain live for a minimum of three days, closing at one minute to midnight on the final day. The first day of advertising will be the day on which an advert goes live, provided it goes live before midday; and will otherwise be the day afterwards.

We recommend that applicants check for properties a minimum of every three days to avoid missing opportunities to bid.

Supported housing properties are advertised on a weekly cycle and adverts will be live for five days, from one minute to midnight on a Thursday until one minute to midnight on the following Monday.

## 3.0 Administration of the Housing Register

### 3.3) Direct Offers

On some occasions, properties will be allocated through a direct offer. A direct offer means that an applicant will not bid on properties but will receive one offer of suitable accommodation. Direct offers are made by the housing service outside of the choice based lettings system. When making a direct offer the council is required to consider the suitability of a property for all members of the household.

These offers are used as part of our approach to preventing homelessness. Applicants who are given a homelessness status at the point of receiving the main housing duty will receive one direct offer of suitable accommodation.

In addition to homeless applicants, direct offers may also be used:

- To match applicants requiring complex adaptations to a suitable property;
- For applicants living in Mother & Baby units;
- In the case of hard-to-let properties (advertised at least twice with no suitable bids);
- For applicants in high-risk priority groups (see 4.0) where a sensitive letting is required; or
- For individual cases that would usually fall outside of this policy but have an urgent or high risk housing need (these offers can only be approved by the internal Housing Panel)

As with all other offers, applicants will only receive one direct offer of accommodation.

### 3.4) Checks and Assessments

If an applicant is successful in bidding, a full verification is carried out at the point of offer. In some cases, a full verification may be carried out before an offer is made.

Documents required as part of this include (but are not limited to):

- Proof of identity;
- Proof of income and savings;
- Proof of residency of children (Child Benefit);
- Proof of pregnancy (MATB1 Form);
- Confirmation of immigration status and right to work if from abroad;
- Medical evidence; and
- Notice of eviction (if relevant).

Existing tenants seeking a transfer will also need to make themselves available for a home visit.

Applicants can aid this process by ensuring they have accurately reflected their circumstances in their application and by making sure they have all the necessary documents required to evidence their situation.

At the point an offer has been made, if an applicant cannot provide their documentation within 48 hours (unless there are exceptional circumstances), the offer will be withdrawn and the property offered to the next eligible person on the shortlist.

### 3.5) Renewal and Removal

Applicants are required to confirm their details as part of renewing their application on an annual basis. The council however can ask for confirmation at any point during the application process.

All renewal requests must be completed within 28 days and completed through Moving with Dacorum. Failure to renew an application within this time will result in details being deleted from the register.

If a renewal application is started but not completed, a member of staff will contact the applicant directly to request the missing information.

If this information is not supplied to the council's satisfaction within 21 days then the details will be deleted from the register as above.

Deleted applicants may re-apply at any point and the new application will be considered. It is advised that applications are only submitted or renewed if there is a genuine housing need.

Applicants can also be removed from the register for other reasons including:

- At their request;
- Where they no longer meet eligibility or qualifying requirements;
- Where they have knowingly provided false, misleading or incomplete information; or
- Where they have accepted an offer of accommodation.

### 3.6) Reviews and Appeals

As a housing service, we will provide an open and fair review process, in accordance with legislation, with appropriate support being offered.

Applicants have the right to request a review of decisions under the Housing Act 1996:

- Section 160ZA Housing Act 1996 (not a qualifying person); or
- Section 166a Housing Act 1996.

Review requests must be made in writing within 21 days of the applicant being notified of the decision. The review will be conducted by the Independent Reviewing Officer who is not involved in original case assessments.

## 3.0 Administration of the Housing Register

## 4.0 Points and Additional Priority

Applicants have the right to request an appeal of the outcome of review decisions. Any appeal request must be made in writing within 21 days of the applicant being notified of the review decision. An appeal investigation will be carried out by the Group Manager for Strategic Housing.

### 3.7) Disclosure of Information and Conflicts of Interest

Information on any housing applicant is confidential and will not be disclosed with any member of the public.

This also applies to any information related to applications. Applicant's family members will need written permission from the applicant to access any information.

In certain circumstances, disclosure of an applicant's information to other professionals or services may be necessary. This will only apply in certain circumstances for example to prevent and detect fraud, or where an applicant has particular support needs that need to be met in order to enable them to maintain a tenancy.

In such cases, any information that is disclosed will be shared on a need to know basis. Examples of services include but are not limited to:

- Housing officers or tenancy sustainment officers;
- Corporate anti-fraud team;

- Occupational health officers;
- Doctors or social services;
- Police or probation services; or
- Other local authorities or housing associations.

Councillors, council employees and their close relatives applying to join the housing register must disclose their association with DBC on their application form.

Applicants with an association to DBC that are successful in bidding on a property require approval from the Corporate Director of Housing and Regeneration prior to the formal offer being made.

## 4.0 Points and Additional Priority

All applications are reviewed and assessed by a Housing Needs Officer who will make the decisions in terms of allocating points to each applicant on the housing register. Points awarded are reflective of housing need and are used to bid on a property. Applicants with the highest number of points will be made an offer on the property at the close of bidding (see appendix 1 for a detailed table of points awarded).

If two or more applicants are at the top of the shortlist and are in all other ways equal, a property will be offered to the applicant with the earliest registration date.

### 4.1) People Who Are Homeless

Part 7 of The Housing Act 1996 (as referred to in the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 as the main housing duty) distinguishes between people who are homeless with the main housing duty to be re-housed by a local authority and those who are homeless with no main housing duty. This will also reflect the requirements set out by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. Applicants who are homeless but are owed either no main housing duty or a limited duty may receive points. Those whom we have a full duty to house will receive a direct offer as stated in section 3.3.

Prior to receiving the main housing duty decision, applicants will receive assistance to prevent homelessness and to bid through the choice based letting scheme with points awarded for relevant priority need criteria.

### 4.2) Insanitary, Overcrowded and Unsatisfactory Housing

As a council, we recognise that tenants in the private rented sector are more likely to be in insanitary or otherwise unsatisfactory dwellings which can lead to potentially harmful health and safety risks. As a local authority, we use the [Housing Health and Safety Rating System \(HHSRS\)](#), introduced by the Housing Act 2004 to formally score and demonstrate the seriousness of hazards in dwellings. To address these issues, we will give additional priority to applicants currently in private rented sector accommodation if the property is found to:

- Lack facilities or have shared facilities; or
- Be in a state of disrepair.

This additional preference will only be given once and will not increase where applicants identify both of the above issues. Points awarded will either be of a 'high' or 'low' category (see Appendix 1) based on the following:

Low:

- Minor disrepair
  - Category 2 hazard from bands D – F under the HHSRS; or
- Sharing kitchen and/or bathroom facilities.

High:

- Major disrepair
  - Category 1 hazard from bands A – C under the HHSRS; or
- Lacking kitchen and/or bathroom facilities.

Both minor and major disrepair will need to be confirmed by an officer from the Private Sector Housing Team and there must be evidence that the landlord is non-compliant in carrying out the repairs.

As a local authority we recognise that overcrowding in a property can cause stress and have other negative impacts on a household. In light of this, we will give additional priority to those applicants who are overcrowded according to our [bedroom standard](#).

## 4.0 Points and Additional Priority

Any points allocated to an applicant for overcrowding will reflect the need set out within the bedroom standard. Applicants are advised to read the standard when making an application for further information on the size of property they may be entitled to.

In order to make best use of our available housing stock, we encourage tenants under-occupying their home (see 4.8 bedroom criteria) to downsize to a smaller property, as this is more reflective of their housing need.

Applicants who wish to downsize will receive points based on how many bedrooms they would like to downsize by. This will need to be specified in the application. As a result, the applicant will be limited in the size of property they can bid for.

### 4.3) Medical and Welfare

We will award additional points on medical grounds when there is evidence that an applicant's current housing situation is having a direct impact on their and/or a household member's medical condition. The term 'medical grounds' also covers disability.

Points will be awarded based on four categories (Extreme, high, medium or low) and reflect the level of risk caused by remaining in the current housing (see Appendix 1). Medical cases are assessed by an independent medical advisor who will advise the council when making our final decision.

We will also award additional points on welfare grounds,

which we define as care and support needs or other social needs that do not require medical care or support e.g. victim of domestic violence. These points are awarded using four categories that are reflective of the level of risk involved in the applicant remaining in their current accommodation. Where appropriate, we may request information from relevant professionals involved in the applicant's case to assess the level of need. All welfare cases are presented to and assessed by the internal housing panel.

### 4.4) Moving Due to Hardship

In some cases, we understand that current tenants may need to move within the borough in order to avoid hardship. We consider that hardship may be personal or financial. Due to this, we will allocate points to applicants who need to move within the borough due to hardship.

### 4.5) Armed Forces

Members of the armed forces who qualify to our housing register will receive additional points if:

- They are serving in the regular forces and are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable to their service;
- They formally served in the regular forces;
- They have recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled to reside in the accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of their spouse or civil partner who served in the regular forces and whose death was attributable to that service; or
- They are serving or have served in the reserve forces and are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable to their service.

### 4.6) Right to Move

Applicants who meet the 'Right to Move' qualifying criteria (see 2.3) will receive additional points.

### 4.7) Other Additional Priority Criteria

The council is also committed to recognising a number of other criteria, and in all cases the additional priority will be awarded as points (see appendix 1). The additional priority criteria are as follows:

- Existing tenants of supported housing accommodation who wish to move from a dispersed property in the community to a supported housing scheme;
- Existing tenants aged 60 or over in general needs accommodation who wish to move into sheltered accommodation;
- Applicants with a dependent child or children who occupy a flat on the first floor of a building or above which does not have a lift.
- Active applicants on the housing register who have completed a pre-tenancy training course (not including transfer tenants); and

Please note that transfer applicants with tenancy breaches will be required to complete a pre-tenancy training course as part of the approval process for their transfer.

Additional priority criteria have been established in relation to other high-risk applicants who are hard-to-house and may require sensitive lettings. These applicants include:

- Care leavers;
- Witness protection cases;
- Applicants moving on from supported housing; or
- Individuals identified through multi-agency groups.

Applicants meeting the additional priority criteria are not expected to be frequent or high in number and will always be considered on a case-by-case basis.



## 4.0 Points and Other Criteria

### 5.0 Further Specific Criteria



#### 4.8) Bedroom Criteria

To ensure homes reflect people's housing need, we operate in line with the Governments Code of Guidance 2012 as well as the DBC [bedroom standards](#).

Households who fall between the criteria within the standards will be able to bid for properties in two size categories to provide maximum choice.

For the purpose of this policy, the reference to children sharing a room shall be considered to mean siblings or step-siblings, not other relations or non-relations. We understand there may be mitigating circumstances where it is not appropriate for siblings or step-siblings to share a bedroom as required by the standard. These cases, including supporting evidence, will be reviewed on an individual basis by the internal housing panel.

Exceptions to the bedroom criteria will also be considered if medical evidence is provided to the housing panel showing that a member of the household is unable to share a room or requires an additional room for medical equipment. Prospective adoptive or foster parents will also be considered for exemption at the discretion of the housing panel.

Where these cases are approved it is essential applicants consider the affordability of separate bedrooms as the household will be considered under-occupying their home which may affect Housing Benefit entitlement.

Some housing association tenancy agreements may differ from the bedroom standard used within this policy. In these cases, we will restrict the size of the household able to bid for the property based on the details received from the relevant housing association.

## 5.0 Further Specific Criteria

### 5.1) Adapted Properties

Due to the low number of properties available in the borough that are suitable to meet the needs of people who have mobility and physical health conditions, we are committed to making sure that people who need adapted properties are prioritised for them.

To do this, we categorise adapted properties and applicants who need adaptations as low, medium or high; and applicants may only bid for properties falling within the category for which their needs are suited (see Appendix 2). Applicants will then be shortlisted according to their needs. The applicant whose needs are best matched to the adapted property will be given priority.

There is also a fourth category, 'extreme', for those applicants with very complex needs, where only very few properties would be appropriate for the extent of the adaptations required. In these cases we will make use of direct offers (see 3.3) to allocate appropriately.

### 5.2 Village Lettings

When shortlisting for village properties, applicants with a local connection (see 2.2) to a specific village (known as village connection) will be considered above applicants without a village connection. Villages for which additional priority will be given for a local connection are:

*Aldbury, Bovingdon, Chipperfield, Flaunden, Flamsted, Great Gaddesden, Gaddesden Row, Kings Langley, Little Gaddesden, Long Marston, Markyate, Northchurch, Potten End, Wilstone and Wigginton.*

Where no bids for village properties have been made by applicants with a village connection, the property will be direct offered to a suitable household (without consideration of village connection). In the event that there is no suitable household to receive a direct offer, the offer will extend to applicants living and/or working in neighbouring parishes, before being opened up to the wider applicant population.

## 5.0 Further Specific Criteria

### 6.0 Exemptions & Exceptions

#### 5.3) Local Lettings Scheme

At DBC we reserve the right to implement local lettings schemes for new developments or to address issues on existing estates. These are used to ensure that communities are sustainable and contain an appropriate mix of households.

#### 5.4) Supported Housing & Flexi Care

Supported housing properties are designed for people aged 60 and over. Applicants below that age, who seek an allocation of supported housing, will be required to demonstrate a medical or social isolation need. These applications will be assessed by the internal housing panel.

Supported housing residents benefit from a Supported Housing Officer who can offer differing levels of support as required and/or requested, as well as opportunities to socialise with other residents in their supported housing scheme.

The majority of our supported housing homes are one bedroom, however on occasion a two-bedroom property may become available. In these cases, the allocation of this property will be considered on a case-by-case basis, specifically taking into account the age of any additional household members living with the successful applicant and how this could impact the wider scheme.

We can also offer [Flexi Care](#) supported housing services for older people whose needs are beyond the provision available within traditional supported housing.

## 6.0 Exemptions and Exceptions

Lettings that are not treated as allocations under this scheme include:

- Mutual exchanges between tenants of the council or housing associations, whether by Deed of Assignment or by commencement of new tenancies (including those arranged via national schemes such as Homeswapper);
- Successions of a tenancy following the death of a tenant;
- Where an introductory tenancy, assured shorthold starter, or probationary tenancy becomes an assured or secure tenancy;
- Where a secure or assured tenancy is granted by court order under Matrimonial Causes Act 1973, Matrimonial and Family Proceedings Act 1984, or Children Act 1989; or
- Where a tenancy is demoted by court order or where a demoted tenancy reverts back to secure tenancy status.

Other exemptions may include (but are not limited to):

- A property allocated to a relative or carer of a tenant who has died without a statutory right to succession being present;
- Changes to a tenancy which do not result in a vacancy (e.g. joint to sole tenancy);
- Where a vacancy is required to enable us to discharge duty to statutorily homeless households;
- The need to re-house an existing tenant temporarily in order to carry out repairs; or
- Any other exceptional circumstances agreed by the Strategic Housing Team Leader and Strategic Housing Group Manager.
- A move agreed from a property with adaptations that are no longer required in line with Help to Move Policy.

In exceptional circumstances the Assistant Director of Housing has authority to award additional priority to applicants and to amend or dis-apply the qualification criteria. All exceptions such as this will be monitored and reported on to the Corporate Director of Housing and Regeneration.

In the interest of fairness and good administration, such awards, amendments and dis-applications will operate at the sole and absolute discretion of the Assistant Director of Housing and, DBC expects, will be both rare and few in number.

# Appendix 1

## How we allocate points

Priority Category	Criteria within priority categories <i>For all priority categories, applicants will only receive points for meeting one level of criteria.</i>	Points
People who are homeless	All people who are homeless (within the meaning of the Housing Act 1996, Part 7), which includes people who are intentionally homeless and those who are not in priority need. People with no fixed abode, rough sleepers and sofa surfers.	10
	People who are owed the full statutory duty by the housing authority under the Housing Act, 1996, Part 7 (as referred to in the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 as the main housing duty). <i>Note: Only to be given at the point that the duty is awarded and not before even if an applicant is considered likely to receive this.</i>	Homelessness Status
Condition of private sector property	Major disrepair – the property has a high level hazard assessed using the HHSRS. <i>Note: This needs to be confirmed by a local authority Environmental Health Officer.</i> <b>Or</b> Lacking kitchen and/or bathroom facilities.	50
	Minor disrepair – the property has a lower level hazard assessed using the HHSRS. <i>Note: This needs to be confirmed by a local authority Environmental Health Officer.</i>	10
Sharing kitchen and/or bathroom facilities	A household that does not have sole use of kitchen and/or bathroom facilities. At Dacorum Borough Council we consider this to be in cases when applicants are residing in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Temporary accommodation which is not self-contained</li> <li>- Houses of multiple occupation</li> <li>- A household that is living with family or friends and has resided there for a minimum of 12 months.</li> </ul>	10

<b>Overcrowding</b>	<p>A household that is overcrowded.</p> <p>At Dacorum Borough Council, we consider overcrowding to occur when an additional person does not have a bed-space, if one bedroom is allocated to each:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Married or co-habiting couple;</li><li>- Adult aged 16 years or more;</li><li>- Pair of children aged 0 – 15 years of the same sex; and</li><li>- Pair of children aged under 5 years regardless of sex.</li></ul>	<b>15</b> (to be given for each additional personal lacking a bed-space if maximum use of available bed-spaces is assumed).
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<b>Under-occupation in Council or Housing Association properties within Dacorum</b>	<p>A household choosing to downsize by one or more bedrooms because they are currently under-occupying.</p> <p>Under-occupation will occur when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A bedroom is unoccupied;</li> <li>- The household contains two same-sex children aged 15 or under who occupy separate bedrooms;</li> <li>- The household contains any two children aged 9 or under who occupy separate bedrooms.</li> </ul>	<b>45</b> (to be given for each bedroom a household is choosing to downsize by).
<b>Medical grounds</b>	Extreme medical needs as awarded by a Medical Advisor	<b>100</b>
	High medical needs as awarded by a Medical Advisor	<b>50</b>
	Medium medical needs as awarded by a Medical Advisor	<b>30</b>
	Low medical needs as awarded by a Medical Advisor	<b>10</b>
<b>Welfare grounds</b>	Extreme welfare needs as awarded by the Housing Panel	<b>100</b>
	High welfare needs as awarded by the Housing Panel	<b>50</b>
	Medium welfare needs as awarded by the Housing Panel	<b>30</b>
	Low welfare needs as awarded by the Housing Panel	<b>10</b>
<b>Children in flats</b>	A household with one or more children aged 9 years or under in a flat (first floor or above) where no lift is available.	<b>10</b> (only to be given once, regardless or number of children in household).
<b>Members of the armed forces</b>	<p>People who have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Formerly served in the regular forces (including those suffering injury, illness or disability attributable to their service);</li> <li>- Ceased entitlement to accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of their spouse or civil partner who served in the regular forces (whose death was attributable to that service);</li> <li>- Served in the reserve forces, suffering serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable to their service.</li> </ul>	<b>10</b>

<b>Sheltered housing moves</b>	Existing tenants of sheltered housing in Dacorum who wish to move from Category 1 to a Category 2 accommodation. <b>Or</b> An existing tenant aged 60 or over in general needs bedsit or one bedroom accommodation in Dacorum who wishes to move into sheltered accommodation.	<b>25</b>
<b>Pre-tenancy training</b>	People who have completed a pre-tenancy training course. <i>Note: Except in the case of a transfer tenant.</i>	<b>5</b>
<b>Length of time on housing register</b>	A single point to be given to people for each year they have been on the housing register, up to five years.	<b>1</b> (Up to a maximum of 5 points).
<b>Use and Occupation</b>	Applicants that have been awarded points by Housing Panel in cases where they are under 'Use and Occupation' and Dacorum Borough Council require the property back	<b>50</b>
<b>Hardship</b>	Applicants who need to move within the Borough due to hardship as noted by the Housing Panel. <b>Or</b> Applicants who have been awarded the 'right to move'.	<b>10</b>
<b>High risk groups</b>	People from high-risk groups who meet hard-to-house or sensitive lettings criteria, such as (this list is not exhaustive): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Care leavers;</li> <li>- Witness protection cases;</li> <li>- Move-on from supported housing; or</li> <li>- Individuals identified through multi-agency groups.</li> </ul>	<b>Direct offer or points at the discretion of the Housing Panel.</b>

## Appendix 2

### How we categorise and allocate adapted properties

	Property Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Needs ground floor or property with lift access or a house with shallow stairs;</li> <li>- Needs a level access shower or shower with a seat;</li> <li>- Property accessible by shallow steps or a ramp;</li> <li>- Parking close to entrance.</li> </ul>	<p>Low:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ground floor property or property with lift access or a house with shallow stairs;</li> <li>- Property with a level access shower or shower with a seat;</li> <li>- Property accessible by shallow steps or a ramp;</li> <li>- Parking guaranteed close to entrance.</li> </ul>
<p>Medium:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Needs ground floor property or a property with lift access or a house with a stair lift;</li> <li>- Needs a level access shower or wet room;</li> <li>- Property accessible by shallow steps or a ramp;</li> <li>- Parking close to entrance.</li> </ul>	<p>Medium:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ground floor property or property with lift access or a house with shallow stairs;</li> <li>- Property with a level access shower or shower with a seat;</li> <li>- Property accessible by shallow steps or a ramp;</li> <li>- Parking guaranteed close to entrance.</li> </ul>
<p>High:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Needs ground floor or a property with a lift access wide enough for a wheelchair or a house with a stair lift;</li> <li>- Space within property for limited wheelchair use in the entrance hall;</li> <li>- Needs a level access shower or wet room;</li> <li>- Needs a level access entrance;</li> <li>- Parking close to entrance;</li> <li>- Property on a flat road.</li> </ul>	<p>High:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ground floor or a property with a lift access wide enough for a wheelchair or a house with a stair lift;</li> <li>- Space within property for limited wheelchair use in the entrance hall;</li> <li>- Property with level access shower or wet room;</li> <li>- Property accessible via a level-access entrance;</li> <li>- Parking guaranteed close to entrance;</li> <li>- Property on a flat road.</li> </ul>

## Links to other corporate documents

This policy links to and should be read in conjunction with the following policies and strategies:

- Homelessness Strategy
- Strategic Tenancy Policy
- Mutual Exchange Policy
- Help to move Policy

## Legislation

The legislation listed below will be taken into consideration when implementing this policy:

- Housing Act 1996, Part VI and part VII
- Homelessness Act 2002
- Housing Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Localism Act 2011
- Welfare Reform Act 2012
- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017