



Priority for Applicants with a Village Connection

Housing Options – Procedures Manual

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File name: Allocations Procedures

Procedure reference: Village located properties

Purpose

To prioritise general needs housing applicants with a local connection to a particular settlement.

Background

In the smaller settlements of East Herts where there are fewer than 1,000 electoral residents and few social housing properties the option for residents who have a connection to the village to remain in the village or return can be limited. This policy is designed so that Housing Register applicants with a connection to a small village can be prioritised on the Housing Register over applicants with no connection to the village to promote community benefits. However the policy does not completely override the Council's duty to allocate to applicants who are in housing need and are in a reasonable preference category as defined by the Housing Act 1996 and the Localism Act 2011.

Process

- 1.1 The Housing Options team has a list of villages with an electoral population of 1,000 or less, as provided by the Council's Democratic Services, that will qualify for this policy. The list will be updated annually in May each year.
- 1.2 This policy does not apply to properties that are adapted or suitable for mobility level 1, 2 or 3 or age restricted accommodation.

- 1.3 Properties advertised in settlements of less than 1,000 residents will have the words 'priority to applicants with a connection to a village' in the advert.
- 1.4 When the shortlist for such a property is available, the household's village connection should be identified to see if any applicants in the first 10 of the short list with 100 points or more have a connection to the village where the property is located. This will be ascertained from the information provided by the applicant on their Housing Register application.
- 1.5 Connection to the village will fall under two categories. Proof will be required. The following applies in order of priority:
 - First Connection Priority: The applicant is currently resident in the village and has lived in the village continuously for the preceding 12 months.
 - Second Connection Priority: The applicant lives outside the village and has parents, adult children or adult brothers or sisters who currently reside in the village and they have been resident continuously for the preceding five years.
- 1.6 If none of the first 10 applicants on the shortlist matches the First Connection Priority and has 100 points or more, the shortlist should be reviewed against the Second Connection Priority for the first 10 applicants with 100 points or more.
- 1.7 If there are applicants in the first 10 of the shortlist with more than 100 points who are a mixture of First and Second Connection Priority then the top three applicants should be ranked by First Priority Connection and their point levels and then Second Priority Connection and their points levels. An applicant with a First Connection Priority with points of 100 or more will have a greater rank than an applicant with Second Connection Priority of 100 points or more even if their points are lower than the applicant with Second Connection Priority.
- 1.8 If there is only one applicant who would qualify as having a First or Second Connection Priority with 100 points or more they would be nominated for the property and the remaining two nominations would be as for a property with no village connection priority i.e. ranked in point order.

- 1.9 If none of the first 10 applicants on the short list with 100 points or more have a First or Second Connection Priority then the shortlist is ranked as usual without any priority connection.