

## MANCHESTER SOCIAL HOUSING ALLOCATIONS SCHEME REVIEW

### BRIEFING PAPER #3: CHANGES AND MOVING TO THE NEW SCHEME

Some criteria will mean that applicants do not **qualify** to join the housing register, where in the current scheme they are simply placed in the lowest band (band 6), these are:

- The introduction of a requirement to have 2 years' continuous residency - note that there are exceptions and exemptions.
- Making the revised financial thresholds a matter of qualification, again with exceptions as noted above.
- Making home owners non-qualifying, with exceptions as noted above.

In addition to introducing qualification, **priority** is changing for those who qualify. Specifically:

- Contributing to communities will no longer be rewarded with additional priority.
- Band 1 is unchanged.
- All other applicants in the reasonable preference categories (in need of rehousing) will be in band 2, except for:
- Most applicants who are overcrowded and need 1 additional bedroom will be in band 3, with the exceptions noted above.
- Applicants who are assessed as intentionally homeless or are owed the prevention duty will be in band 3
- All applicants who are assessed as not in housing need will be in band 4.
- All demoted applications will be in a single band 5.

#### Summary of the new scheme

Band 1	is applicants in need (reasonable preference) who are in very urgent or emergency need to be rehoused
Band 2	is the majority of applicants in need (reasonable preference)
Band 3	is applicants in need (reasonable preference) who are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• one bedroom short (with exceptions)</li><li>• owed the homelessness prevention duty</li><li>• intentionally homeless but in priority need</li></ul>
Band 4	is applicants not in need (not in the reasonable preference groups)
Band 5	is applicants demoted from bands 1-4

#### Moving to the new scheme

The new scheme rules will apply to all applicants. Applying a new scheme to all applicants is both fair and transparent.

There is a strong commitment to minimise the need for applicants to manage moving their information over to the new scheme. Current applications will be carried over into the new scheme and placed into the relevant new band. This will be done automatically as far as possible, but applicants will still need to check that their information is up to date and accurate. Applicants should always keep their details up to date and checking their information is correct should be straightforward.

Some applicants will need to provide additional information in respect of the new scheme rules. These applicants will be contacted and asked to update their applications with the required information. This will be kept to a minimum and will not require existing information to be resubmitted.

### **Applicants who no longer qualify under the residency rule**

There will be some applicants in the current priority bands (1-3) who no longer qualify because they don't have the required two years' continuous residency in Manchester. These applicants will be offered a "credit" of the length of time they have been on the housing register if they reapply at the point they qualify.

For example assuming the new scheme goes live on 3rd November:

A household has lived in Manchester continuously for only 18 months at 3rd November and therefore does not qualify and is removed from the register. At that time the applicant had been in band 3 for 5 months. If the applicant reapplies to join the register in May 2021 when the two years' continuous residency has been achieved, and assuming there has been no change in circumstances (i.e., the applicant is still in the reasonable preference categories), the application would be given a 5 month backdate to December 2020 in recognition of the 5 months previously spent on the register in identical circumstances.

### **Timetable**

The Covid-19 situation might mean that the "go live" date has to be put back a few weeks, but currently everyone is still working towards the "go live" on 3rd November.

Subject to slipping due to Covid-19, August and September will see the migration of applications across to the new scheme. Any issues about missing or out of date information will be picked up and dealt with as they occur during this period. Some applicants will no longer qualify to join the housing register. Most of these applicants are in current bands 4, 5 and 6, and so have very little chance of being rehoused. These applicants will be contacted and given housing options advice. Work has begun to identify any applicants who have priority (bands 1-3) under the current scheme but who might not qualify under the new scheme. It is anticipated that most of these applicants will still qualify once additional information has been submitted for their applications. There will be some who, after close investigation, we are certain will not qualify under the new scheme. These applicants will be contacted directly and given housing options advice.

### **Housing options**

Outside of changes to the scheme there will be significant efforts to improve all applicants' understanding of their realistic housing options. The Manchester Move "front end" housing options advice and signposting will be updated as necessary.

## WYTHENSHAW COMMUNITY HOUSING GROUP AND ONE MANCHESTER

Wythenshawe Community Housing Group and One Manchester have both revised their own allocations schemes in the light of the council's new scheme. There is continued commitment to the Manchester Move partnership that works well for applicants and social landlords alike, and both are continuing to use the single Manchester Housing Register and the single gateway for access to social homes.

### Schedule to "Go Live"

27 July-2 Oct	Reregistration (information updating) period for bands 1-3
Week 3rd oct	Non-qualifying applicants contacted to issue 28 days' notice
Week 12th Oct	Applicants notified of band on new scheme
Go Live	3rd November

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