



Lancaster City Council

Housing and Property: Council Housing

Equality Impact Assessment: Housing Allocation Policy

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Prepared by:
Effective from
Approved by
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Equality Impact Assessment: Housing Allocation Policy review 2025

Service: Council Housing

Title of Policy: Housing Allocation Policy

Type of Policy: Amendment to existing

Lead Officer: Graeme Milce, Choice Based Lettings Manager

What is the aim of the policy?

To set out the policy and approach to the allocation of residential accommodation from the Council's own stock and from Private Registered Providers of Social Housing (PRPSH) who the Council works in partnership with.

Who is it intended to benefit? Who will it have a detrimental effect on and how?

The policy is relevant to any person seeking social housing in the Lancaster district, from applying to join the housing register, through to assessment of housing need and letting of a Council tenancy. Lancaster City Council operates a choice-based lettings scheme (Ideal Choice Homes) which is the main route into accessing social housing in the district.

Access to decent, safe, affordable housing is important in providing the basis of opportunity for people to play a full part in the community. The policy therefore has a significant impact as it has a direct effect on service users, many of whom are relatively disadvantaged or vulnerable.

There is no direct evidence of discrimination in respect of housing allocations in Lancaster, though it is recognised that the potential for discrimination (either directly or indirectly) exists and is monitored and mitigated as set out in the policy.

A range of personal information is collected on the Housing Application Form, in line with the Council Housing Privacy Notice, and details of application and lettings by each characteristic provide the basis for regular reporting, monitoring and oversight of the operation of the service area.

Does, or could, the policy have a negative impact on the groups below?

Group	Impact (negative, positive/no impact, unclear)
Age	Positive/no impact
Disability	Positive/no impact
Faith, religion or belief	Positive/no impact
Gender including marriage, pregnancy or maternity	Positive/no impact
Gender reassignment	Positive/no impact
Race	Positive/no impact
Sexual orientation (including civil partnerships)	Positive/no impact
Other socially excluded groups such as carers, areas of deprivation, etc	Positive/no impact
Rural communities	Positive/no impact



Who has been consulted with?

As part of the Allocation Policy review 2025 consultation has taken place with a range of stakeholders including waiting list applicants, tenants, tenants voice groups, other registered providers of housing, ward Councillors, Probation Service, Community Mental Health Service, Morecambe Bay Health Trust, The Police, Social Care, The Well, Inspire, Strawberry Fields, Positive Futures, CAB, LDHAS, West End Impact, Olive Branch, Morecambe Bay Food Bank, Global Link, local Community Centres, Refugee Advocacy Information and Support, and more.

The consultation consisted of two online consultations and an in-person workshop event. Feedback from consultation has been fully considered and has informed the reviewed policy, and the amendments and changes proposed.

Assessing the impact

Age	It is recognised that different age groups have different housing requirements. Certain groups may be more likely to require some support. IN addition, communication needs differ across age groups.
Disability	Housing options are more limited for applicants who require disabled adaptations. As described below the housing service has policies which ai to support the diverse needs of housing applicants and tenants.
Faith, religion, or belief	No significant impact directly related to this group is known
Gender including marriage, pregnancy or maternity	Expectant parents may experience a change to their housing needs.
Gender reassignment	No significant impact directly related to this group is known
Race	No significant impact directly related to this group is known
Sexual orientation including civil partnership	No significant impact directly related to this group is known
Rural communities	It is recognised that properties in rural locations are limited, whether social housing or in general, which makes support for rural communities challenging. There is low turnover within the small number of rural council dwellings which do not become available to let often.

How does the Council mitigate any potential negative impact?

Age: The Council has a stock of Independent Living Accommodation for those over 60, and bungalow accommodation for over 55's. The application process is designed to make these dwellings available appropriately, and with appropriate support in place to take up and successfully maintain a tenancy.

Disability: The Council has adapted stock for the use of applicants who have disabilities and makes best use of this by making offers to households with matching needs. The lettings team works closely with occupational therapists to ensure an assessment for suitability is carried out before a formal offer of accommodation is made. The Allocations Policy should be read in conjunction with the published Adaptations Policy to fully understand how this process is managed.

Pregnancy and maternity: When information is provided regarding pregnancy a housing application will be re-assessed to amend the housing need of the household. Most commonly this relates to bedroom need and the opportunity to seek rehousing becomes available 12 weeks prior to the pregnant applicant's due date.

Rural Communities: The Council's aim is to support and help preserve rural communities where possible, A limited amount of rural stock is available and the Policy allows for additional priority to be given to applicants who have a rural connection to a village, or the market town of Carnforth.

Communication: The Housing service remains committed to 'in person' communication where preferred or required, however also offers a wide range of other communication methods: by letter, text, email, through social media, through their housing application on the online portal, or via the Council's website.

It is the approach of the service to communicate b the customer's preferred method where possible.

Use of digital systems: In addition to the range of communication methods other mitigations are in place to support applicants where use of digital systems may present a barrier to accessing the allocations and letting process. For example: at application stage, on request an applicant can receive a home visit for assistance to complete the online application form. To express an interest in vacant dwellings advertised online 'auto bidding' is available for applicants who are unable to access or use the online system.

Conclusion

The information available does not identify any direct discrimination in the Council's Housing Allocation Policy, however as details in this EIA there does exist the potential for direct or indirect discrimination.

Along with regular operational report, a quarterly report is provided to the senior management team, and shared with the Housing Portfolio Holder, which considers the data available and reviews the delivery of the policy on an ongoing basis.

In addition, the Housing Allocations Policy Review Group meets quarterly to review and conder delivery of the policy strategically, and to see assurance around the impact of the delivery of the policy.