



# Lettings Policy

[www.lincshomefinder.co.uk](http://www.lincshomefinder.co.uk)

<b>VERSION DATED</b>	<b>12/03/2018</b>
<b>SCHEME APPROVED</b>	<b>NKDC – 27/03/2018 City of Lincoln – 26/03/2018</b>
<b>SCHEME IMPLEMENTED</b>	<b>03/04/2018</b>

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This is the allocation scheme, as required by the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2012, Localism Act 2011 and as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 for the partners listed below. It sets out the framework within which partners operate in the assessment of housing need on the common housing register and the letting of social and affordable rented properties.
- 1.2 Partners, and their housing arrangements are:
- City of Lincoln Council – stock holding local authority
  - North Kesteven District Council – a stock holding local authority
- 1.3 Properties owned by other housing providers, operate their individual nomination arrangements with the above Partners through this scheme.

## **2 Statement of Choice**

- 2.1 The Partnership is fully committed to enabling applicants to play an active role in choosing where they live, whilst accommodating those in the greatest housing need.
- 2.2 It is important that applicants are aware that the demand for accommodation is higher in some areas than in others, as is property availability and turnover. In making a decision about the choices available, applicants need to consider their housing need against the availability of properties in any given area.
- 2.3 The main objectives of this Policy are to:
- Provide a fair, open and accountable framework with equality of access
  - Prevent homelessness and reduce the use of temporary accommodation
  - Ensure freely available and accessible advice and assistance, to ensure applicants understanding and participation.
  - Take account of the relevant legislation, statutory regulations and guidance
  - Reflect Partners individual tenancy policies and strategies
  - Have due regard to the Lincolnshire Homelessness Strategy

## **3 Equal Opportunities**

- 3.1 The partnership is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity for all existing and potential applicants. No one will be treated unfairly due to age, gender, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, transsexuality, marital or partnership status, or being pregnant/on maternity leave. This list is not intended to be exhaustive but indicative of the Partnership's intention and commitment to ensuring equality.

## 4 Data Protection, Confidentiality and Sharing Information

- 4.1 The Partners are what is known as ‘Controllers’ of the data you provide and are each registered with the Information Commissioner’s Office. The Partners take your privacy seriously and will not use the information you give for any other purposes than to administer your application, unless the law allows this.
- 4.2 If you provide your personal information on both the paper and online application, you are consenting to the Partners using this and any other information you provide as proof of your application, to process and consider your application. We will:
- keep your information accurate and up to date, with your assistance
  - retain your information only for as long as necessary (minimum of 6 years from the end of the tenancy/application and longer in certain circumstances)
  - store your information securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 at a level appropriate for its sensitivity. For further information see the relevant Partner’s Data Protection Policy
- 4.3 We will not share your personal information with third parties without your consent, unless they are processing your information on our behalf, or because the law allows this, for example to check the information provided by you or about you. This includes any sensitive personal information you provide for example regarding you or your family’s health, although only where it is necessary.
- 4.4 We are also under a duty to protect the public funds we administer, and to this end may use the information you have provided for the prevention and detection of fraud. We may also share this information with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds for these purposes.
- 4.5 The third parties may include but are not limited to, passing your information and receiving information about you, with the agencies/services listed in the Statement and Declaration on the application form.
- 4.6 If after providing consent for us to process your personal information for this purpose, you decide to withdraw your consent, then you must contact us immediately to confirm this. However the consequences of this will be that your application will not be considered. We may also have already passed on your information, as the law allows, to other departments within council and organisations.
- 4.7 If you want to know more about the information we hold about you and how we process this or you have a complaint regarding the way we have handled your personal information please ask for the Data Protection Officer at any of the Partners main offices. If you however remain unhappy, then you have a right to complain to the Information Commissioner at: Information Commissioner’s Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Telephone: 01625 545 700 Website: [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

## **5 Overview of How the Scheme Works**

- 5.1 The common Lettings Policy provides a way of letting social housing, and promoting shared ownership properties, and other housing options across the partner areas. The Scheme has been designed to be easy to use, provide the highest level of customer service and enable people to make the best choice for their needs from the full range of housing options available to them. The Scheme will not however produce any more housing but will provide a fair, efficient and transparent way of letting the current social housing resources.
- 5.2 People who apply to join the scheme or are registered with the Scheme are known as applicants. Applicants are assessed and awarded a banding according to their need for alternative accommodation. Landlords advertise their vacant properties for rent and invite bids on each property from applicants who are registered.
- 5.3 Adverts will contain a detailed description of the property and will state which applicants are able to apply. Applicants can then bid for the property of their choice as long as they meet the qualifying criteria and are registered with the scheme.
- 5.4 The successful applicant will be selected from those who have bid for the property and who meet the qualifying criteria. Selection will be based on the relevant band, followed by the effective banding date where there is more than one applicant from the same band. The landlord then offers the tenancy to the successful applicant.
- 5.5 Feedback will be provided for each vacancy advertised, as this will help applicants to make more informed choices.

## **6 Eligibility**

- 6.1 Applicants should be aged 18 years or over.
- 6.2 Applications from the following groups will be considered:
  - 6.2.1 Persons not subject to immigration control taking account of nationality and immigration. The main customer groups to whom properties will be let to are:
    - British Nationals who are habitually resident in the Common Travel Area (CTA) i.e. United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man or Republic of Ireland.
    - Commonwealth citizens who have the right of abode and are habitually resident in the CTA.
    - European Economic Area (EEA) nationals who have the right to reside in the UK and are habitually resident in the CTA.
  - 6.2.2 Persons subject to immigration control who have been granted:
    - Refugee Status
    - Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Protection, provided that there is no condition that they shall not be a charge on public funds

- Indefinite Leave to Remain, provided that they are habitually resident in the CTA and their Leave to Remain was not granted in the previous five years on the basis of sponsorship given in relation to maintenance and accommodation (or if their sponsor has died)
- Persons subject to immigration control who are nationals of a country that has ratified the European Convention on Social and Medical Assistance (ECSMA) or the European Social Charter (ESC) provided that they are habitually resident in the CTA and lawfully present in the UK.

6.2.3 In addition to European Nationals who are habitually resident in the UK, and can prove they have a current British National Insurance Number, applications from the following groups of people will also be considered: -

- A person granted refugee status when his/her request for asylum is accepted.
- Persons granted exceptional leave to enter or remain. This will be someone who has failed in the request for asylum, but has been given leave to remain where there are compelling, compassionate circumstances.
- Persons granted indefinite leave to remain in the UK who are regarded as having settled status. Applicants still have to establish habitual residence.

6.3 Under the Housing Act 1996, local authorities must consider whether applicants are eligible for housing assistance. This relates to some people who may have been living abroad or who do not have permanent permission to remain in the UK. Any person making an application who is identified as falling under the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 will be assessed in accordance with the Act. We reserve the right to seek advice and assistance to resolve the issue of eligibility.

## 7 Ineligible Applicants

7.1 Those who **CANNOT** join the Choice Based Letting Scheme are: -

- Persons who are ineligible to reside in the United Kingdom.
- Persons granted exceptional leave to enter or remain but do not have recourse to public funds.

7.2 There may be cases where an ineligible person forms part of a household with others who are eligible. It is important to note that whilst the ineligible person cannot be granted a tenancy they may be taken into account in the size of accommodation to be offered, but the tenancy will only be granted to the individual who is eligible.

## 8 Non-Qualifying Persons

The following will be considered to be non-qualifying persons, and therefore unable to join this Choice Based Lettings Scheme:

- Existing social housing tenants who have not been in their current home for 12months.
- Serious Unacceptable behaviour

### 8.1 Existing Social Housing Tenant

8.1.1 Our partnership aims to promote settled and sustainable communities, therefore social housing tenants who have not been in their current home for 12months will be considered non-qualifying and not accepted on to the scheme.

8.1.2 Partners will consider any exceptional cases where an applicant's household circumstances have significantly changed and the applicant was not aware or anticipating the change prior to taking their current tenancy

### 8.2 Serious Unacceptable Behaviour

8.2.1 This can relate to anti-social behaviour, criminal behaviour, nuisance, property condition and/or any significant housing related debt.

8.2.2 The Partners are entitled, when deciding whether or not to allow an applicant to join the scheme or be offered a tenancy, to take into account relevant current and previous behaviour of the applicant, and/or members of their household.

8.2.3 It is the responsibility of an applicant to provide reasonable information to enable their application to be processed and assessed. Applications will not be registered until we have received all the required information and we are satisfied that an applicant, and their household, is eligible and a qualifying person.

8.2.4 In determining the issue it is not necessary for the applicant to have actually been a tenant of one of the Partners when the behaviour occurred. Furthermore, the behaviour is not limited to that caused by the applicant and/or their household - it extends to behaviour caused by visitors to an applicant's home for which they were responsible.

8.2.5 The following contains examples of where we may consider applicants as non-qualifying, and therefore not eligible to join the scheme, due to evidence of serious unacceptable behaviour, as we may consider this makes them unsuitable as a tenant. This includes, but not limited to:

- Housing related debt, generally determined, but not limited, equivalent of 8 weeks rent liability or less. By "Housing Related Debt" we mean (1) rent arrears owed to any landlord (2) costs of repairing damage to accommodation, (3) mortgage arrears owed to the Council or any other lender, (4) other Partner debts including Housing Benefit overpayments and rent advance or deposit payments, and (5) court costs.

We expect applicants with housing related debt to either pay the debt in full or reduce the debt to less than the equivalent of 8 weeks rent liability followed by

regular repayments of an acceptable amount to reduce the debt for a minimum of 13 consecutive weeks and ongoing to continue to reduce the debt.

- Breaching a condition of the tenancy agreement, for which possession action has been or is being pursued. If we have evidence that a tenant is breaking their tenancy conditions we may not offer accommodation until the breach has been remedied. This includes, but is not limited to: damaging the property; making structural alterations without our consent; allowing the garden to become neglected or overgrown; poor internal decorative and cleanliness standard. This also applies to applicants whose landlord is another Local Authority, Registered Provider or a Private Landlord. We may visit our own tenants before we offer them another tenancy.
- Anti-Social Behaviour - Being subject to (or having previously been subject to) an Anti-social Behaviour Injunction, an Anti-social Behaviour Order, a Criminal Anti-social Behaviour Order, a Criminal Behaviour Order, a Community Protection Notice, a Closure of Premises Order; or having been in breach of any of those orders, a Possession Order, or notice served for anti-social behaviour. The applicant will have to show that their behaviour has improved and they are capable of being a responsible tenant before reapplying.
- Using their home for immoral or illegal purposes
- Being convicted of an offence committed in, or in the locality of, their home, or committed elsewhere against a person with a right to reside in, or occupy housing accommodation in the locality, or was committed elsewhere against the landlord of their home, or a person employed in connection with the exercise of the Partner's housing management functions, and that the conduct affects those functions (either directly or indirectly)
- Causing the condition of the property to deteriorate by a deliberate act, or by neglect
- Making a false statement to obtain a tenancy

8.2.6 The Partnership will take into account other behaviour considered as unacceptable, but is not considered sufficiently serious for non-qualifying as above, this is detailed in **Section 10.7**

8.2.7 The Partnership will take into account other housing related debt, which is not considered sufficient for non-qualifying as above, this is detailed in **Section 10.8**

### **8.3 Consideration**

8.3.1 We will act reasonably when determining if an application is considered non-qualifying. We will consider all the relevant information before we make our decision.

8.3.2 Where the Partner has reason to believe that unacceptable behaviour is due to a physical, mental or learning disability, the person will not be determined as disqualified without first considering whether they would be able to maintain a tenancy

satisfactorily with appropriate care and support. In such cases the Partner will consult as appropriate with any relevant agencies, including Social Services and providers of support services. We will consider the interests of the applicant and their household but we will also consider the interest of the people who live and work on our estates.

- 8.3.3 In the case of new applications, we expect applicants to provide us with some proof that they have behaved responsibly. We will normally ask for a reference from the applicant's current or former landlord(s) relating, but not limited, to behaviour, payment and property condition. We may also consider references from an employer or other professional persons. It will be the applicant's responsibility to obtain such references. Where such landlord references are not available, we may ask applicants to produce other documentation to show whether or not they were up to date with their rent payments.
- 8.3.4 Where it is apparent to the Partner that an applicant has not behaved responsibly, the applicant will be given the opportunity to explain, with each case decided on its own merits. It is usual for an applicant to evidence that they have remedied their behaviour, normally over a period of six months.
- 8.3.5 If at any time the Partner obtains information that leads it to believe that an applicant already on the housing register is non-qualifying, the applicant will be informed in writing. The applicant will be given 28 days to provide information supporting why they believe they are a qualifying applicant, their application will be suspended for that period and unable to place bids, bids already placed may be bypassed. If they do not reply within this period, or if they reply but the Partner remains of the view that they are non qualifying, they will be removed from the housing register ie: their application will be cancelled. The applicant may request a review of the decision.
- 8.3.6 Partners will consider future application on its merits and evidence at that time.
- 8.3.7 Exceptional circumstances – partners will consider any request from households with exceptional circumstances who would not normally qualify for housing. Each case will be assessed on an individual basis.



## **9 How to apply and how we process applications**

### **9.1 Administrating Partner**

- 9.1.1 Applications should be forward to, and appropriately processed by, the Partner:
- for the area you currently live (if currently residing within Partnership area); or
  - for the area in which you wish to live (if currently residing outside the Partnership area).

### **9.2 Providing Information and Documentation**

- 9.2.1 Applicants are required to provide acceptable evidence of their identity e.g. their National Insurance Number(s) and proof of residency for themselves and anyone they wish to be housed with. A list I of acceptable required documents will be provided. Without this information an application will not be processed.
- 9.2.2 For any application which includes someone from abroad, proof of identification, nationality and immigration status will be required. Verification may be sought from the Immigration Service to safeguard the use and allocation of public funds.
- 9.2.3 In order to determine the priority an application receives, it is the applicant(s) responsibility to provide any and all information reasonably required by the Partnership. Such information may extend beyond that requested on the initial Application Form to reflect individual circumstances. Until all required information is provided the application will not be registered and/or will NOT be eligible to bid.
- 9.2.4 It is also the applicant(s) responsibility to ensure they notify the Scheme Partnership of any change in their circumstances. The Housing Act 1996 section 171 states that a person commits an offence if, in connection with the exercise by a local housing authority of their functions under this Part –
- (a) s/he knowingly or recklessly makes a statement which is false in a material particular, or
- (b) s/he knowingly withholds information which the authority have reasonably required her/him to give in connection with the exercise of those functions.’
- 9.2.5 False information can include any information given on an application form, given in response to subsequent review letters, given during telephone conversations or interviews, or by other updating mechanisms or information submitted by applicants during the proceedings of a review. Landlords may seek possession of a property under Ground 5 of Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1985 if a tenant has induced the Council to grant a tenancy by knowingly or recklessly making a false statement. The offence is also punishable on summary conviction by magistrates by a fine of up to £5000.

### **9.3 Dating of Applications**

- 9.3.1 The initial registration date of an application will be the date the fully completed and signed housing application form is received at any of the Partner offices. All relevant documentation requested by the Partnership should be provided within 28 days of initial contact. Failure to provide relevant documentation may result in a later registration date, or cancellation of application.

9.3.2 The following explains how effective band dates will be awarded:

- **New application** - the effective band date will be the same as the applicant's registration date. Assuming all required documents are received within 28days, if not then date will be when all required documents are actually received
- **Change in circumstances which results in a higher band assessment** - the effective band date will be the date the applicant provides satisfactory evidence of the change in circumstances.
- **Change in circumstances which result in a lower band assessment** - the effective band date will revert to the original application date.
- **Homelessness applications** – the effective band date will be the date the homeless decision (s184) is made and notified to the applicant
- **Refusal of reasonable offers** – Partners reserve the right to amend effective banding dates to date of last offer in accordance with **Section 14.5**

9.3.3 For example: birth of a child may cause a household to be lacking 1 bedroom and may therefore move up a band. The effective band date is the date that the birth certificate was provided to the Partnership (leading to the re-assessment) not the child's date of birth

#### **9.4 Cancellation of Applications**

9.4.1 The Partnership may cancel applications where, an applicant:

- is housed as a result of that application,
- fails to respond to the annual review within the set timescale,
- has moved and failed to notify the Partnership, within 28days of moving
- persistently fails to respond to a Partner's communication or requests for information over a reasonable timescale, we consider this to be within 28days, or over 3 advertising cycles
- has failed to bid within the last 12months, unless there is evidence that there has been no suitable vacancies
- is no longer considered a qualifying person

9.4.2 Should an applicant subsequently wish to re-join the register they will be required to complete a new application which will be processed based on their current circumstances and with the subsequent registration date.

#### **9.5 Suspension of Applications**

9.5.1 We may suspend (put "on hold") a housing application if, for example:

- Applicant has been asked, in writing, by telephone or email for key information in relation to their application and we are waiting for an appropriate response
- We have asked another support agency or worker, to provide additional key information about a household and are waiting for a reply from them.
- if we are unable to contact an applicant following multi attempts
- whilst awaiting the outcome of a referral to the Lincs Homefinder Panel
- whilst awaiting response to annual review
- where requested, an applicant refuses a home visit

#### **9.6 Landlord References**

9.6.1 Partners may contact an applicant's current or former landlord(s) for information on how that tenancy was conducted. This will cover payment of monies due, condition of property, anti-social behaviour and other tenancy conditions. This information will be used to determine eligibility and banding, of which applicants will be informed. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure Partners are provided with this information.

9.6.2 In the event that an applicant disputes the contents of a reference, an officer will make a decision taking into account individual circumstances and information available.

## **9.8 Home Visits**

9.8.1 It may be necessary to carry out home visits to assist with the assessment process and/or to provide an alternative way for customers to discuss their circumstances.

- Home visits will only be carried out by prior appointment, unless in exceptional circumstances.
- The Partners reserve the right to suspend applications where access to the home is denied and until such time as this can be given. Persistent refusal of reasonable requests may lead to the application being cancelled. The Partners reserve the right to decline the request for a home visit where this may place a member of staff at risk or is otherwise considered unnecessary

## **9.9 Financial Capacity**

9.9.1 Households may be assessed for their ability to buy/rent a suitable property within the area, or improve/adapt their own home to meet their assessed needs.

9.9.2 Assets that may be taken into consideration when assessing financial capacity may include but are not limited to savings, shares, bonds, commercial property, residential property, property abroad and money apportioned through the proceeds of a divorce settlement, inheritance or any form of cash windfall.

9.9.3 Applicants assessed as having the financial resources to resolve their own housing difficulties, may have their housing priority reduced. The Partnership reserves the right not to make an offer of tenancy to an applicant who has the financial capacity to reasonable resolve their housing situation when taking the above into account. This criteria may be reviewed where a property is deemed to be in a 'low demand area' or at the discretion of the Partner who manages the relevant property.

## **9.10 Change of Circumstances**

9.10.1 Applicants are required to inform the relevant Partner if their personal circumstance change and it may reasonably be expected to have an effect on their Housing Register application. This includes any change in their address or household composition or contact details.

9.10.2 A specific form may be available for this purpose and this must be signed by each of the applicants. Examples of this include:

- Housing circumstances have improved
- Recovered from an illness which previously gave medical priority
- When a child is born and a copy of the birth certificate has been provided there will be a re-assessment of the banding and if the banding results in a higher band it will

have an effective band date of when the Partner received confirmation of the child's birth.

9.10.3 Changes in circumstances that lead to re-banding will be dealt with in accordance with this policy. The relevant Partner will re-assess an application where there has been a change of circumstances and if priority changes applicant(s) will be notified in writing.

9.10.4 It is the applicants responsibility to ensure they provide up to date contacts, failure to do so may lead to their application being suspended or cancelled and could mean their bids on vacancies are bypassed, after reasonable attempts to contact are unsuccessful.

### **9.11 Managing Risks**

9.11.1 It is important to manage the needs of individual applicants with the needs and rights of neighbours and the local community. In order to manage risks to individuals and communities a multi-agency approach must be taken, the Partnership will therefore work closely with the Police, Social Care, Probation, Health and voluntary agencies. Applicant are required to complete a self-assessed risk assessment prior to being accepted on to the register.

9.11.2 For example, securing accommodation for a high-risk offender will be done in consultation and with the approval of the appropriate agencies and special arrangements may apply in cases where an applicant is considered by the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). In order to achieve this there may be occasions when the applicant with the highest priority in the scheme may not be offered a particular property. In such cases they will be written to by the relevant Partner explaining the reasons why this has happened.

9.11.3 The Partnership actively works with the Local Community Safety Partnership in addressing a range of issues that impact upon community safety. These issues include drugs misuse, anti-social behaviour and domestic abuse amongst others. The Partnership reserves the right to liaise with the Local Community Safety Partnership when considering any exclusion, letting or other issues which have an impact upon community safety.

9.11.4 An integral part of managing risks is to ensure that appropriate support networks are in place and are regularly monitored and reviewed by the Partners involved. Any successful bid will be declined if the relevant agencies have not provided a relevant Care Plan/Risk Assessment to manage the risk.

### **9.12 Annual Review**

9.12.1 The Partners are required to undertake an annual review of applicants on the Register. This helps to ensure that those on the register are still interested in applying for suitable properties and also reduces the amount of time and resources wasted in sending information to those applicants who are no longer looking to move house.

9.12.2 Each applicant will be contacted, in writing, on the anniversary of their application to ascertain if they still wish to be registered. Should there be no response to this letter **within 4 weeks**, the application will be suspended. A further letter will be sent to the

applicant notifying them their application is suspended and should they not respond, within 14 days, their application will be cancelled.

9.12.3 Applicants who subsequently decide they wish to re-join the Register will need to re-apply in the normal way and will have their current circumstances assessed. The application date will not be backdated under these circumstances.

## 10 How We Prioritise Applications

### 10.1 Bandings

10.1.1 There are 4 Bands, with Band 1 for those with the highest priority. Applicants are placed in the band in accordance with their housing needs assessment [APPENDIX B](#)

### 10.2 Reasonable Preference

10.2.1 The law states that certain groups of people have reasonable preference within any housing allocation scheme operated by a Local Housing Authority, these groups are:

- homeless (within Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002, as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 h); this includes people who are intentionally homeless, and those who are not in priority need;
- unintentionally homeless, or threatened with, and in priority need who are owed a duty by the housing authority under section 193 (2) or 195 (2) of the Housing Act 1996 (or under Section 65 (2) or 68 (2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by the housing authority under Section 192 (3);
- occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions;
- People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds;
- People who need to move to a particular locality in the area, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others).
- Those leaving the Armed Forces who are in housing need

### 10.3 Homelessness

10.3.1 In cases where a Partner, Local Authority, has accepted a main housing duty under homelessness, applicants will be placed into the appropriate band and are required to bid for suitable properties for which they are eligible. In such cases local connection will only be confirmed for the Partner area that has accepted the Homeless duty.

10.3.2 Homeless cases will be monitored, and if applicants fail to make bids, the Partnership will then bid on their behalf for the next suitable property they are eligible for. If an applicant refuses a successful bid that is considered suitable and reasonable, the homelessness duty to them may be discharged. In such cases the application will be re-assessed.

10.3.3 Partners reserve the right to make direct lets to homeless households, where they consider a property is suitable and reasonable for the household, in accordance with [Section 14.8](#)

### 10.4 Worsened Circumstances

10.4.1 Where a Partner determines that an applicant has deliberately worsened their circumstances and gained additional priority, they reserve the right to reduce the priority awarded for up to 6 months. Examples include, but not limited to:

- Giving up suitable accommodation that was available to them
- Moving into an unsatisfactory arrangement eg: sharing facilities or overcrowded

10.4.2 Partners will take into account the current needs of the household before reducing any priority. Where priority has changed applicants will always be informed in writing

stating the reasons, any time restrictions and their right to review of that decision. Once the period of reduced priority has expired the application and effective banding dates will revert to the original applicable dates.

## **10.5 Medical Need Bandings**

10.5.1 The assessment determines medical priority based on the current housing circumstances in relation to the effect on the illness and/or disability of the applicant, or member of their household, and that a move to more appropriate accommodation will alleviate that effect.

## **10.6 Sheltered Housing (Older Person Schemes)**

10.6.1 Sheltered accommodation and older persons schemes are normally allocated according to the following criteria:

- a) applicants in need of supported accommodation who fulfil any determined assessment criteria, this will be determined, where appropriate, by a *sheltered housing needs assessment*, to assess individual needs and independence and ability of the “sheltered” service to meet those needs, and
- b) applicants or their partner be 60 years of age or over, (this may vary between partners and/or landlords) taking into account the requirements of the scheme and community.

10.6.2 Such properties will be clearly advertised detailing who can bid and be considered for the vacancy

## **10.7 Unacceptable Behaviour**

10.7.1 Partners will take into account any behaviour of the applicant or member of their household, which is not sufficiently serious to consider as Non-Qualifying Personas detailed in **Section 8** is not applicable. Such applications may, in consideration of this behaviour along with other housing needs, decide to reduce the priority given.

## **10.8 Housing Related Debt**

10.8.1 Where an applicant(s) has any current/former rent arrears or other housing related debt, and **Section 8** is not applicable, they will be accepted onto the housing register and placed in the appropriate band. Partners will advise applicants when a housing related debt is made known to them, explaining the consequences and provide advice and information to make arrangements to clear the debt or to make a repayment plan.

10.8.2 If an applicant makes a bid and is successful, their application may be passed over, until an acceptable repayment agreement has been made and maintained for 13wks, having regard to the following criterion:

Current and/or former rent arrears:

- Reasons given for which the arrears have incurred
- the age of the debt

Other housing related debt:

- the amount of debt outstanding,
- the age of the debt

- reasons given for why monies owed
- the applicant's commitment to repay,
- current housing circumstances,

10.8.3 In the event that an application is passed over by a Partner for these reasons, applicant(s) would be notified in writing and informed of their right to review of that decision. Applicants must be aware that the letting of a property will not be delayed pending a review, the outcome of the review will only be applicable for future vacancies.

## **10.9 Disabled Facilities/Renovation Grants and Adaptations**

10.9.1 Where an applicant(s), or member of the moving household has benefited from either a disabled facilities grant/adaptation or renovation grant they will be accepted onto the housing register and placed in the appropriate band. However, their application will be passed over, for a period of 5 years from when the work was undertaken, unless the household's circumstances have substantially changed to make the property unsuitable.

10.9.2 Applicants need to be aware that if they are subsequently re-housed within the 5 year grant period, the relevant grant conditions, as signed, may still apply along with any financial consequences.

10.9.3 In the event that an application is passed over by a Partner for these reasons, applicant(s) would be notified in writing and of their right to review of that decision. Applicants must be aware that the letting of a property will not be delayed pending a review, the outcome of the review will only be applicable for future vacancies.

10.9.4 This will not apply in exceptional circumstances, where it is considered that a households circumstances or housing needs have changed significantly since the completion of the relevant works.

## **10.10 Right to Buy**

10.10.1 Where an applicant(s), or member of the moving household has benefited from a Right to Buy, they will be accepted onto the housing register and placed in the appropriate band. However, their application will be passed over, for a period of 3 years from purchase of the property, unless the household's circumstances have substantially changed to make the property unsuitable.

10.10.2 Applicants need to be aware that if they are subsequently re-housed within the 3 year period, the relevant discount conditions, as signed, may still apply along with any financial consequences.

10.10.3 In the event that an application is passed over by a Partner for these reasons, an applicant would be notified in writing and of their right to a review of that decision. Applicants must be aware that the letting of a property will not be delayed pending a review, the outcome of the review will only be applicable for future vacancies.

10.10.4 This will not apply in exceptional circumstances, where it is considered that a households circumstances or housing needs have changed significantly since the completion of the purchase





## 11 Local Connection

11.1 A local connection with one of the partner authorities will prioritise bids over those from applicants who do not have a local connection. To qualify for a local connection to a partner area within this scheme the applicant must provide supporting evidence that demonstrates:

- Currently resident in any partner area and have been so for at least the last SIX months,
- Have previously lived in any partner district area for a continuous period of TWELVE months (whilst aged 18 or over) in the last FIVE YEARS,
- Immediate family members who are currently resident in any partner area. Family members are defined as parents or guardians, adult children or brothers or sisters who have lived in that area continuously for the last FIVE YEARS, (please note in accordance with [section 14.2](#) bids may be bypassed if the vacancy does not reduce the distance between those households)
- their current main place of permanent work in any partner area for a continuous period of TWELVE months

### 11.2 Other local connection circumstances

11.2.1 These circumstances include:

- applicants who have been accepted by one of the partner authorities under homeless legislation - only the local connection to that Partner area will apply even if applicants meet criteria for other local connections
- applicants who have been accepted for priority housing as a reciprocal arrangement with another housing organisation - only the local connection to that Partner area will apply even if applicants meet criteria for other local connections
- HM Armed Forces applicants through Section 315 of the Housing and Regeneration Act (2008) who have established a local connection with one of the partner areas during their service or before they joined the services
- Members of the Armed Forces, former service personnel applying within five years of discharge, bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the Armed Forces and serving or former members of the Reserve Forces who need to move for medical reasons, who may have established a local connection with one of the partner areas before or during their service
- refugees who have been granted leave to remain and have been dispersed to a Partners area
- applicants who have been accepted from outside the Partner area as part of a Witness Protection recommendation - only the local connection to that Partner area will apply even if applicants meet criteria for other local connections
- applicants from outside the partner authorities who are victims of domestic abuse or fleeing other violence and/or harassment, who cannot return to the area where they were living for fear of harm
- Care leavers, whilst they may not meet the normal local connection criteria, if they have resided within Lincolnshire they will be awarded a local connection to all Partner areas

11.2.2 In other exceptional cases Partners have the discretion to award a local connection to their area, the Lincs Homefinder Panel can apply a local connection to another area or the Partnership as a whole.

### **11.3 What does not give you a local connection?**

11.3.1 The following circumstances will not lead for a local connection be awarded to an application:

- People living in bail hostels or approved premises
- Occupying a mobile home, caravan or motor caravan which is not placed on an official mobile home or caravan park
- Hostel residents from outside the partner authorities who have not otherwise lived in one of the partner authorities for six months
- Those residing in supported accommodation
- Those occupying student accommodation – hall of residence and all other accommodation sourced in connection to education
- Those residing in prison within the area
- Those residing in hospital, in-patient care or residential care settings

### **11.4 Local Letting Policies**

11.4.1 Local Lettings Policies are usually introduced to meet a particular local need and have an overall positive effect on estates. For example, if an estate had a high level of anti-social behaviour, applicants who bid for the advertised property may be subject to enhanced checks on their previous behaviour, or in areas of low employment status priority may be given to those in current employment, or households of a certain age or for some schemes a very specific local connection to an individual village not just partner area.

11.4.2 There are a number of Local Lettings Policies throughout the partnership area. To be considered for a property subject to local lettings criteria, applicants would need to meet the usual eligibility criteria AND the additional local lettings criteria, failure to meet both criteria may lead to the bid being bypassed.

## **12 Property Eligibility**

- 12.1 Applicants, upon acceptance to the Housing Register, will be notified in writing of the properties they are eligible to bid for. Property eligibility is based upon a household's composition and their needs, [See Appendices C and D](#). The Policy covers the letting of a range of property types throughout the area.
- 12.2 It is important to note that property eligibility may differ between landlords, as individual Housing Providers endeavour to make the best possible use of their stock in terms of size and suitability when setting the criteria for eligibility. For example, ground floor flats may be reserved for people with a physical disability. Housing Providers may also choose to exercise some discretion and invite bids from particular household compositions to contribute to sustainable communities. The advert will clearly state which applicants can bid for each property and which applicant will have priority for the vacancy.
- 12.3 The Partnership reserves the right, in exceptional circumstances, to offer applicants accommodation not usually considered for their household type or size, for example, but not limited to, where availability of properties in a certain area are scarce or those with no medical need may be considered for level floor accommodation.
- 12.4 The Partnership reserve the right to amend the bid criteria of previously advertised properties to widen the eligibility and enable successful bids to be made.

### **12.5 Access to children**

- 12.5.1 For the purposes of this policy, we consider that access to children must be verified as regular and for at least three nights each week. Single people or couples with access to children only will normally only be considered for a one bedroom flat.
- 12.5.2 Some landlords may consider such applicants for a two bedroom flat opposed to a one bedroom flat, although landlords may continue to give preference to applicants who would fully occupy the vacancy on a permanent basis, eligibility will be included in adverts so must be checked carefully.
- 12.5.3 Single people or couples with children living with them permanently and with access to other children will not be granted priority for needing an additional bedroom but may be able to bid for properties with an extra bedroom. However, Partners may give preference to large families who would fully occupy the property permanently.

### **12.6 Carers, Prospective/Approved Adopters and Foster Carers**

- 12.6.1 Applicants with a disability or other need who require an additional bedroom to accommodate a carer are required to provide an approved and detailed Care Plan. Such Care Plans will need to be shared with all providers so that appropriate accommodation can be considered. Partners will work closely with the relevant Children's Services departments, on an individual case basis to assist in meeting the needs of prospective and approved adopters and foster carers and duties under s22G of the Children's Act 1989.

## 13 Advertising Vacancies and Bidding

### 13.1 Advertising Cycle

13.1.1 Once applicants are registered they are able to start looking for a suitable vacancy across the Partnership area. Vacancies will be advertised on a weekly basis from midnight on Wednesday to midnight on the following Monday (6days). Adverts will include key property attributes, local facilities and eligibility criteria.

13.1.2 Vacancies will be advertised in the following ways:

- **Lincs Homefinder Website** – [www.lincshomefinder.co.uk](http://www.lincshomefinder.co.uk) All Partner websites direct users to this website to allow applicants to view available properties and apply 'on-line' for properties of their choice. Access to the website is available in some of the Partner's reception areas.
- **Reception Areas** – Partner may advertise vacancies in their reception areas.
- **Dispersed office locations** – some partners may circulated a list of vacancies to assist with access should any applicant approach them for information

### 13.2 Withdrawing Adverts

13.2.1 Occasionally, a Partner may be required to withdraw a property advert, for instance:

- if it becomes apparent that the property may be let through direct lets in accordance with this policy, *Section 14.8* or
- The current tenant of the property being advertised has withdrawn their notice terminating their tenancy of that property, so the property is no longer available,
- Significantly incorrect information had been advertised in respect of the property or applicants eligibility for that property.

### 13.3 Bidding for a Vacancy

13.3.1 Applicants are restricted to making 2 bids in each cycle. Where an applicant meets the property eligibility, bids can only be placed during the bidding cycle, and should be placed through the applicants individual online account by themselves or their advocates.

13.3.2 Where a vacancy has been advertised and no bids have been received, or been successful, the vacancy may be re-advertised and may be allocated on a first come first served basis subject to the usual eligibility criteria.

13.3.3 Bids for individual vacancies are ranked by banding and banding date, firstly those with a local connection to the partner area in which the vacancy occurs then those with a connection to the wider partnership area before those with no local connection to the partnership.

## **14 Shortlisting and Offers**

14.1 At the end of the advertising cycle, applicants who have bid will be shortlisted according to their eligibility criteria and any local lettings criteria. Verification checks will be undertaken at this stage to ensure applicants still qualify and circumstances have not changed

### **14.2 Bypassing Bids**

14.2.1 Bids may be bypassed for several reasons. It is not possible to provide an exhaustive list, but the following are common, an applicant or household member:

- doesn't require ground floor property and vacancy is ground floor
- does require ground floor property and vacancy is upper floor
- would not fully occupy the vacancy
- since the bid was placed, is now under offer or first nomination to another vacancy
- now considered to be non-qualifying, and application will be cancelled
- has experienced a change of circumstances or partner has identified information that affects eligibility, local connection and/or priority
- Unable to contact applicant(s) within 24hrs
- Does not meet specific criteria for the vacancy ie: additional local letting criteria
- If the Partner believes the vacancy would be unaffordable to the household from the onset
- Local connection does not apply – does not bring family closer together

14.2.2 Bids are updated to reflect the reason for being bypassed, so applicants are aware.

### **14.3 Making an Offer**

14.3.1 The successful candidate will be contacted by an officer from the partner landlord whose vacancy they have bid for, to be offered a tenancy and to arrange an accompanied viewing of the property.

14.3.2 If an applicant cannot be contacted following three attempts over different advertising cycles, their application will be cancelled in accordance with [section 9.4](#), also failing to respond within 24hrs of contact regarding a specific vacancy, Partners reserve the right to move to the next eligible person on the shortlist. It is important that all applicants ensure they are contactable as their bid may be bypassed after reasonable attempts to contact them have been unsuccessful.

14.3.3 In exceptional circumstances a Partner may not make an offer or may withdraw an offer to a successful bidder, this may include but is not limited to :

- it is clear that an applicant is not capable of understanding the responsibilities associated with being a tenant or they do not understand what they are signing
- current tenant of the property being advertised has withdrawn their notice terminating their tenancy of that property, so the property is no longer available
- applicant has failed to respond to three contact attempts from a Partner
- Partner or landlord believes the property is unaffordable from the onset.
- Identifying information that affects the application

### **14.4 Tenancies**

14.4.1 Joint tenancies will normally be offered to:

- Married couples, civil partnerships, unmarried couples and same sex partnerships, provided that both are named on the application form, unless both parties request the tenancy to be granted in a sole name, stating their reasons
- Adults wishing to live together as friends, both names have been included on the application form
- Applicants and their live-in carers, where the Partner considers it to be justified.

14.4.2 Joint tenancies are not usually given to a parent and adult child, unless there are formal caring responsibilities.

14.4.3 In all other circumstances sole tenancies will be offered to the eligible lead applicant. In cases relating to persons from abroad who are subject to immigration restrictions, the tenancy will only be granted to the individual who is eligible, whilst the ineligible person can still be taken into account in respect of size and type of accommodation offered.

#### **14.5 Refusals**

14.5.1 Generally, if an applicant refuses 2 offers, they will be contacted to discuss their housing needs and circumstances. With the exception to applications assessed with Band 1 priority (excluding Accepted Homeless housing duty), where Partners may review an application after the refusal of 1 reasonable offer. Once reviewed, if a Partner considers such refusals were unreasonable, Partners reserve the right to reduce their banding to a Band 4, for a period of 6 months from the date of the most recent unreasonable refusal.

#### **14.6 Non-Bidding**

14.6.1 All applicants will be monitored to establish if any suitable properties have been advertised. If suitable properties have been advertised the applicant may be contacted to establish why they have not bid. This will assist Partners in ascertaining if any additional assistance is required to participate in the scheme. Partners reserve the right to review such applications.

#### **14.7 Vacancies excluded from the Scheme**

14.7.1 The Partnership reserves the right to exclude certain properties and housing schemes from this Scheme, but a majority of social housing vacancies in the Partnership area will be advertised and let through this scheme. Examples of where this may occur include (but are not limited to) where a property is needed urgently to deal with an emergency. Specialist accommodation may also be let outside this Scheme for example extra care schemes for the elderly.

14.7.2 In exceptional circumstances properties may be withdrawn from an advertising cycle or scheme, those applicants who may have already expressed an interest in any such property will be notified of the reasons why.

## **14.8 Direct Lets**

- 14.8.1 Each Partner lets the majority of their properties through this CBL Scheme. The Partnership reserves the right to exclude certain properties and housing schemes from the CBL scheme. An example of this may include, but is not limited to, where a property is needed urgently to deal with an emergency, the renewal of a flexible-secure tenancy. Specialist accommodation may also be let outside this Scheme.
- 14.8.2 In some circumstances it may be necessary to directly match an applicant to a suitable property. This means that the applicant may not be able to bid for properties such as Homeless applicants as detailed in *Section 9.3*. If this applies, we will notify the applicant direct.
- 14.8.3 Applicants subject to a direct letting will normally be made one offer of suitable accommodation. If they do not accept the property the relevant partner may decide to make no further offers to them, reduce their Banding or discharge a homeless duty. They will be able to request a review of any decision on the suitability of a property or a decision not to make a further offer.
- 14.8.4 Properties let through direct lettings may not be advertised through this scheme, but information will normally be made available to indicate that the letting took place. This may not be done if there is good reason, such as the need to re-house someone threatened with violence.

## **14.9 Allocations to Employees and Relations**

- 14.9.1 The Scheme's application form requires applicants to declare if they or a member of their household are either a member of staff/Councillor/Board Member or related to a member of staff/Councillor/Board Member of any Partner within the Scheme.
- 14.9.2 In such cases there will be stringent procedures and checks in place to ensure the application is processed in accordance with this Policy and other applications. A Senior Officer will check the processing and assessment. Prior to any offer of accommodation being made to such an applicant the relevant Partner will notify their appropriate Director or Head of Service for approval.



## 15 Reviews and Complaints

### 15.1 Reviews of Decision

15.1.1 Initial decisions relating to an application will be made by the relevant Partner organisation.

15.1.2 All applicants have the right to request a review of a decision if they consider this policy has not been applied correctly, for example a decision about:

- Exclusion or removal from the Housing Register
- Type of property the applicant is eligible for
- Band awarded
- Application status and applicable dates
- Reasonableness of refusals

15.1.3 If an applicant wishes to request of a review of the initial decision, they should notify the partner that made that decision, of the issue they would like to be reviewed. This will be dealt with by an officer not involved in the original decision making process.

15.1.4 If the applicant still considers their case has not been dealt with in accordance with this policy, and they can provide evidence that relevant information has not been considered, they may request that the case is passed to Lincs Homefinder Panel. An officer, where there are exceptional circumstances not covered by this policy and that have implications across Partners, may make a referral to the same Panel for consideration

15.1.5 If an applicant wishes to continue to pursue the matter following a decision by the Lincs Homefinder Panel, they can approach the Ombudsman [Section 15.3](#)

15.1.6 Where an applicant wishes to provide new information that has not previously been available to the Partner organisation for consideration, this will be dealt with as a 'change of circumstances' and subject to a reassessment and not considered as a review.

### 15.2 Complaints

15.2.1 If an applicant is dissatisfied with how they have been dealt with, and feel they have been unfairly treated, discriminated against and/or a Partner has failed to do something they should have done, then the applicant can make a complaint.

15.2.2 Complaints will be dealt with by the Partner involved and in accordance with their own Corporate Complaints Policy:

City of Lincoln Council

Post: City of Lincoln Council, City Hall, Beaumont Fee, Lincoln, LN1 1DD

Email: [housing@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:housing@lincoln.gov.uk)

Tel: 01522 881188

North Kesteven District Council  
Post: Complaints Officer at FREEPOST NKDC  
Email: [Complaints@n-kesteven.gov.uk](mailto:Complaints@n-kesteven.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01529 414155 or 01522 699699

### **15.3 Ombudsman**

15.3.1 The Local Government Ombudsman is independent of all government departments, councils and politicians. The Ombudsman examines complaints without taking sides. In most cases the complainant must have pursued the matter through the Council's own complaints procedure before a complaint can be considered by the Ombudsman

Contact details for the Local Government Ombudsman are

Email [advice@lgo.org.uk](mailto:advice@lgo.org.uk)

Telephone: 0300 061 0614

Text 'call back' on 0762 480 4299.

Fax us on 024 7682 0001.

Write to the **Local Government Ombudsman**, PO Box 4771, Coventry CV4 0EH.

Contact details for the Housing Ombudsman Service are

Email [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

Telephone : 0300 111 3000

Fax : 020 7831 1942

Write to: **Housing Ombudsman Service**, Exchange Tower, Harbour Exchange Square, London. E14 9GE

### **15.4 Homelessness Reviews**

15.4.1 Requests for reviews of decisions made in respect of an applicant's homeless application are subject to review procedures outside this scheme. Applicants should contact the local Authority responsible for their homelessness application for further information and assistance.

### **15.5 Partnership Decisions**

15.5.1 All Partners aim to deal with individual enquiries at the initial point of contact including correspondence from Members of Parliament. Where necessary the Partners may meet to agree an appropriate response or decision(s). The Lincs Homefinder Partnership will meet on a regular basis to consider the following:

- Requests for Reviews (once Partner has undertaken initial review)
- To award a Local Connection to whole partnership area, in exceptional circumstances,
- All other exceptional cases that warrant consideration.

### **15.6 Policy Review**

15.6.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3yrs, or earlier if required, to ensure it:

- a) meets legal requirements and is consistent with of related policies and strategies
- b) meets Partner's needs and addresses local housing needs
- c) achieves its objectives

- 15.6.2 Each partner is responsible for ensuring all allocations within their organisation are made in accordance with this agreed Policy. The Partnership Board, consisting of senior managers and Members will monitor the overall partnership, performance and effectiveness.
- 15.6.3 The Partnership will consult with a wide range of stakeholders including existing and potential applicants on any proposed major changes to this Lettings Scheme and the implications of such changes.

## Glossary of Terms

Term	Explanation
ADHAC	Agricultural Dwelling House Advisory Committee
ASBO	Anti-Social Behaviour Order
Adequately Housed	Living in a property that is suitable for your needs
Applicant(s)	A person(s), submitting an application, or member of household
Application	Form to be included in the scheme and considered for housing
Area	Within the district boundaries of City of Lincoln and North Kesteven
Banding	How applicants are prioritised in the scheme
Bid	Process stating which vacancy they are interested in
CBL	Choice Based Lettings
Complaints Procedure	What is a complaint, how to make a complaint and how it will be dealt with
Council	City of Lincoln Council or North Kesteven District Council
Household	Individuals with intention of living together
Housing Related Debt	Works for which tenants are responsible, current or former rent arrears, rent advance/deposits payments, all other repayable payments
No Fixed Abode (NFA)	You have no fixed accommodation. Applicants who claim that they are of no fixed abode have to satisfy the Partnership that they genuinely have no settled accommodation and are living at various locations for very short period of time.
Lincs Homefinder Panel	Group of representatives from each Partner organisation that consider exceptional cases with implications for all Partners
Lincs Homefinder Partnership	Group of senior Officers and Councillors/Board Members from each Partner organisation, to monitor the performance and effectiveness of the Lincs Homefinder Scheme
Partner	A member organisation of this Scheme
Partnership	Organisations listed at <i>Section 1.1</i>
Policy	This Lincs Homefinder Choice Based Lettings Policy
Registration	Method of applying for housing
Registered Provider	An organisation that lets social housing
Repayment Agreement	An agreement made between landlords and applicants to repay and reduce housing related debts
Rough Sleepers	Those sleeping, about to bed down or actually bedded down in the open air or those in buildings (or other places) not designed for habitation
Stakeholders	Other agencies/organisations with an interest or involvement in the scheme or individual applications

LINCS HOMEFINDER – PRIORITY BANDINGS

Ref	Band 1 Criteria	Assessment/Evidence
1.1	Immediate and Significant Medical – Permanent condition and unable to continue to reside in current home	Appropriate support from medical professional
1.2	Urgent Welfare Need - unable to remain in current accommodation	Support from relevant agencies
1.3	Succeeded to a tenancy but current home not suitable	Confirmation from Partner Tenancy/Neighbourhood Services
1.4	Social housing tenants, within partnership area, under-occupying by 2 bedrooms, and would leave vacant possession	Home visit
1.5	Approved ADHAC cases	Determination from ADHAC (North Kesteven cases only)
1.6	Urgent Disrepair - inc. but not limited to compulsory purchase order, Prohibition Order or emergency prohibition order (not due to willful neglect/damage)	Determined by a Partner housing standards officer or equivalent
1.7	Statutory overcrowding	Confirmation of household and property size, may require a home visit
1.8	Homeless households – unintentionally homeless and in priority need (full housing duty)	s184 letter by Partner
1.9	Occupying supported accommodation, for more than 3months, with a notice and confirmation to move on to more independent living	Appropriate confirmation from supported accommodation provider

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Band 2 Criteria</b>	<b>Assessment/Evidence</b>
2.1	Homeless Relief Duty Accepted AND in temporary Accommodation, inc those homeless at home	Decision by Partner
2.2	Urgent Medical Need - urgent need associated with alleviating or significantly improving condition	Medical self-assessment, supporting prescriptions, other support by medical professional
2.3	Formal discharge notice of leaving the Armed Forces	Applicants will have to have participated in Options Interview with Partner and provided notice
2.4	Family living separately - who have previously lived together but current housing circumstances do not enable	Evidence of previously living together
2.5	Serious disrepair – Category 1 hazard (not due to wilful damage or neglect)	Determined by a housing standards officer or equivalent
2.6	Applicant(s) WITH dependant children/pregnant lacking access to essential facilities or sharing with a household not moving	
2.7	Applicant(s) lacking a least 1 bedroom, with permanent residency or medical need for additional bedroom	Evidence of household & current accommodation. Regular overnight access is not applicable see B3
2.8	Financial Difficulties – that could be alleviated by moving, but not due to own deliberate act	Income and essential expenditure assessment
2.9	Applicants subject to NKDC Flexi-secure tenancy review by a Partner – whilst adequately housed have a need to move to more suitable accommodation	Confirmation from Partner Tenancy/Neighbourhood Services
2.10	Social housing tenants under-occupying by 1 bedroom, leaving vacant possession	Confirmation from Partner Tenancy/Neighbourhood Services

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Band 3 Criteria</b>	<b>Assessment/Evidence</b>
3.1	Homeless Relief Duty Accepted and Not in Temporary Accommodation	As determined by Partner
3.2	Households at risk of homelessness and subject to prevention duty by a Partner	As determined by Partner
3.3	Medical Need – confirmed medical condition that would be improved by move to alternative accommodation	Medical self-assessment, supporting prescriptions, other support by medical professional
3.4	Households with NO dependant children lacking access to essential facilities or sharing them with household no moving	Confirmation of household and property size, maybe home visit
3.5	Welfare Need – to provide or receive support, for isolated due to lack of transport	Support from relevant agency
3.6	Lacking 1 bedroom – inc those with regular overnight access	Require confirmation of access from main guardian
3.7	Employment – to improve access to current permanent employment	Employment confirmation
3.8	Moderate disrepair - likely to be assessed as at least 1 Category 2 hazard by a Housing Standards officer (not due to willful damage/neglect)	Determined by a housing standards officer or equivalent

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Band 4 Criteria</b>	<b>Assessment/Evidence</b>
4.1	Adequately housed	No evidence of priority as detailed above
4.2	Intentionally Homeless – both priority and non-priority need, but otherwise meets eligibility criteria and not considered a non-qualifying person	As determined by Partner
4.3	In housing need but deliberately worsened their circumstances, time limited for 6months from effective banding date	As determined by Partner
4.4	In housing need but have made 2 unreasonable refusals of offer, time limited for 6months from last unreasonable refusal	As determined by Partner
4.5	In housing need but considered financially able to resolve their housing needs	As determined by Partner

## Appendix C

### Property Eligibility – City of Lincoln

Please note that eligibility WILL differ between partners and landlords, **please check** individual vacancy adverts for full eligibility criteria for individual properties. A child is 17 or under for the purposes of this Lettings Policy and whom permanently resides with the applicant on a full time basis.

If the household has no under 18s permanently full time living with the applicant they are not entitled to a house and instead normally only be considered for a flat

<b>Property Types:</b> Bedsits, Flats, Maisonette, and Houses	Bedsit	Flat	House	Flat	Maisonette	House	Flat	Maisonette	House	House	House	House
<b>No of Bedrooms</b>	<b>1</b>			<b>2</b>			<b>3</b>			<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
Single person	Y	Y	Y									
couple		Y	Y									
Single/couple pregnant				Y	Y	Y						
Single/couple no children but access to children		Y	Y									
Household with 1 child				Y	Y	Y						
Household with 2 children same gender;												
• both under 18				Y	Y	Y						
• one under 18 and one over 18							Y	Y	Y			
• Both over 18							Y	Y				
Households with 2 children different genders;												
• both under 10				Y	Y	Y						
• one under 10 and one over 10							Y	Y	Y			
• both over 10							Y	Y	Y			
Households with 3 children							Y	Y	Y			
Households with 4 children							Y	Y	Y	Y		
Households with 5 children										Y	Y	
Households with 6 children or more										Y	Y	Y
Sharing adults (not partners) or families with adult children				Y	Y							
2 people (2 adults or single person +adult child)				Y	Y							
-3 people (couple + 1 adult child)				Y	Y							
-3 people (single person + 2 adult children)							Y	Y				
-4 people (couple + 2 adult children)							Y	Y				
-4 people (single person + 3 adult children)							Y	Y				



<b>Bedroom</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>3</b>	
<b>Property Type</b>	<b>Bungalow</b>	<b>Ground floor flat</b>	<b>Bungalow</b>	<b>Ground floor flat</b>	<b>Bungalow</b>	<b>Ground floor flat</b>
Single/couple aged 18-59 with medical need	Y	Y				
Couple with medical need for ground floor and a need for an extra bedroom			Y	Y		
Single/couple aged 18-59 with no medical need						
Single/couple aged 60+	Y	Y				
Families with medical needs			Y	Y	Y	Y

## Appendix D

### Property Eligibility – North Kesteven

Please note that eligibility WILL differ between partners and landlords, **please check** individual vacancy adverts for full eligibility criteria for individual properties. A child is 17 or under for the purposes of this Lettings Policy and whom permanently resides with the applicant on a full time basis.

If the household has no under 18s permanently full time living with the applicant they are not entitled to a house and instead normally only be considered for a flat.

Those households that are not permanently occupying all bedrooms will be subject to affordability assessments.

<b>Property Types:</b> Bedsits, Flats, Maisonette, and Houses	Bedsit	Flat	House	Flat	Maisonette	House	Flat	Maisonette	House	House	House	House
<b>No of Bedrooms</b>	<b>1</b>			<b>2</b>			<b>3</b>			<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
Single person	Y	Y	Y	Y								
Couple		Y	Y	Y	Y							
Single/couple - pregnant				Y	Y	Y						
Single/couple - no children but access to children		Y	Y	Y	Y							
Household with 1 child				Y	Y	Y						
Household with 2 children same gender:												
• both under 18				Y	Y	Y						
• one under 18 and one over 18				Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
• Both over 18				Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				
Households with 2 children different genders:												
• both under 10				Y	Y	Y						
• one under 10 and one over 10							Y	Y	Y			
• both over 10							Y	Y	Y			
Households with 3 children							Y	Y	Y			
Households with 4 children							Y	Y	Y	Y		
Households with 5 children										Y	Y	
Households with 6+ children										Y	Y	Y
Sharing adults (not partners) or families with adult children;				Y	Y							
2 people (2 adults or single person +adult child)				Y	Y							
-3 people (couple + 1 adult child)				Y	Y							
-3 people (single person + 2 adult children)							Y	Y				
-4 people (couple + 2 adult children)							Y	Y				
-4 people (single person + 3 adult children)							Y	Y				

Property Type	Bungalow	Ground floor flat	Bungalow	Ground floor flat	Bungalow	Ground floor flat
<b>No of Bedrooms</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>3</b>	
Single/couple aged 18-59 with medical need for Ground floor		Y				
Single/couple aged 18-59 with specific need for bungalow	Y	Y				
Couple with medical need for ground floor and a need for an extra bedroom				Y		
Couple with specific need for bungalow and a need for an extra bedroom			Y	Y		
Single/couple aged 18-59 with no medical need (but will rank lower than those who need ground floor)		Y				
Single/couple aged 60+	Y	Y				
Families with medical need for ground floor				Y		Y
Families with no ground floor need (but will rank lower than those who need ground floor)				Y		Y
Families with specific need for bungalow			Y	Y	Y	Y
Group with at least 1 aged 60+			Y	Y	Y	Y
Group all aged under 60 with ground floor need				Y		Y
Group all aged under 60 with specific need for bungalow			Y	Y	Y	Y
Group all aged under 60 with no ground floor need (but will rank lower than those who need ground floor)				Y		Y

## PARTNER CONTACTS FOR COMPLAINTS

### **City of Lincoln Council**

Post: City of Lincoln Council, City Hall, Beaumont Fee, Lincoln, LN1 1DD  
Email: [housing@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:housing@lincoln.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01522 881188

### **North Kesteven District Council**

Post: Complaints Officer at FREEPOST NKDC  
Email: [Complaints@n-kesteven.gov.uk](mailto:Complaints@n-kesteven.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01529 414155 or 01522 699699