

Procedure for Allocation of a property
HM PROC 1B @ November 2019

Note: In the case of applicants with disabilities and where timescales are referred to the case should be looked at on an individual basis in order to accommodate advocates or special needs of the applicant concerned.

1. The first step

The Housing Officer (HO) or Housing Assistant (HM) in their absence will allocate the property within 1 working day of receiving the termination of tenancy form. A decision will be made by the HO (in discussion with the Head of housing Services if necessary) using the allocations guide (see end of this document) which group the property should be offered to.

Allocation Guide – which group to allocate to

Group 1: Homeless Referrals & nominations - Homeless / WDC nominations (50% of lets)

Group 2: General List - Under occupancy, Unsuitable Housing, General Needs (45% of lets)

Group 3: Transfers – Under occupancy, Unsuitable Housing, General Needs (5% of lets)

Allocation within groups in order to meet targets

Check the overall percentage/number of lets on the void module. This will offer a general guide as to where we are at with target lets for the year.

Using the void module check the last allocation for the property size. See which group it went to and allocate to the opposite (i.e. if the last allocation went to a Section 5, this one should go to General). The exception to this is where a Section 5 referral has been received in the intervening period and where the house to be re-allocated is suitable, in this instance the allocation should be made to the Section 5.

Please note, if a property is refused the next allocation should go to the same group, i.e. if originally allocated to General all future allocations should go to General. If there are no matches on the original list for subsequent allocations the HO will make a decision as to which group to allocate to in line with the quotas.

The above guide will not work in all circumstances depending on time of year, the number of lets already made and targets. It may be that a specific group requires a number of allocations in succession to be made to it in order to meet targets. Please see the HM if in any doubt about which group to allocate to.

2. If a Council nomination is agreed the following applies:

- Form A should be completed and sent to the Council for a response within 24 hours
- If no nomination is received from the council this is a failed nomination and the Council should be informed of this. It should also be logged in the void module. The property should then be allocated to the CHA list (Proceed to step 4).
- On receipt of the nomination from the Council the HO should check for an existing CHA application. If this exists its waiting list category should be changed on Kypera to reflect the nomination. (Proceed to step 4).
- If no CHA form exists an application form should be filled in by the HO and loaded onto kypera. (Proceed to step 4).
- If the nomination fails to contact or refuses the offer, a second nomination should be requested from the Council via Form C. Their form then has to be cancelled from home team. After two nominations the HO should allocate to the CHA list and notify the Council of this via Form C (Proceed to step 4).

3. For a homeless nomination (Section 5 referral):

If a Homeless Section 5 referral is received the HO complete a CHA application form and input this into Kypera under the Section 5 referral category. The applicant will then be asked to come into the office to sign and complete the remaining sections of the housing application form. If an existing CHA form exists this should be amended to the Section 5 category (Proceed to step 4).

4. Criteria:

In general the applicant with the highest points and then earliest date of application will get the offer of housing. The exception is for adapted properties where the person with the highest and most appropriate medical need will be matched. For homeless referrals only one applicant is matched. Nominations may have 2 referrals if the first nomination fails

5. For allocation the HO should use Kypera as follows:

- Housing – Waiting List – Allocations Wizard (Follow the wizard)
- Input the property reference and click next
- Confirm the waiting list and live applicants (2apt or 3apt etc.)
- Confirm allocation group – general, transfer or Section5/Nomination
- Click next to call up all applicants unless the property is adapted or a nomination or homeless nomination in which case the appropriate list should be called up. For adapted properties the medical list should be looked at. For a homeless referral or a nomination the appropriate list should be selected.

- Before finalising the provisional offer the applicant must be contacted by telephone in the first instance to ascertain whether or not they are interested. If they cannot be reached by telephone an email will be sent asking them to contact as soon as possible to discuss their housing application. This is to avoid unnecessary refusals of the property.
- If proceeding, a screen dump of all applicants showing with the applicant receiving the offer should be printed as well as the Kypera audit trail.
- In all cases a screen dump of the section 5 waiting list must be printed and kept with the audit trail.

6. For an adapted property (suitable for medical needs):

- The HO should check medical details and points for all applicants from the medical list. An assessment should highlight the applicant most in need of the property. This should be written on the audit trail in particular.

7. The HO will check and arrange a counter check of the application at the top of the list for the following:

- Confirm points in accordance with CHA allocations policy
- Check that the applicants area and street choices include the area and street of property on offer
- Request (where applicable) an up to date tenancy reference from the applicants landlord
- Check for essential elements the applicant desires such as a shower or gas central heating
- If any of the above prevents an offer being made the HO should then check the next applicant on the list and continue until a suitable applicant is found marking the reason for not offering on the audit trail.
- The HO should then print of the allocation list from Kypera ensuring that the applicant being considered for the offer is highlighted and that any reasons for passing over an applicant higher on the list are noted.
- The HO should then pass the list print, audit trail and the application form for the selected applicant to the HA to countercheck.
- If agreed both the HO and the person counter checking should sign and date the list print

8. The HO will then make the offer by doing the following:

- Select the applicant for offer as per step 5 above.
- Details should be completed on the void module; this should include the date of offer the applicants name and their reference number.
- A telephone interview should be made to avoid unnecessary offers and avoid delaying the allocations process. Confirmation of acceptable areas and house types as well as family circumstances (proof) should be discussed. If this all checks out the provisional offer should be made verbally at this stage subject to stages 11 and 12 below. If the call means the offer cannot proceed a by-pass reason should be listed on the audit trail and the next person on the list

looked at as per stage 7. If telephone interview or an email is not possible the offer letter should go out as below.

- The appropriate offer letter giving 48 hours to contact should be completed and sent to the applicant detailing the street, apartment size and monthly rent. This should be done, where possible by email. A copy of this should be kept with the offer paperwork in the allocations folder.

9. If the applicant refuses the offer the following applies:

- The HO should discuss with the applicant any changes to their application, implement these and notify the applicant in writing confirming the changes if required.
- The offer should be put through Kypera as refused along with the date and reason for refusal. Housing – Housing Management – Waiting list – Open the application and go into the offers & suspensions tab and complete details. **The refusal reason must be copied and pasted into the comments box. Along with any other relevant comments.**
- The refusal and reason should be logged in the void module
- The property should be reallocated (Go to step 1) or a further Section 5/nomination requested

10. If the applicant does not respond to the offer:

- The offer should be put through Kypera as refused along with the date and reason for refusal given as no response as per bullet point 3 at step 11
- Points should be changed to zero as the applicant has failed to prove their circumstances.
- The application should be marked for a no response final chance letter to be sent and passed to the CO.
- The property should be reallocated (Go to step 1) or a further nomination requested.

11. If the applicant contacts and is interested in the offer:

- The HO should ensure that the applicant is able to provide the required proof of residence for each household member. A satisfactory tenancy reference that confirms the applicant's circumstances must be available if they have a current tenancy or a former tenancy in the last 5 years with a local authority or RSL.
- If a tenancy reference is not applicable a home visit to confirm points is necessary if the applicant has overcrowding or under occupation points. This should be arranged with the applicant within three working days of them contacting, or at a mutually convenient agreed date and time.

12. The Home Visit

- The applicant must provide two recent and official forms of proof confirming their name and with the application address on them. All official forms of proof must be dated within that last 4 to 8 weeks.

- One form of similar proof is required for every other household member
- Acceptable proof includes bank statements, council tax notifications, credit card bills, wage slips, domestic bills, and similar types of documentation. These should be recent and official.
- For children the child benefit proof or tax credit proof in the form of a book or bank statement must always be sought in the first instance. The children's names should be clearly shown on tax credit proof along with the address. If this is not available advice should be sought from the Housing Officer on other suitable proof.
- Circular or advertising forms of mail are not acceptable as proof
- Proof can be shown on line as long as the name, address and date are visible.
- The number of bedrooms in the house should be confirmed along with confirmation of who sleeps where in the house. Spare bedding should be seen.
- A visit form should be completed and the applicant should sign and date the form to confirm the information given.
- The offer will not proceed if the information gained at the visit results in a change to the applicant's points total (e.g. a different number of bedrooms or different number of people living there than on the application). In this instance the applicant should be advised they would be contacted within one working day regarding the offer.
- If possible a decision on proceeding with the offer should then be taken and the applicant informed (can proceed if after points change applicant is still top of the list).
- If proceeding with the offer the applicant should be advised that we will contact them when the property is safe to view.
- If not proceeding with the offer the applicant should be contacted within one working day and the reasons given. Changes to the application form should also be made at this time. The property should then be reallocated or a further nomination requested.
- If not enough information is provided to proceed with the offer the staff members visiting should advise the applicant they will contact them within a working day regarding the offer. Staff should then consult the HO with the visit information on whether or not the offer should proceed and advise the applicant accordingly. If any additional information is required the applicant must provide this within one working day or the offer will be withdrawn and reallocated or another Section 5/nomination requested.

13. Viewing the property

- Arrangements should be made for the prospective tenant to view. Maintenance will send an email when a property is safe to view. The viewing should take place as soon as possible once the property is safe to view.
- A member of the housing team will accompany this viewing.
- Prospective tenants should make their decision on accepting or refusing the offer within 24 hours or the next working day of viewing it.
- The Housing Officer or Housing Assistant giving out the keys to view the property should advise the prospective tenant of the minimum lettable standard,

to enable this the information sheet keys to view leaflet should be given out to the applicant and they should sign the accompanying pro forma to confirm they have received this.

- The five year maintenance place will be shown to the prospective tenant at the viewing.
- If accepted once the email is received from maintenance confirming the property is ready to let an appointment will be made for a sign up for as soon as possible. (within 24 hours where possible)
- If refused after viewing the HO or HA should interview the applicant to ascertain the full reason for refusal and amend the applicants form accordingly to ensure no similar offers are made in future. The property should then be reallocated or another Section 5/nomination requested.