

Appendix 2: Proposed amendments to the Common Housing Allocation Scheme

Para	Amendment	Current text	Amended text	Impact
	Change all references from NHDC to NHC throughout document			None.
3	Update figures on social housing stock in the district	There are over 9,000 general needs properties for rent (see Annex A) and over 30 sheltered housing/Retirement Living projects (see Annex B) spread throughout the district.	There are over 9,000 general needs properties for rent (see Annex A) and almost 30 sheltered housing/retirement living schemes (see Annex B) spread throughout the district.	None.
5.4	Update text to reflect new national arrangements for low cost home ownership schemes	Those subject to immigration control are not restricted from accessing affordable home ownership schemes provided that they are unable to afford suitable accommodation on the open market and can secure a mortgage. Applicants who are ineligible for social housing due to their immigration status who wish to be considered for such schemes should contact the Help to Buy Agent for the East and South East of England.	Those subject to immigration control are not restricted from accessing affordable home ownership schemes provided that they are unable to afford suitable accommodation on the open market and can secure a mortgage. Applicants should visit the government's Own Your Home website for further information about available schemes and eligibility.	None.
5.5 (7 th bullet point)	<u>Refine qualification criteria</u> to ensure social housing is prioritised for those most in need (detail is provided at paragraph 5.5.5)	An applicant will not qualify for inclusion on the Common Housing Register...in the following circumstances:	An applicant will not qualify for inclusion on the Common Housing Register...in the following circumstances:	See comments against para 5.5.5.
5.5 (final bullet point)	<i>Remove this qualification criterion</i> as now covered by changes to para 5.5.5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the applicant does not have a housing need (see section 17); or the applicant does not have a local connection (unless they are social housing tenants in England and need to move within or into North Hertfordshire for work related reasons or they require sheltered housing/Retirement Living) (see paragraphs 17.3 and 18.1); or the applicant or a member of his/her household has been convicted of anti-social behaviour or certain types of crime (see paragraph 5.5.1); or the applicant or a member of his/her household is facing legal action for anti-social behaviour or certain types of crime (see paragraph 5.5.1); or the applicant has an outstanding current housing debt or outstanding debt from a former tenancy for which repayment arrangements are not in place (see paragraphs 5.5.2 and 5.5.3); or the applicant or a member of his/her household has been evicted from social housing (see paragraph 5.5.4); or the applicant has sufficient resources to buy a suitable home on the open market (see paragraph 5.5.5); or the applicant has made a fraudulent application to the Common Housing Register (see paragraph 5.5.6); or <i>the gross income of the household exceeds £60,000 per annum unless there are exceptional circumstances.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the applicant does not have a housing need (see section 17); or the applicant does not have a local connection (unless they are social housing tenants in England and need to move within or into North Hertfordshire for work related reasons or they require sheltered housing/Retirement Living) (see paragraphs 17.3 and 18.1); or the applicant or a member of his/her household has been convicted of anti-social behaviour or certain types of crime (see paragraph 5.5.1); or the applicant or a member of his/her household is facing legal action for anti-social behaviour or certain types of crime (see paragraph 5.5.1); or the applicant has an outstanding current housing debt or outstanding debt from a former tenancy for which repayment arrangements are not in place (see paragraphs 5.5.2 and 5.5.3); or the applicant or a member of his/her household has been evicted from social housing (see paragraph 5.5.4); or <u>the household has sufficient resources to meet their own housing need (see paragraph 5.5.5); or</u> the applicant has made a fraudulent application to the Common Housing Register (see paragraph 5.5.6). 	See comments against para 5.5.5.
5.5.1	<u>Additional text</u> to clarify existing practice.	<p>The Partnership will consider a fresh application to the Common Housing Register from any applicant refused access to the Common Housing Register on grounds of anti-social behaviour if the person responsible for the anti-social behaviour/crime has lived in the community for three years with no further convictions of this type, or when their convictions are spent, whichever is the sooner (see Annex C).</p> <p>Applicants who do not qualify for inclusion on the Common Housing Register will be notified of the decision and the reasons</p>	<p>The Partnership will consider a fresh application to the Common Housing Register from any applicant refused access to the Common Housing Register on grounds of anti-social behaviour if the person responsible for the anti-social behaviour/crime has lived in the community for three years with no further convictions of this type, or when their convictions are spent, whichever is the sooner (see Annex C).</p> <p><u>Any household can be removed from the Housing Register for unacceptable behaviour.</u></p>	None, clarifies existing practice.

		for it in writing. The applicant has a right to request a review of such a decision (see paragraph 14).	Applicants who do not qualify for inclusion on the Common Housing Register will be notified of the decision and the reasons for it in writing. The applicant has a right to request a review of such a decision (see paragraph 14).	
5.5.2 (3 rd bullet point)	<i>Remove bullet point as Deposit Guarantee Scheme no longer in operation</i>	A housing debt is a debt related to a current or previous tenancy owed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a social landlord; or a private rented sector landlord; or <i>NHDC resulting from claims against the NHDC Deposit Guarantee Scheme; or</i> an agency that has provided a loan as a result of a referral by NHDC for the purpose of preventing homelessness. Housing debts include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> current or former tenant/licensee rent/charge arrears in respect of a dwelling; Mesne profits owed by tolerated trespassers; court costs incurred through proceedings in relation to breach of tenancy, including anti-social behaviour and rent arrears. Court costs incurred through proceedings relating to the applicant's occupation of his/her home or former home will be considered according to individual circumstances; charges for repair of damage to a dwelling that the occupier is liable for; <i>claims from a private landlord against a deposit guaranteed by NHDC;</i> loans from agencies that were enabled by NHDC for the purpose of preventing homelessness where repayments have not been maintained. 	A housing debt is a debt related to a current or previous tenancy owed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a social landlord; or a private rented sector landlord; or an agency that has provided a loan as a result of a referral by NHDC for the purpose of preventing homelessness. Housing debts include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> current or former tenant/licensee rent/charge arrears in respect of a dwelling; Mesne profits <u>and use and occupation charges</u> owed by tolerated trespassers; court costs incurred through proceedings in relation to breach of tenancy, including anti-social behaviour and rent arrears. Court costs incurred through proceedings relating to the applicant's occupation of his/her home or former home will be considered according to individual circumstances; charges for repair of damage to a dwelling that the occupier is liable for; loans from agencies that were enabled by NHDC for the purpose of preventing homelessness where repayments have not been maintained. 	None.
5.5.2 (6 th bullet point)	<u>Additional text</u> to include use and occupation charges as housing debt			Ensures those with use and occupation charges are held accountable when applying for social housing. A very limited number of households may no longer qualify for the Common Housing Register (CHR).
5.5.2 (penultimate bullet point)	<i>Remove bullet point as Deposit Guarantee Scheme no longer in operation</i>			None.
5.5.5	Change to qualification criteria. Assessment of applicants' financial means to meet their own housing needs refined and updated to include new income thresholds and a savings cap, above which households will not qualify for the CHR.	<i>Applicants with sufficient financial resources to purchase accommodation that meets their housing need</i> Applicants who can meet their own housing need by buying a suitable property on the open market, with or without a mortgage, will not qualify for inclusion on the Common Housing Register. Resources include affordable loans, income, equity and capital.	<i>The household has sufficient resources to meet their own housing need</i> Households who have sufficient resources to resolve their own housing need either by renting or buying a suitable property (on the open market or through a low cost home ownership scheme) or by any other means will not qualify for inclusion on the Common Housing Register. A household will be deemed to have sufficient resources if they have in excess of the gross annual household income limits set out as follows: 1 bedroom/studio property: £39,000 2 bedroom property: £50,000 3+ bedroom property: £64,000 A household with savings above the cap set by the Department for Work and Pensions for claiming Housing Benefit (currently £16,000) will also be deemed to have sufficient resources. The savings cap will not apply to households requiring sheltered housing – RM/ML to confirm Our assessment of resources will also take into account affordable loans, investment income, equity and capital, amongst others.	Ensures that scarce social housing is prioritised for those most in need. Some households may no longer qualify for the CHR. All households will be re-assessed to determine whether they have sufficient resources; it is estimated that around 1 in 15 households currently on the CHR may be removed as a result of the proposed change to this qualification criterion. These changes have been consulted on, with the majority of respondents in favour of the proposal.

			<p>Please note that our assessment of resources will disregard any sum received by a member of the Armed Forces as compensation for an injury or disability sustained on active service.</p> <p>Applicants who do not qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register will be informed of the decision and the reasons for it in writing. Such applicants have a right to request a review of the decision (see paragraph 14).</p>	
5.6	Update text to reflect current practice.	A guarantor may be required by social landlords when offering a tenancy to a person under the age of 18. Where a tenancy is to be offered by a member of the NHHP and there is no guarantor available to the applicant, senior officers of the Partnership will make a decision on whether an allocation can be made without a guarantor.	Applicants under the age of 18 can apply to the Common Housing Register however, will not qualify for an allocation of social housing until over the age of 18 years old.	None, clarifies existing practice.
5.7	<p>Change to qualification criteria. Remove qualification for homeowners requiring general needs housing.</p>	<p>Home owners (including those owning a share in a property) with a housing need will be accepted onto the Housing Register provided they have insufficient resources to resolve their housing need (see paragraph 5.5.5) and;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it is unreasonable to continue to occupy their current accommodation; and • it is not possible to adapt their current accommodation to meet their needs after taking into account the affordability and practicality of any necessary measures; and • they have insufficient resources to purchase a suitable property in North Herts; or • they have insufficient resources to purchase suitable accommodation in the local authority area in which they currently live and there is a compelling reason why they need to move into North Herts. <p>When making a decision on whether it is reasonable for the household to continue to occupy the accommodation the following will be taken into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether the accommodation and amenities within it are accessible to all members of the household; • affordability – taking into consideration any equity in the property, any other properties owned by members of the household and the availability of government supported schemes such as Support for Mortgage Interest; • the physical condition of the property; • the probability that the continued occupation of the property will result in violence or threats of violence that are likely to be carried out against applicant or a member of their household; • whether the property is overcrowded to the extent that it is unreasonable for the household to continue to occupy it; • any other reason that would make it unreasonable for the household to continue occupy their present accommodation. <p>Where it is unreasonable for the household to continue to occupy their property, they will be awarded preference according to their housing need.</p>	<p>Home owners requiring general needs accommodation (including those owning a share in a property) will not qualify for inclusion on the Common Housing Register.</p> <p>Home owners who either have exceptional difficulties or who are applying for sheltered housing/Retirement Living may qualify provided they have insufficient resources to resolve their own housing need (see paragraph 5.5.5). The property must be on the market for sale before taking up a social housing tenancy.</p> <p>Where a tenancy is granted to a person who owns a property it will be an assured shorthold tenancy with a fixed term of 6 months. The tenancy may be brought to an end if the applicant does not take reasonable steps to sell their property.</p> <p>Once the Partnership is satisfied that the applicant no longer has an interest in their former, market property the tenancy will be converted to a social tenancy.</p>	<p>Numerous applications are received from households with interest in properties with significant equity and therefore able to resolve their own housing need for example by purchasing shared ownership or renting in the private sector. This proposal will help ensure that scarce social housing is prioritised for those in most need.</p> <p>A very limited number of households currently on the CHR may no longer qualify; expected to be around 10 households.</p> <p>These changes have been consulted on, with the majority of respondents in favour of the proposal.</p>

		<p>Home owners accepted onto the Common Housing Register are required to take all reasonable steps to complete the sale of their property before taking up a social housing tenancy. Where the NHHP is satisfied that, despite making all reasonable efforts, including reducing the price, this has not been possible, the applicant will be required to undertake to bring their interest in the property to an end as soon as possible after being granted a tenancy and to keep the NHHP informed on their progress in doing so.</p> <p>Home owners who either have exceptional difficulties or who are applying for sheltered housing/Retirement Living may not be required to have taken all reasonable steps to have completed the sale of their property before taking up a social housing tenancy.</p> <p>Where a tenancy is granted to a person who owns a property it will be an assured shorthold tenancy with a fixed term of 6 months. The tenancy may be brought to an end if the applicant does not take reasonable steps to sell their property.</p> <p>Once the Partnership is satisfied that the applicant no longer has an interest in their former, market property the tenancy will be converted to a social tenancy.</p>		
6 (4 th para)	Remove reference, in line with current practice.	Bids made by an applicant's representative, (who may be an NHHP officer), will be accepted provided the NHHP has the written consent of the applicant.		None, clarifies existing practice.
6.1	<i>Remove reference</i> to obtaining written consent, in line with current practice.	<p>Support for potentially disadvantaged applicants</p> <p>Choice based lettings require applicants to actively participate in choosing their accommodation. Some applicants may find such participation more difficult than others. Assistance in making an application and with making bids will be provided, free of charge, to ensure that such applicants are not at a disadvantage.</p> <p>Assistance will be provided at an appropriate level to the applicant's needs by NHHP officers and/or statutory and voluntary support and advice agencies. This may include bids being made on behalf of the applicant <i>where the NHHP has the applicant's written permission to accept/make such bids.</i></p>	<p>Support for potentially disadvantaged applicants</p> <p>Choice based lettings require applicants to actively participate in choosing their accommodation. Some applicants may find such participation more difficult than others. Assistance in making an application and with making bids will be provided, free of charge, to ensure that such applicants are not at a disadvantage.</p> <p>Assistance will be provided at an appropriate level to the applicant's needs by NHHP officers and/or statutory and voluntary support and advice agencies. This may include bids being made on behalf of the applicant.</p>	None, clarifies existing practice.
8	<u>Additional text</u> to reflect changes at 17.1.9 which removes preference for those sharing facilities with other households with whom a tenancy is jointly held.	<p>PROPERTY SIZE</p> <p>For the purpose of awarding preference on the Housing Register, households will qualify for one bedroom for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • every adult couple (married or unmarried); • any other adult aged 16 or over; • any two children of the same sex aged under 16; • any two children aged under 10; • a foster child; • any other child, (other than a child whose main home is elsewhere); • a carer (or team of carers) who does not live with the household but who provides permanent full-time overnight care for a member of the household. Supporting documentation will be required from Hertfordshire County Council care services. 	<p>PROPERTY SIZE</p> <p>For the purpose of awarding preference on the Housing Register, households will qualify for one bedroom for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • every adult couple (married or unmarried); • any other adult aged 16 or over; • any two children of the same sex aged under 16; • any two children aged under 10; • a foster child; • any other child, (other than a child whose main home is elsewhere); • a carer (or team of carers) who does not live with the household but who provides permanent full-time overnight care for a member of the household. Supporting documentation will be required from Hertfordshire County Council care services. 	See changes at 17.1.9.

			Where an applicant is sharing facilities with another person not included in their application and both parties have a legal right to reside in the property (i.e. are joint tenants), they will be awarded priority as though they have sole use of the property. Therefore, lacking bedroom priority will not be awarded for themselves or their household unless they would usually be deemed to be lacking a bedroom in accordance to the criteria above.	
8.1	<u>Additional text</u> to clarify difference in care needs.	The majority of units in sheltered housing/Retirement Living are self-contained one bedroom flats suitable for either couples or single applicants or studio flats which are only suitable for single person households. Such housing is available for single or couple households that include a person aged 55 or over with a support need.	The majority of units in sheltered housing/Retirement Living are self-contained one bedroom flats suitable for either couples or single applicants or studio flats which are only suitable for single person households. Such housing is available for single or couple households that include a person aged 55 or over with a low level support need. <u>Those with a high level support need and requiring flexi care accommodation will be assessed and allocated outside of this policy.</u>	None.
17.1.2	Change to preference. Remove under-occupying preference for those in sheltered/retirement living	<i>Living in accommodation that is too big for the household</i> A household will be deemed to live in unsuitable housing if they are tenants of social housing within the district who are under-occupying. Preference will be awarded where applicants are in properties with two or three bedrooms and are willing to move to a one-bedroom property; or living in four or five bedroom properties or three bedroom properties with two self-contained reception rooms who are willing to move to a smaller property. In these circumstances, households will be considered for properties that are larger than the household would normally qualify for under the terms of the Common Allocation Scheme (see paragraph 8).	<i>Living in accommodation that is too big for the household</i> A household will be deemed to live in unsuitable housing if they are tenants of social housing within the district who are under-occupying. Preference will be awarded where applicants are in properties with two or three bedrooms (with the exception of sheltered/retirement living) and are willing to move to a one-bedroom property; or living in four or five bedroom properties or three bedroom properties with two self-contained reception rooms who are willing to move to a smaller property. In these circumstances, households will be considered for properties that are larger than the household would normally qualify for under the terms of the Common Allocation Scheme (see paragraph 8).	Very limited, clarifies existing practice. This preference is no longer awarded to households in sheltered accommodation. These changes have been consulted on, with the majority of respondents in favour of the proposal.
17.1.3	Measurements in square metre equivalent added to table	Less than 48 sq ft 48 to 50 sq ft 50 to 70 sq ft 70 to 90 sq ft 90 to 110 sq ft 110 sq ft or over	Less than 48 sq ft (4.5 sq m) 48 to 50 sq ft (4.5 to 4.6 sq m) 50 to 70 sq ft (4.6 to 6.5 sq m) 70 to 90 sq ft (6.5 to 8.4 sq m) 90 to 110 sq ft (8.4 to 10.2 sq m) 110 sq ft or over (10.2 sq m)	None.
17.1.7	Change to preference. Remove preference for those with children living in accommodation that is above ground floor and/or without access to secure garden	<i>Living in accommodation with children under the age of six that is above the ground floor and/or children under the age of 11 without access to a secure garden</i>		This is seeking to ensure that scarce social housing is prioritised for those most in need. Most applicants awarded these preferences will also have other housing needs e.g. requiring another bedroom and therefore only a small number of households currently on the CHR (estimated to be around 70) would be assessed as no longer having a housing need and therefore removed from the CHR. The vast majority of these are existing social housing tenants.

				In addition, just under 300 households on the CHR will lose housing needs points for this preference. These changes have been consulted on, with the majority of respondents in favour of the proposal.
17.1.9	Change to preference. Revise to exclude applicants who are sharing with another household with whom they have a joint tenancy (typically being ex-partners).	<i>Households sharing facilities with other households</i> This applies where the applicant and his household share facilities with others who are not included in their application.	<i>Households sharing facilities with other households</i> This applies where the applicant and his/her household share facilities with others who are not included in their application. However, this priority shall not be awarded where the applicant or household have a legal right to reside in the property i.e. joint tenants.	Again, this will ensure scarce social housing is prioritised for those most in need. Joint tenants should seek legal resolution to their housing situation. Separate robust processes are in place to ensure safeguarding issues are fully considered, including support for those at risk of/suffering domestic abuse. A very limited number of households (estimated at less than 10) may be removed from the CHR if this is their only housing need. These changes have been consulted on, with the majority of respondents in favour of the proposal.
17.2.1 (2 nd para)	Remove reference to lacking garden as per proposed change to 17.1.7	Where a household is deemed to have a medical need for moving, medical priority will be awarded in addition to any already recognised housing need. For instance, a household that lacks a garden for a child under the age of 11 years is placed in Band C. Should a member of the household be deemed to have a medical need for a garden, the appropriate medical preference will be also awarded to the household. An exception may apply to applicants who are vulnerable due to a medical need (see paragraph 17.2.6).	Where a household is deemed to have a medical need for moving, medical priority will be awarded in addition to any already recognised housing need. For instance, a household that requires sheltered/retirement living is placed in Band C. Should a member of the household be deemed to have a medical need for this type of accommodation, the appropriate medical preference will be also awarded to the household. An exception may apply to applicants who are vulnerable due to a medical need (see paragraph 17.2.6).	None.
17.2.3 (2 nd bullet point)	Clarify wording around award of medical priority.	High medical priority will be granted in circumstances whereby: ... • the applicant's continued occupation of their current property is likely to cause a significant deterioration to their health or the health of a member of the household.	High medical priority will be granted in circumstances whereby: ... • the applicant's continued occupation of their current property will cause a significant deterioration to their health or the health of a member of the household.	None, clarifies existing practice.
17.2.4 (2 nd bullet point)	Clarify wording around award of medical priority.	Moderate medical priority will be awarded in circumstances whereby: ... • the applicant's continued occupation of their current property is likely to cause deterioration to their health or the health of a member of their household.	Moderate medical priority will be awarded in circumstances whereby: ... • the applicant's continued occupation of their current property will cause deterioration to their health or the health of a member of their household.	None, clarifies existing practice.
17.2.7	<u>Additional text</u> to clarify level of support need for sheltered housing.	<i>The household includes an applicant aged over 55 and requires sheltered housing/Retirement Living</i> Sheltered housing/Retirement Living is available to single applicants aged over 55 or couples in which one of the	<i>The household includes an applicant aged over 55 and requires sheltered housing/Retirement Living</i> Sheltered housing/Retirement Living is available to single applicants aged over 55 or couples in which one of the	None, clarifies existing practice.

17.2.7	<u>Additional text</u> to accompany changes to paragraph 5.7.	applicants is over the age of 55. To qualify, the applicant must have a support need that can be met in sheltered housing/Retirement Living.	applicants is over the age of 55. To qualify, the applicant must have a <u>low level</u> support need that can be met in sheltered housing/Retirement Living. <u>Those who are home owners (and without sufficient resources to resolve their housing needs) will be placed in Band C but will not be awarded any other preference until such time as they have brought their interest in the property to an end.[also those over savings cap – or exceptional circs?] – RM to discuss with team and confirm with ML and Sean/Dave</u>	Allows home owners requiring sheltered accommodation to qualify for the CHR (para 5.7) but effectively limits chances of successfully bidding on any properties bar hard to let ones.
19.1 (5 th bullet point)	Delete this provision to ensure consistency with provisions in paragraph 20 (cumulative need)	High preference will be awarded where applicants or a member of their household: ... • a senior officer of the NHHP has decided that a household has cumulative housing needs so great as to necessitate an urgent move;		This will provide consistency with provisions in paragraph 20.
19.2 (2 nd bullet point)	Revise from Band B preference to Band C to reflect current practice.	Medium preference will be awarded where: ... • the applicant needs to move and is vulnerable and cannot be expected to find their own accommodation and there is no other person in the household who could be expected to do so on their behalf.		Very limited, if at all. In practice, this preference is only used for care leavers, for whom separate provisions are already in place at paragraph 5.12. Other vulnerable applicants who cannot find their own accommodation as defined at paragraph 17.2.6 would not yet be in a position to manage their own tenancy so a Band B preference (which would potentially put them close to securing a home) would not be suitable for them.
19.3	<u>Additional text</u> in line with changes at 19.2 above, to be added to bulleted list	Low preference will be awarded where: • a household with no dependent children or vulnerable adults is sharing facilities with another household; • a household is owed a duty, other than the main housing duty, by NHDC under homelessness legislation; • a household has been accepted as unintentionally homeless and in priority need and placed in supported accommodation by NHDC but is not yet ready to move into general needs housing; • a household that has been accepted as homeless or threatened with homelessness and in priority need by any local housing authority other than North Hertfordshire District Council; • a household is owed a main housing duty by NHDC under homelessness legislation but does not meet the qualifying criteria for joining the CHR; • the applicant or a member of his or her household has been awarded moderate medical priority; • there is a need to move to provide care to a person who has a moderate medical priority because of a permanent medical condition or a disability or such a person needs to move to receive care and other remedies have been investigated and eliminated;	Low preference will be awarded where: • a household with no dependent children or vulnerable adults is sharing facilities with another household; • a household is owed a duty, other than the main housing duty, by NHDC under homelessness legislation; • a household has been accepted as unintentionally homeless and in priority need and placed in supported accommodation by NHDC but is not yet ready to move into general needs housing; • a household that has been accepted as homeless or threatened with homelessness and in priority need by any local housing authority other than North Hertfordshire District Council; • a household is owed a main housing duty by NHDC under homelessness legislation but does not meet the qualifying criteria for joining the CHR; • the applicant or a member of his or her household has been awarded moderate medical priority; • there is a need to move to provide care to a person who has a moderate medical priority because of a permanent medical condition or a disability or such a person needs to move to receive care and other remedies have been investigated and eliminated;	As above.
19.3 (11 th and 12 th bullet points)	<u>Remove</u> in line with changes to preference at 17.1.7			See comments against para 17.1.7.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the household does not include children or vulnerable adults and they require another bedroom under the terms of the Common Housing Allocation Scheme; the household is occupying a property in which a bedroom is too small; single person households who have lived in a bed-sit or studio flat for three years within the district, as tenants, and wish to move to a one bedroom flat; <i>children under the age of 6 or pregnant women are living in flats above the ground floor;</i> <i>children under the age of 11 who do not have access to a secure garden;</i> there is a need to move to avoid hardship; households are in accommodation with limited security of tenure; the applicant is in an institution and has no suitable accommodation to return to; applicants are over 55 years of age with a support need and require sheltered housing/Retirement Living; looked after children and care leavers aged 16 and 17, in accordance with the Hertfordshire Joint Housing Protocol. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the household does not include children or vulnerable adults and they require another bedroom under the terms of the Common Housing Allocation Scheme; the household is occupying a property in which a bedroom is too small; single person households who have lived in a bed-sit or studio flat for three years within the district, as tenants, and wish to move to a one bedroom flat; there is a need to move to avoid hardship; households are in accommodation with limited security of tenure; the applicant is in an institution and has no suitable accommodation to return to; applicants are over 55 years of age with a support need and require sheltered housing/Retirement Living; looked after children and care leavers aged 16 and 17, in accordance with the Hertfordshire Joint Housing Protocol; <u>the applicant needs to move and is vulnerable and cannot be expected to find their own accommodation and there is no other person in the household who could be expected to do so on their behalf.</u> 	
22 (7 th para)	<u>Additional text</u> to be added to bulleted list of exceptions, to reflect existing affordability checks conducted by housing providers.	<p>OFFERS OF ACCOMMODATION</p> <p>Available properties will be advertised and applicants invited to 'bid' for the property of their choice (see paragraph 6). Bidders will be short listed in order of the amount of preference that they have on the Housing Register. A maximum of five applicants, with the highest preference on the Common Housing Register will be invited to view the property. Following the viewing, applicants will be required to confirm whether or not they want to be considered for the property. Of those who wish to be considered, the property will be offered to the applicant with the highest preference on the Register.</p> <p>The type of tenancy offered may vary between social housing providers and, depending on an applicant's circumstances, could range in duration from six months to a lifetime. Further details will be found in providers' tenancy policies.</p>	<p>OFFERS OF ACCOMMODATION</p> <p>Available properties will be advertised and applicants invited to 'bid' for the property of their choice (see paragraph 6). Bidders will be short listed in order of the amount of preference that they have on the Housing Register. A maximum of five applicants, with the highest preference on the Common Housing Register will be invited to view the property. Following the viewing, applicants will be required to confirm whether or not they want to be considered for the property. Of those who wish to be considered, the property will be offered to the applicant with the highest preference on the Register.</p> <p>The type of tenancy offered may vary between social housing providers and, depending on an applicant's circumstances, could range in duration from six months to a lifetime. Further details will be found in providers' tenancy policies.</p>	None, clarifies existing practice.
22 (final para)	<u>Additional text</u> to streamline administrative process. We will no longer write to applicants who do not meet criteria for advertised properties, where those criteria have been clearly specified in the advert.	<p>Applicants who have been offered a property will not be considered for other properties until they have made a decision on the offer. Should an applicant be at the top of more than one shortlist, they will be required to make a decision on which property they prefer.</p> <p>The applicant will have a limited time period to notify the NHHP of whether they will accept an offer.</p> <p>Vulnerable households may be permitted a longer period to decide whether or not to accept a property to allow them time to liaise with support and advice agencies. In these circumstances, the amount of time that the applicant will be given will be made on a case by case basis.</p>	<p>Applicants who have been offered a property will not be considered for other properties until they have made a decision on the offer. Should an applicant be at the top of more than one shortlist, they will be required to make a decision on which property they prefer.</p> <p>The applicant will have a limited time period to notify the NHHP of whether they will accept an offer.</p> <p>Vulnerable households may be permitted a longer period to decide whether or not to accept a property to allow them time to liaise with support and advice agencies. In these circumstances, the amount of time that the applicant will be given will be made on a case by case basis.</p>	This will save staff time.
22	<u>Additional text</u> to protect against fraudulent applications to be added at end.			To reduce the risk of people fraudulently obtaining scarce social housing.

		<p>If the applicant refuses the offer or fails to respond within the given time, the property will be offered to the applicant with the next highest preference on the Common Housing Register. This process will be followed until the property is successfully allocated.</p> <p>An exception to this process will apply where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the allocation is deemed unsuitable because the applicant or a member of their household poses a risk to themselves, individuals or other members of the community which, cannot safely be managed in the available property; the applicant is 16 or 17 years of age and has no guarantor (see paragraph 5.6); the applicant has been assessed as ineligible for an allocation (see paragraph 5.4); the applicant does not qualify for inclusion on the Common Housing Register (see paragraph 5.5) the eligibility criteria for the property is restricted and the applicant does not meet the criteria (see paragraphs 7. to 7.3); the applicant is in supported accommodation and not considered ready to move to general needs accommodation by his/her support provider; or there is another special reason why a particular property cannot be offered to the bidder with the highest preference. <p>In these circumstances, the applicant may be by-passed for an allocation. Where a decision is made to by-pass an applicant for an offer of accommodation due to any of the reasons listed above, the applicant will be notified of the decision and the reasons for it in writing. The applicant may request a review of such a decision (see paragraph 14).</p>	<p>If the applicant refuses the offer or fails to respond within the given time, the property will be offered to the applicant with the next highest preference on the Common Housing Register. This process will be followed until the property is successfully allocated.</p> <p>An exception to this process will apply where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the allocation is deemed unsuitable because the applicant or a member of their household poses a risk to themselves, individuals or other members of the community which, cannot safely be managed in the available property; the applicant is 16 or 17 years of age and has no guarantor (see paragraph 5.6); the applicant has been assessed as ineligible for an allocation (see paragraph 5.4); the applicant does not qualify for inclusion on the Common Housing Register (see paragraph 5.5) the eligibility criteria for the property is restricted and the applicant does not meet the criteria (see paragraphs 7. to 7.3); the applicant is in supported accommodation and not considered ready to move to general needs accommodation by his/her support provider; there is another special reason why a particular property cannot be offered to the bidder with the highest preference; or <u>the applicant fails the affordability check for the property</u> <p>In these circumstances, the applicant may be by-passed for an allocation. Where a decision is made to by-pass an applicant for an offer of accommodation due to any of the reasons listed above, the applicant will be notified of the decision and the reasons for it in writing, <u>unless the criteria for the property has been specified in the advert</u>. The applicant may request a review of such a decision (see paragraph 14).</p> <p><u>Registered applicants under investigation due to potential fraud will be bypassed on vacancy shortlists until the investigation has been completed. The applicant may not request a review of this decision.</u></p>	
23	Update wording as settle no longer have a floating support service.	The NHHP will ensure that vulnerable households are provided with the support they need to sustain their tenancy. Such support may be provided by the NHHP, settle Floating Support Service and/or dedicated support agencies.	The NHHP will ensure that vulnerable households are provided with the support they need to sustain their tenancy. Such support may be provided by the NHHP and/or dedicated support agencies.	None, clarifies existing practice.