



Housing Allocations Policy Summary

Housing Service

October 2013

Introduction

Individuals wanting to apply to the Council's housing register will need to complete an application form online at www.movingwithdacorum.org.uk. If applicants cannot access the internet, either at home or at public terminals such as in the library or the Council offices, there is a paper form available.

Applications will be considered on the basis of eligibility, qualification, and any additional information provided on the form and supporting documentation. Full verification will be carried out at the point of offer.

The Council holds an Active Register for qualifying applicants and a Deferred Register for non-qualifying applicants.

Home-seeker and transfer applicants on the Active Register are able to bid for available properties by using a choice based lettings (CBL) scheme 'Moving with Dacorum'. Direct offers will be used alongside the CBL scheme to make suitable offers to applicants with the full homelessness duty. In some cases direct offers will also be used to make an offer to home-seeker or transfer applicants with management priority.

In very exceptional circumstances the Assistant Director - Housing (who has responsibility for the Strategic Housing service) has delegated authority to award additional priority to applicants and to amend the eligibility or qualification criteria.

The household

Non-dependent children (aged 18 or over) or other adults joining the household will be considered as part of the household if they have lived in the property for a minimum of 12 months and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Dependent adult relatives who have joined the household because they are unable to live independently may be considered as part of the household. Such cases will need to be referred to the Council's independent medical adviser. A child will not be considered part of the household if:

- The applicant has staying contact with the child for less than 50% of the time; or
- In the case of equal contact time, the property will not be the child's main or principle home.

Eligibility

The Council does not recognise as eligible:

- Those applicants subject to immigration control *unless* they fall within a class prescribed as eligible in the regulations as stated in the Housing Act 1996, Part 6;
- Those applicants who may not be subject to immigration control but who are prescribed by regulations as being 'persons from abroad' as stated in the Housing Act 1996, Part 6.

Qualification

The criteria relating to qualification do not apply to applicants being made an offer through the Housing Act 1996, Part 7. The qualification criteria mean that:

- Applicants choosing to register before their 18th birthday will be placed on the Deferred Register (except 16 and 17 year olds identified as qualifying to a high-risk priority group).
- Applicants who do not meet **at least one** of the following criteria will be placed on the Deferred Register (except applicants to sheltered housing aged 60 years and over and members of the armed forces and former service personnel, where the housing application is made within 5 years of discharge):
 - 10 years residency within the Borough at some point in their lifetime;
 - Family connection where immediate family members (parents, siblings or children) have been continuously resident within the Borough for the last 10 years;
 - 24 months of permanent continuous employment within the Borough of more than 16 hours per week.
- Applicants who are home-owners will be placed onto the Deferred Register (except applicants to sheltered housing aged 60 years and over).
- Applicants will be placed on the Deferred Register where either they or their partner have:
 - In excess of £60,000 income; or
 - In excess of £16,000 savings (except where savings are due to any lump sum payment made to a current or former member of the armed forces as compensation).
- Applicants with any one of the legal orders and injunctions listed in the policy will be placed on the Deferred Register. In addition, applicants will also be placed on the Deferred Register if they, or any members of their household:
 - Have been evicted on the grounds of ASB in the last 5 years;
 - Have held a demoted tenancy due to ASB in the last 6 months;
 - Is a person known to be involved with serious ASB, or to have been involved in the last 6 months, as per the advice of the Council's ASB team;
 - Have been evicted on the grounds of rent arrears from council or housing association property in the last 5 years;
 - Have an existing notice or a possession order on their property.
 - Have a property-related arrear where regular repayment has not been made over a period of at least six months.
- Applicants found to have deliberately worsened their circumstances, or found to have provided fraudulent information, will be placed on the Deferred Register.
- Applicants refusing a third reasonable offer of housing will be placed on the Deferred Register.
- Applicants not meeting any of the priority criteria identified in the policy (including all the reasonable preference groups) will be placed on the Deferred Register.

Bedrooms

The policy allocates a separate bedroom to each:

- Married or cohabiting couple;
- Adult aged 21 years or more;
- Pair of adolescents aged 0-20 years of the same sex; and
- Pair of children aged under 10 years regardless of sex.

The Council's bedroom criteria for one, two and three bedroom properties are tabled in the policy. All bedroom sizes are given on each property advert.

Applicants will **only** be able to bid for those properties where they meet the following criteria:

- The household has a need for all the bedrooms available (except for households under-occupying by two bedrooms, who will be able to bid for properties with one bedroom above their need); and
- The household would not become overcrowded (except for households needing four or more bedrooms who may bid for three bedroom properties due to stock shortage).

In some cases the Council will restrict the size of household able to bid for the property based on the property details received from the relevant housing association.

Prospective adoptive or foster parents will be considered for exemption of the bedroom criteria on a case-by-case basis only.

Shortlisting

In drawing the short-list for a ground floor or adapted property, applicants with a specific need for the type of property will be considered above applicants without any specific need.

In drawing the short-list for a village property, applicants with a local connection to the specific village will be considered above applicants without a local connection.

Points

Points are given to applicants on the Active Register who meet certain levels of need or other additional factors. Applicants with the highest points will be considered above otherwise equal applicants.

Points are provided for:

- People who are homeless
- Condition of private sector property
- Overcrowding
- Under-occupation
- Medical and welfare grounds
- Children in flats
- Members of the armed forces
- Sheltered tenants moving from category 1 to category 2 accommodation
- Pre-tenancy training
- Length of time on register
- End of a flexible tenancy
- Hardship
- High risk groups.

The points table is provided as an appendix to the policy.