

Selection Process and Criteria for Supported Housing Schemes

Purpose

To match the housing and support needs of people with identified care needs with available and appropriate housing options.

The City Council is committed to helping people achieve a good quality of life, to help them retain their health, and lead independent, fulfilling lives for as long as possible in their own homes and community wherever feasible.

Supported housing schemes play a key role in enabling the City Council to deliver these objectives by providing flexible care and support services, offering an independent alternative housing option for applicants who have a learning, or intellectual disability, autism spectrum disorder or traumatic brain injury.

The ability to have care available over a 24-hour period, based upon individual assessed need is integral in assisting people to be supported to live and remain in their own homes and to access community facilities.

Allocations Policy

The Council is required by the Housing Act 1996 to have an Allocations Policy which sets out how we decide who is selected for social housing. Every allocation of housing made by, or on behalf of the Council must be in accordance with the Policy. Allocations for the scheme will be made in accordance with Newcastle City Council's Allocations and Lettings Policy, and in consideration of the criteria and process detailed in this plan.

Property Criteria

Concierge Plus

Concierge Plus housing is for vulnerable adults with a low level disability such as a learning disability, autism or Asperger's who need support to live in the community. Concierge plus allows people to live independently but with the added security of an onsite concierge to deal with everyday issues and a little emotional support if needed.

In order to be considered for a nomination to the concierge plus schemes the applicant must have a:

- care need identified and assessed by the People Directorate and have a current care plan in place
- learning disability, intellectual disability, autism spectrum disorder or traumatic brain injury
- be registered, eligible, qualified or accepted for a direct let on Tyne and Wear Homes

Preference will be given to those with urgent care needs whose needs can be better met through the care provided at the schemes, and who have a priority housing need.

Households are eligible to apply where one member meets the above criteria.

Core and Cluster

Core and Cluster accommodation provides housing and 24-hour care for those people with a learning disability, autism or Asperger's, who have complex needs and are unable to live independently or with others.

In order to be considered for a nomination to the core and cluster schemes the applicant must have a:

- 24-hour care need identified and assessed by the People Directorate and have a current care plan in place
- learning disability, intellectual disability, autism spectrum disorder or traumatic brain injury which results in them being unable to live independently or with others.

Local Connection

To qualify for the Schemes an applicant must ordinarily be a resident of Newcastle, or have a demonstrable local connection with the City, i.e.

- Lived in Newcastle for 6 months in the last year. This does not include those whose only residence in the city is because of time spent living in a hospital or hostel accommodation.
- Lived in Newcastle for 3 years in the last 5 years.
- Be employed in non-casual employment or be training in Newcastle City Council.
- Have close family living in Newcastle such as a parent, child or sibling.
- Have relatives or social networks in Newcastle that will provide support or care to meet specific needs.
- Served in the armed forces in the last 5 years.
- Other special circumstances.

Applications from those who have no local connection will be considered in exceptional circumstances e.g. where there are vacancies in the schemes for which there are no eligible applicants or where the applicant has no local connection but lives geographically close to a scheme.

Referral Process

Applicants may be identified from Tyne and Wear Homes or alternatively be clients of the People Directorate, who will be signposted to Tyne and Wear Homes to complete an application form and have their name added to the “waiting list”.

All applications and queries in relation to the schemes will be referred to the named person at Your Homes Newcastle, who will make sure they are registered on Tyne and Wear Homes and are recorded on the “waiting list”.

Your Homes Newcastle will send out an information pack, where available, to any applicant expressing an interest in the schemes.

Your Homes Newcastle will carry out some basic checks to ensure that the applicant is eligible and qualified for Tyne and Wear Homes and meets the property criteria. Where applicants meet the criteria, they will remain on the waiting list for further consideration by the Supported Housing Allocation Panel.

Where applicants have not met the criteria for the scheme, Your Homes Newcastle will advise them that their application will remain registered on Tyne and Wear Homes for alternative forms of accommodation. Appropriate advice and assistance will be given on available housing options.

The People Directorate will provide a copy of the care assessment together with a risk assessment form in advance of the Supported Housing Allocations Panel meeting. The People Directorate will also ensure the appropriate referral form is completed by themselves and Your Homes Newcastle.

On completion of an assessment, an outline of the application and care assessment will be forwarded to the Supported Housing Allocations Panel for them to decide whether the person is eligible.

NCC will be responsible for keeping the “waiting list” up to date. This will be kept in a shared file which members of the Supported Housing Allocations Panel will be able to access.

Supported Housing Criteria

Allocations for the scheme will be considered by the Supported Housing Allocations Panel. Details can be found at appendix 1.

Any referral to the panel will need to include:

- Confirmation of eligibility and qualification on the Tyne and Wear Homes Scheme.
- Referral pro forma completed by the People Directorate and YHN
- An up to date care and risk assessment provided by the People Directorate
- Any support or recommendation from the People Directorate or YHN
- Confirmation of any adaptation needs together with details of any adaptation work carried out to their existing property.

The Panel will consider suitability for any scheme using the following 2 stage process:

1st stage:

Your Homes Newcastle will Band (A-D) each application in accordance with housing priority need as below:

Supported Housing Criteria	Assessment
<u>Housing needs</u> Housing needs are not met within the applicant's current home and will be met in the supported housing scheme.	Council's housing allocation policy via YHN – Bands A – D.

2nd stage:

YHN will provide the Supported Housing Allocation Panel with the full list of applicants for consideration following an assessment of housing needs in accordance with the Council's allocations policy. The Panel will then agree the nominations using the following criteria:

Supported Housing Criteria	Assessment
<u>Care needs</u> Care plan requirements can be better met within the supported housing scheme than in the applicant's current home. This may be relevant for service users who wish to move to live independently. Consideration will also include the number of care hours the applicant has and the applicant's capacity to manage a tenancy.	Individual social worker to assess.
<u>Welfare or health needs</u> A move to the supported housing scheme will improve the applicant or their carer's social well-being e.g. provide additional support to prevent relationship breakdown or enable the applicant to reside closer to caring networks.	Individual social worker/the selection panel.
<u>Best use of accommodation</u> The applicant may have mobility requirements which cannot be met by the use of aids and adaptations within the applicant's home. The applicant is currently under occupying social housing or their home can be relet to someone else in housing need.	YHN
<u>Commissioning considerations</u> Care requirements can be better met through the supported housing scheme. This may include consideration of those applicants currently housed in residential care settings.	ACSD
<u>Projected needs</u>	Individual social worker/ selection panel

Applicant's long-term needs will be met through the supported housing scheme	
<u>Risks</u> Identification of risks should the applicant be housed, or not housed in the scheme.	

When determining who will be selected, the panel will look at an applicant's long-term care needs, as well as giving consideration to:

- the applicant's housing preference, including, where appropriate, any family or carers views;
- the applicant's general suitability for the scheme;
- the current mix of residents in the scheme;
- the applicant and their carer's social and financial wellbeing;
- the need to release high demand accommodation;
- any commissioning issues;
- managing any risks.

Dependency Levels

As the care and support services are commissioned to meet the differing needs of a range of tenants or households, when a property becomes available to let, the Panel must take the service capacity into account when reaching its decision.

The Panel should ensure, wherever possible, to maintain a balanced community within the scheme. This is important if the ethos and values of the supported housing scheme are to be maintained and to allay tenants concerns that schemes will become 'residential care homes' by another name.

Tenants living within a supported housing scheme will usually have care and support needs related to social/health difficulties, including disabilities or mental ill health. The Panel will endeavour to enable applicants to enter supported housing at an optimum time for them.

Tenants may need flexibility in the provision of care services as their care needs may change over time. Care plans will be compiled to reflect ways of meeting their needs in the scheme, to provide maximum independence, autonomy, dignity and choice for the individual.

The Panel reserve the right to refuse an application for any scheme where the applicant's needs or behaviour pose a risk to other residents.

Disability provision

Where a property has been built or adapted to meet the needs of someone with a physical disability, the panel will ensure that first priority is given to applicants who are able to make best use of this facility.

Ground floor priority

Priority for ground floor accommodation will be given to applicants who:

- have poor mobility to enable them to access communal facilities, Scheme Manager's Office and other amenities;
- have a phobia of lifts;
- need quick access for Scheme Manager/care staff;
- have severe visual impairment/blindness.

Two-bedroom accommodation

Preference for two-bedroom accommodation will be given to those applicants who can provide a demonstrable need for 2 bedrooms. Examples include:

- Where the household size and or composition warrants 2-bedroom accommodation.
- The applicant has a demonstrable medical or care need that warrants a need for an additional bedroom.

Transfers within schemes

There could be reasons why an applicant may apply for a transfer from one flat to another as a vacancy arises. Such applications will be discussed at the Panel to decide whether a potential transfer will benefit the applicant. If a vacancy arises and the Scheme Manager is aware that this may benefit an existing resident who has not applied for a transfer, they may approach the resident/their advocate. This situation may arise if an adapted property becomes available which may meet the needs of a resident who is living in a property without adaptation. The decision to agree a transfer is made by the Panel.

Transfer applications may be suspended if:

- There are management concerns which need resolving. For example, the tenant is in rent arrears or another breach of tenancy
- Where the transfer will result in additional costs to the landlord, for example where the tenant has carried out unauthorised alterations to the flat.

Equal Opportunities

The Panel is committed to providing services to the whole community and will not discriminate against any applicant on the basis of their ethnic origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability.

Determination of Allocations

All allocations to the schemes will be determined by the Panel in consideration of the above criteria. Your Homes Newcastle will notify all decisions to the applicants/their advocates in writing, including rights of appeal against unsuccessful applications.

In order for the Panel to be quorate there needs to be the chair or vice chair in attendance with at least one member from each of the following partners:

- The People Directorate,
- Your Homes Newcastle,

- The Landlord who has the vacancies.

Refusals

The reason for refusals, either by the Panel or the applicant, will be recorded in the minutes of the Panel meetings. All documentation and information will be kept with the Tyne and Wear Homes application.

Confidentiality

All Panel members will adhere to the **Information Sharing Agreement** attached at **Appendix 3**. Panel members will also need to sign the **Declaration of Confidentiality** attached at **Appendix 4**.

Members of the panel will communicate applicant's details via secure email, and all information including the waiting list and applicant information will be held securely in a shared file.

The contents of any document including agendas, minutes, waiting list and other information circulated, which includes personal details of clients, are restricted and should only be produced with the agreement of the Chairperson or the owner of the document.

The Appeals Process

Applicants will be entitled to appeal against decisions made by the Panel. All appeals will be dealt with by Your Homes Newcastle. The Panel will be consulted on any appeals made and their views will be taken into consideration. Your Homes Newcastle will inform the appellant regarding the appeal decision and how this decision was reached.

Applicants wishing to appeal any decision relating to care provision will be referred to the People Directorate.