Tameside common housing allocation scheme

Rules for allocating social rented housing

2026

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1.0. Introduction

1.1. These rules have been published jointly by –

a. Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
b. Ashton Pioneer Homes Limited
c. Jigsaw Homes Tameside
d. Onward Homes
e. Regenda
f. Irwell Valley Homes
g. Accent Housing
h. Your Housing Group
i. Mosscare St Vincent
j. Guinness Partnership
k. Great Places
l. Southway Wythenshsaw Homes

1.2. These rules explain how we will make decisions about –

a. prioritising people who have applied to be included on our housing waiting list for an allocation of social rented housing, and
b. secure tenants who wish to move to other social rented housing let under secure tenancies.

1.3. We shall maintain these rules, which explain the procedures to be followed when we allocate social rented housing.

1.4. We have established a common housing allocation scheme, which includes –

a. A common application for all people applying for an allocation of social housing.
b. A common housing register of all people who are eligible for an allocation of social housing.
c. A common website to advertise social housing available to-let.
d. A common set of rules for making decisions about the allocation of social housing.

1.5. For the purposes of these rules, social housing means general needs and supported housing (including housing for older people), made available at social rent and affordable rent rates, that are owned by local authorities and private registered providers.

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2.0. Allocation of social rented housing

2.1. We shall allocate social rented housing following the procedures set out in these rules. Decisions about the allocation of social rented housing shall be taken by officers acting under delegated powers.

2.2. We shall allocate social rented housing when we –

a. select a person to be a tenant under a secure or a starter tenancy of social rented housing held us, including when we decide to make use of any powers to tell an existing social housing tenant or licensee that their tenancy or licence is to be a secure tenancy, or
b. nominate a person to be an assured or introductory tenant of social housing held by another person or a private registered provider of social housing, including as part of any nomination agreements that requires social housing, or a specified amount of social housing, to be made available to people or one of a number of people nominated by us, or

2.1. We shall allocate social rented housing to tenants holding a secure/assured tenancy seeking a transfer of social rented housing, in line with these rules. Tenants that are under occupying their social housing who wish to transfer that tenancy to another home where they will not be unoccupied by more than one bedroom, shall be exempt from qualification criteria concerning rent arrears, financial resources and local connection.

2.3. We shall allocate social rented housing in a fair and transparent way that prioritises those most in need but also makes best use of social rented housing stock. This shall include –

a. having effective policies and processes in place for allocating social rented housing;
b. having clear decision-making criteria including in relation to tenants seek to transfer their tenancy;
c. having a robust act understanding of local housing needs and social rented housing, including social rented housing which has been designed or adapted to meet specific needs;
d. allocating social rented housing that is designated, designed or adapted to meet specific needs in a way that is compatible with the purpose of the housing;
e. addressing under-occupation and overcrowding in social rented housing;
f. carrying out effective checks before allowing a person to be included on the housing waiting list and when they are allocated social rented housing, to prevent and tackle tenancy fraud;

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g. having a fair, reasonable, simple and accessible appeals process for social rented housing allocation decisions;
h. recording information on social rented housing allocations and lettings made.

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3.0. Other rules outside this Scheme

3.1. These rules to not apply to decisions we make about –

a. a secure/assured tenancy in the following cases
    a. succession to a periodic secure tenancy on death of a tenant
    b. devolution of term certain of secure tenancy on death of a tenant
    c. assignment of secure tenancy by way of exchange
    d. assignment to a person who would be qualified to succeed a secure tenant if the secure tenant died immediately before the assignment
    e. permitting a tenant who holds a secure or assured tenancy and a tenant who holds a flexible tenancy or an assured shorthold tenancy, to surrender their tenancies and grant a new secure tenancy or assured tenancy of social rented housing
    f. vests or is otherwise disposed of in pursuance of an order under –
        i. property adjustment orders in connection with divorce proceedings
        ii. orders for financial provision and property adjustment
        iii. orders for financial relief against parents, or
        iv. property adjustment orders in connection with civil partnership proceedings or overseas dissolution of civil partnerships, or

b. a introductory tenancy in the following cases –
    a. when it becomes a secure tenancy on ceasing to be an introductory tenancy, or
    b. succession to introductory tenancy on death of tenant, or
    c. assignment to a person who would be qualified to succeed the introductory tenant if the introductory tenant died immediately before the assignment, or
    d. vests or is otherwise disposed of in pursuance of an order made under
        i. property adjustment orders in connection with matrimonial proceedings
        ii. property adjustment orders after overseas divorce
        iii. order orders for financial relief against parents
        iv. property adjustment orders in connection with civil partnership proceedings or after overseas dissolution of civil partnerships

c. a secure/assured tenancy or introductory tenant in the following cases
    a. Mutual exchanges between existing tenants
    b. Transfers that a private registered provider initiate for management purposes, for example, to carry out a temporary decant (or relocation of tenants), to allow repairs to a property to be carried out.

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3.2. Private registered providers maintain rules for the above-described decisions, which explain the procedures to be followed, and make them available at our offices during their usual opening hours, and also on our website, free of charge, to any social rented housing tenant who requests one.

3.3. Private registered providers shall provide a printed summary of the above rules free of charge, and a printed copy of the above rules upon payment of a reasonable fee, to any social housing tenant who requests one. An electronic summary and copy of these rules shall be provided free of charge on the websites of private registered providers.

3.4. Private register providers maintain a website to facilitate moves by mutual exchange.

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4.0. Eligible persons

4.1. We shall not allocate social housing to –

a. a person from abroad (see section 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5. below), including a person from abroad who does not need permission to enter or remain in the United Kingdon who the UK Government say must be treated as being ineligible for an allocation of social housing; or

b. Disregard any other persons if they are ineligible because they are subject to immigration control.

4.2. We shall allocate social housing to

a. a person who usually lives in the United Kingdom, and who is living in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and Ireland (known as the Common Travel Area) and intends to remain living in the Common Travel Area for the foreseeable future, and has lived in the Common Travel Area for considerable period of time; or

b. a person who needs permission to enter and remain in the United Kingdom, who the UK government say should be treated as being eligible for an allocation of social housing; or

c. a person from abroad who does not need permission to enter or remain in the United Kingdon, who the UK government say should be treated as being eligible for an allocation of social housing.

4.3. A person from abroad that has been given permission to enter or remain in the United Kingdom, shall be ineligible for an allocation of social housing, if the permission –

a. restricts their employment or the type of work they can carry out in the United Kingdom; or

b. requires them to be responsible for their accommodation and to financially support themself in the United Kingdom, so they will not need to claim benefits, tax credit or housing assistance that are paid by national or local governments.

4.4. A person from abroad who needs permission to enter or remain in the United Kingdom, shall be ineligible for an allocation of social housing if they –

a. require permission to enter or remain in the Common Travel Area, but do not have permission to do so;

b. have permission to enter or remain in the Common Travel Area, but they are not allowed to claim most benefits, tax credits or housing assistance that are paid by national or local governments;

c. have permission to enter or remain in the Common Travel Area, but another person has made promised to be responsible for their accommodation and to financially support them in the United Kingdom, travel area, to make sure

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they will not need to claim benefits, tax credit or housing assistance that are paid by national or local governments; or

d. have appealed a decision relating to their immigration status and are waiting for the appeal decision to be made.

4.5. We shall only allocate social housing to person from abroad that the UK Government might decide should be eligible for an allocation of social housing. We shall seek verification of a person's immigration status from the Home Office whenever there is any uncertainty about this. A list of persons from abroad who are eligible and ineligible for an allocation of social housing can be viewed here.

4.6. We shall not make decisions about existing local authority social housing tenants seeking a transfer of social rented housing, about their legal right to work or any other reasons why the UK government might decide people should be in eligible for an allocation of social housing, due them being exempt from eligibility rules. We shall make decisions about existing private register provider tenants seeking a transfer of social rented housing, about their legal right to rent.

4.7. We shall provide a written explanation to each person who applies to join the housing register, whether or not they are eligible for an allocation of social rented housing. When we believe that a person may have difficulty in understanding the implications of a decision of in eligibility, we shall make arrangements for the information to be explained in person. We shall keep copies of decisions for [insert timeframe] at our offices for collection by the person or someone on their behalf.

4.8. We should tell a person who have decided is in eligible for an allocation of social housing due to their immigration status, that they have the right to request a review and a right to be informed of the decision on review and the grounds for that decision.

4.9. We shall make a decision about whether a person is eligible for an allocation of social housing when they apply to be included on the housing register, and again when they are allocated social housing.

4.10. When deciding whether a person is eligible for an allocation of social housing, we shall assess a person's (and that of their family members) –

a. nationality,
b. compliance with worker registration schemes,
c. immigration status,
d. entitlement to public funds,
e. the country where they usually live, the length of time they have been living in that country, their future intentions for living in that country and the

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country where they are living at the time they apply to be included on the housing register,

f. whether or not they Common Travel area and if so, the length time they have done so,
g. employment prospects in the United Kingdom and how stable these might be or how permeant any work taken up might be,
h. reason for coming to the United Kingdom,
i. future intentions for residence and employment in the United Kingdom,

4.11. Our employees responsible for making decisions about eligibility for an allocation of social housing, shall be provided with training about asylum and immigration law as it relates to social housing allocations. They shall also be given training on duties and responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

4.12. We shall monitor our performance in screening people applying to be included on the housing register for immigration status, to ensure that members of ethnic minorities who are eligible for a social housing allocation, are not denied housing and do not experience unreasonably long delays while their applications are considered.

4.13. We shall make sure that language and interpretation support is available for people who have difficulty speaking or reading English. We shall consider producing information in a variety of minority languages upon request.

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5.0. Qualifying persons

5.1. We shall allocate social rented housing only to persons who are qualified to be allocated to social rented housing by us.

5.2. We have decided that the following classes of persons are qualifying persons –

a. people not guilty of unacceptable behaviour.
b. people who do not have the financial resources available them to meet their housing costs and housing needs from the commercial housing market.
c. People who have a local connection to the borough of Tameside.

5.3. We have decided that the following classes of persons are not qualifying persons –

a. people guilty of unacceptable behaviour.
b. people who have the financial resources available to them to meet their housing costs and housing needs from the commercial housing market.
c. people who do not have a local connection to the borough of Tameside.

5.4. We shall decide that a person is to be treated as not qualifying for an allocation of social housing by us, if we are satisfied that they, or a member of their household (including any person that usually resides with them or would be expected to reside with them) –

a. have been guilty of unacceptable behaviour that is serious enough that it could have been reasonable to allow us to secure a possession order had the person been our tenant at the time the behaviour occurred (regardless of whether they were a social housing tenant when the unacceptable behaviour occurred); and
b. their behaviour remains unacceptable when they apply to be included on the housing register (only current unacceptable behaviour will be taken into account, pass unacceptable behaviour will be disregarded); and
c. they are likely to behave unacceptably again.

5.5. When deciding whether a person is to be treated as not qualifying for an allocation of social housing due to their behaviour, We mean a person –

a. who has outstanding rent or service charge arrears, or property related recharges connected to a tenancy (see exemption below), or
b. or some living with them or visiting their house, has caused, or is likely to cause, nuisance or annoyance to another person living with them, visiting them, or who is in the locality, or the landlord of their house or a person employed (by the landlord or by another organisation) to carry out the landlord's housing services that directly or indirectly affected their ability to carry out the housing services, or has been convicted of using their home or allowing it to be used for immoral or legal purposes or has committed a serious offence in their home or in the locality of their home, or

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c. or an adult living with them, has an unspent conviction for a serious offence which occurred during and at the scene of a riot in the UK, or
d. who is married, or in a civil partnership, or is living together with someone else as if they were married or civil partners, and one or both of the partners is a tenant of their home and the person has caused the partner to leave because of violence or threats of violence by them towards their partner or a member of the family of that partner who was living with that partner immediately before the partner left and the partner who has left is unlikely to return, or
e. or a person living with them (including a person lodging with them or a sub tenant of theirs) has damaged or deliberately neglecting their home, or
f. or a person living with them (including a person lodging with them or a sub tenant of theirs) has caused the condition of furniture provided by the landlord for use in their home, or common parts of a building, to deteriorate due to ill treatment, or
g. deliberately make a false statement to be granted a tenancy by us, or
h. paid money or received money as part of an exchange of tenancy, or
i. guilty of conduct that makes it inappropriate for them continue living in their home, due to the home is part of a building used by their landlord for non-housing purposes (e.g. a property situated in the grounds of a school or a public park),
j. who is a tenant, or a person living in or visiting their home, who has an unspent conviction for a serious offence which was committed (wholly or partly) in or nearby to their home, always committed elsewhere against the person with a right to live in a home in the locality of the person who has the unspent conviction, or was committed against their landlord or a person employed (by the landlord or by another organisation) to carry out the landlords housing services which directly or indirectly affected the provision of those services, or
k. who is a tenant, or a person living in or visiting their home, who has breached an injunction for antisocial behaviour and the breach occurred in or nearby to their home or the breach occurred somewhere else which resulted in the person causing nuisance or annoyance to another person with a right to live in a home in the locality of the person who has breached the injunction or they have caused nuisance or annoyance to their landlord, or a person employed (by their landlord or by another organisation, to carry out the landlords housing services and it has directly or indirectly affected their ability to carry out those services, or
l. who is a tenant, or a person living with them or visiting their home, who has breached a criminal behaviour order and that breach occurred in or nearby to their home, or occurred elsewhere and the breach was due to behaviour that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or stress to a person to live in housing in the locality of the person who breached the criminal

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behaviour order, or to the landlord or a person employed (by the landlord (or another organisation) in connection with the landlords housing services and it directly or indirectly affected their ability to provide those service, or

m. whose is not allowed to access their home for continuous period of more than 48 hours due to a closure order or a closure notice issued under the Antisocial Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, or
n. or a person living in or visiting their house, has been breached notice or a court order for noise nuisance from their home.

5.6. We shall allow a person who has outstanding rent or service charge arrears, or property related recharges connected a tenancy, to be eligible for an allocation of social housing if –

a. they we're not the tenant when the liability was accrued, or
b. the liability is now statute barred, or
c. the liability was accrued due to financial abuse or as a consequence of other forms of domestic abuse, or
d. have paid at least 1/12 of the annual amount payable (or which was payable) by them to their landlord in respect of the tenancy question, or
e. they have agreed with their landlord and arrangement for paying the outstanding liability and have made payments in accordance with the arrangement for at least three months and are continuing to make such payments.
f. the outstanding liability is not attributable to the tenancy of a home

5.7. We shall decide that a person is to be treated as not qualifying for an allocation of social housing by us, if we are satisfied that they and their spouse, civil partner or partner that they reside with –

a. have a taxable income of at least £60,000 in the year ending in the financial year prior to applying to be included on the housing waiting list, of £60,000 or more in the most recent tax year, or
b. have savings of more than £16,000, or
c. have ownership of, or value of, real property.

5.8. Information about income in scope can be found here. Where there are more than two incomes within a household, only the two highest incomes shall be taken into account.

5.9. We shall take no account of the financial resources available to a person when –

a. the owner cannot secure entry to their property, which has not been let, due to severe structural faults or where there are squatters living in the property, or

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b. it is probable that occupation of the property will lead to abuse from some other person residing in that property, or who previously resided with that person whether in that property or elsewhere, or
c. occupation of a property may endanger the health of the person, and/or their usual household members, and there are no reasonable steps which can be taken by the person to prevent that danger, due to the person not having the resources to rectify the problems, or
d. families have been deserted by the main wage earner following a relationship breakdown who may become homeless, or
e. escaping domestic abuse.
f. a social housing tenant who is under-occupying their home wishes to move to transferred a tenancy to another home where they will not be under occupying by more than one bedroom

5.10. We shall decide that a person is to be treated as not qualifying for an allocation of social housing by us, if we are satisfied that they (including any person that usually resides with them or would be expected to reside with them) do not have local connection to the borough of Tameside because they –

a. have not normally been resident in the borough of Tameside by their own choice for a minimum of two years; or
b. do not having any close family (defined as children, parents, and siblings) resident in the borough of Tameside by their own choice for a minimum of two years; or
c. have not been employed (including an apprenticeship) in the borough of Tameside (in employment that is intended to last more than 12 months, or 16 hours or more a week), and working there for a minimum of two years; or
d. do not have any other special reason.

5.11. Exceptions to local connection requirements, apply to people who are:

a. Members of the Armed Forces community who are;
    i. Currently serving in the Regular Armed Forces, or were serving in the Regular Armed Forces at any time prior to making an application to join the housing waiting list; or
    ii. Bereaved, spouses or civil partners of those serving in the Regular Armed Forces, where -
        - The bereaved, spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled to, to reside in ministry of defence accommodation, following the death of their service, spouse, or civil partner, and
        - The death was wholly or partially attributable to the service; or

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iii. Existing or former members of the Reserve Armed Forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness, or disability which is wholly or partially attributable to their service; or
iv. Divorced or separated spouses or civil partners of Service personnel who need to move out of accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence; or
v. Adult children of currently serving members of the Armed Forces who may no longer be able to remain the family home; or

b. Tenants (of any English local authority or private registered provider) who
   i. need to move to the borough of Tameside for work (including an apprenticeship) related reasons (e.g. travel time, transport, type of work, personal factors, contract length, employment prospects) because of they were unable to do so it would cause them hardship, and
   ii. need to move because they work (including an apprenticeship) in the borough of Tameside, or
   iii. needs to move to take up an offer of work in the borough of Tameside (including an apprenticeship) and have a genuine intention to take up the offer, and
   iv. the work (including an apprenticeship) is intended to last for more than 12 months, of 16 hours or more a week and their level of earnings will be substantial; or
c. Care leavers, who are
   i. a child looked after by a local authority who is aged 16 or 17 who has been looked after for a period of, or periods amounting to, at least 13 weeks in England or Wales since their 14th birthday
   ii. a child who is not being looked after, by any local authority in England or Wales, who was, before they last ceased to be looked after, a child aged 16 or 17 who had been looked after for a period of, or periods amount too, at least 13 weeks in England or Wales since they're 14th birthday
   iii. a child aged over 18 who was looked after by a local authority when they attained the age of 18, and immediately before ceasing to be looked after was looked after for a period of, or periods amounting to, at least 13 weeks in England or Wales since their 14th birthday
d. a victim of domestic abuse, or have been, carried out by another person, who needs to move for reasons connected with that abuse, including from accommodation initially occupied on a temporary basis; or
e. escaping abuse, violence, intimidation, and social behaviour that causes alarm or distress, hate, or harassment (e.g. racial, religious or secretarial, homophobic, trans phobic, autistic people and people with a learning or physical disability), or being a witness of crime, or victim of crime, who would

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be at risk of intimidation amounting to violence or threats of violence if they remained in their current home; or

f. homeless, within the meaning of Housing Act 1974, section 174, in the borough of Tameside; or
g. owed a homelessness duty by the borough of Tameside, whom were housed outside of the borough of Tameside; or
h. a key worker needing to move to the borough of Tameside to take up an offer of work that is intended to last for more than 12 months, of 16 hours or more a week; or
i. needing to be near special medical or support services which they need to very regularly access; or
j. returning to the borough of Tameside where they previously were brought up or lived for a considerable length of time, following a period of imprisonment or hospitalisation; or
k. a social housing tenant under-occupying their current home (by the local housing allowance size criteria) in the borough of Tameside and intend to downsize to a smaller home in the borough of Tameside; or
l. needing to give or receive care/support, who need to move within a distance or travel time (appropriate to the context) from the person to whom they will be giving, or from whom they will be receiving, care/support, taking account of the amount of support being given or received and the frequency to which someone will give or receive support and how many hours of support they will give or receive; or
m. Gypsies and Travellers; or
n. Refugees who were living in the Borough of Tameside when they were granted leave to remain.

5.12. We shall provide a written explanation to each person who applies to join the housing register, whether or not they qualify for an allocation of social rented housing. When we believe that a person may have difficulty in understanding the implications of a decision of disqualification, we shall make arrangements for the information to be explained in person. We shall keep copies of decisions for [insert timeframe] at our offices for collection by the person or someone on their behalf.

5.13. We shall tell a person who we have decided is not a qualifying person for an allocation of social housing, that they may make a fresh application if they consider they should no longer be treated as not qualifying. It will be for the person to show that their circumstances have changed.

5.14. We shall tell a person who we have decided is not a qualifying person for an allocation of social housing, that they have the right to request a review and a right to be informed of the decision on review and the grounds for that decision.

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5.15. We shall make a decision about whether a person is not a qualifying person for an allocation of social housing, when they apply to be included on the housing waiting list, and again when they are allocated social housing.

5.16. We shall monitor and disseminate information and concern concerning the numbers of people who are considered not a qualifying person for social rented housing because of unacceptable behaviour, financial resources, and local connection and the outcomes of any appeals/reviews.

5.17. We shall work collaboratively with the police and probation services and other statutory and voluntary organisations in sharing information on sex offenders or other applicants who are violent or have a history of violence and, where appropriate, become involved in the management of risk posed by them.

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6.0. Offers of social housing held by private registered providers of social housing

6.1. The following private registered providers –

a. Ashton Pioneer Homes Limited
b. Jigsaw Homes Tameside
c. [insert names of other registered providers that own social rented housing stock in Tameside that agree to become members of the Tameside common housing allocation scheme]

shall only offer social rented housing which they hold in the borough of Tameside, to people included on the common housing waiting list established and maintained by Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council.

6.2. The private registered providers shall choose who is offered social rented housing which they hold in the borough of Tameside, following the procedures set out in these rules.

6.3. The private register providers, when choosing who has offered other housing that is not social housing that they hold in the borough of Tameside, shall not follow the procedures set out in these rules.

6.4. This will apply when the private register providers are offering social housing under an agreement that requires the private register providers to offer housing, or a certain amount of housing, to a person or to a group of people that Tameside Council have nominated.

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7.0 Common housing register

7.1. Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council, together with private registered providers that own stock in the local authority area, shall establish and maintain a common housing waiting list of people to whom social rented housing in the area may be allocated in accordance with these rules.

7.2. We shall consider every application received for inclusion on the housing waiting list, provided it is made in accordance with these rules. We shall accept applications from people currently living in institutional arrangements. We shall put a person on the housing waiting list if:

a. a person applies to be included the housing waiting list, and
b. it appears to us that they are eligible for an allocation of social rented housing (see chapter 3), and
c. It appears to us that they qualify for an allocation of social rented housing (see chapter 4).

7.3. We shall put a person on the housing waiting list without them needing to make an application if it appears to us that they are eligible and qualify for an allocation of social housing (for example, when a local authority decides a person is: homeless or owed a homelessness duty;, living under unsatisfactory housing conditions; has unmet housing needs; is a social housing contract holder under-occupying their home). When we put a person on the housing waiting list, we shall notify them that we have done so.

7.4. The date a person is put on the housing waiting list shall be known as the registration date. The registration date will be based on the date a person applied to be included on the housing waiting list.

7.5. We shall keep the housing waiting list in an electronic format on a software system, provided and maintained by us or a third-party organisation.

7.6. We shall maintain the housing waiting list for people applying for an allocation of social housing, and also for social housing tenants seeking to transfer their tenancy from their current home to another home. Entries on the housing waiting list for people applying for an allocation of social housing, and for social housing tenants seeking to transfer their tenancy shall be distinguishable, as shall entries for people applying for an allocation of social housing for a specific private registered provider of social housing.

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8.0. Operation of the common housing register

8.1. We shall amend a person's entry on the housing waiting list, whenever there is a change in their circumstances, or when it is necessary following any to these rules. We shall review the housing waiting list regularly to make sure information held about each person is up-to-date. We shall operate an annual rolling review, contacting people in writing or on the telephone we have put on the housing waiting list, on the anniversary of their registration date, providing them an opportunity to confirm whether or not their housing needs have changed and to see if they still wish to be included on the housing waiting list. When we contact people to update the information held about them in the housing register, we shall inform them that if they withhold information or provide misleading information, they shall be disqualified from being allocated social rented housing and be removed from the housing register. We shall notify a person in writing when their entry on the housing waiting list is amended, explaining the reasons for any amendment. Any amendment that results in a person being given a higher priority, shall result in them being given a new registration date. Any amendment that results in them having the same priority or a lower priority, will result in them retaining their original registration date.

8.2. We shall remove a person from the housing waiting list when –

a. they become ineligible to be allocated social rented housing,
b. they become disqualified to be to be allocated social rented housing,
c. they request to be removed from the housing waiting list,
d. they die,
e. they fail to respond to a first request and a follow-up request by us, to review of information we hold about them on the housing waiting list or other correspondence, such as request for information or an allocation of social rented housing, or
f. they have moved away or no longer need or want to be allocated social rented housing by us.

8.3. We shall notify a person in writing before they are removed from the housing waiting list, explaining the reasons for the removal. We shall reinclude a person on the housing waiting list, if they get back in contact with six months as issuing the notification for them to be removed from the housing waiting list. If we decide to reinclude a person on the housing waiting list, they shall not need to complete a new application form, and their registration date shall remain the same as it was before being removed from the housing waiting list.

8.4. A person's entry on the housing waiting list shall include details of –

a. people who normally live with them, for example –
    i. a member of their family (i.e. those with close blood or marriage relationships and cohabiting partners), or

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ii. children (their own, and/or a child they have adopted, fostered or a step-child) aged up to 18 years, who normally lives with the person that is making the application to be included on the housing waiting list, on a permanent or regular basis, at least part of the time;

b. people who might be reasonably expected to live with them, for example –
   i. children in the care of children services or staying with relatives but will return to live with the person that is making the application to join the housing waiting list, if they are allocated social rented housing. (in such circumstances, we shall liaise with children services before reaching any decision about the allocation of social rented housing),
   ii. foster children, potential adoptive children, or other children whom the person that is making the application to join the housing waiting list wishes to be involved in their upbringing,
   iii. children living with one parent who, by arrangement between two separated parents or as a result of shared residence order made by the family courts, are to begin living with the person that is making the application to join the housing waiting list,
   iv. children of a person whom has earlier fled their home in fear of domestic abuse,
   v. a person unable to return from hospital to their normal home, where they were living before going into hospital,
   vi. a person who has to live apart of their spouse or civil partner, because they have nowhere that they can live together, or
   vii. lodger, nanny, carer, front of the family or anyone else, living with the person making the application to join the housing waiting list, or
   viii. a prospective carer, who wishes to live with and look after another person, or
   ix. companions for elderly people or disabled people.

8.5. The housing waiting list shall also contain information about each person's entry on it, such as –

a. the number of bedrooms required,
b. whether they are subject immigration control,
c. whether they are care leavers,
d. their nationality,
e. any changes made to their application,
f. grounds to establish a local connection or residency,
g. the number of years established for a local connection,
h. any rent arrears owed,
i. Exceptions to rent arrears for social housing tenants under occupying their home seeking to move to a home where they will be under occupied by no more than one bedroom.
j. any reasonable preference groups a person might be in,

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k. any given additional preference a person might be given.
l. members of the UK Armed Forces community given additional preference,
m. whether they are a serving member of the UK Armed Forces or a veteran,
n. existing social housing tenants under occupying their home who wish to downsize to a smaller home, and
o. accessible housing needs of disabled people.

8.6 The housing waiting list shall also contain information about –

a. lettings made to –
    i. existing social rented housing tenants,
    ii. existing social rented housing tenants who previously resident in another local authority area or with another private registered provider of social housing,
    iii. new tenants of social rented housing,
    iv. new social rented housing tenants where they moved from another local authority area,
    v. General needs social rented housing, and
    vi. Supported social rented housing;
        i. sheltered accommodation.
        ii. extra care housing,
        iii. domestic abuse refuges,
        iv. hostels for homeless
        v. supported housing for people with drug or alcohol,
        vi. supported housing for people with mental health problems
        vii. supported housing for people with learning disabilities,
        viii. supported housing for people with physical/sensory disabilities,
        ix. supported housing for people who have a history of offending or at risk of offending,
        x. supported housing for people leaving care
        xi. supported housing for teenage parents,
        xii. supported housing for refugees;
b. nominations taken up by private registered providers of social housing in response to a nomination from Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council,
c. lettings and nominations to people who are a member of the UK armed forces community.

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9.0. Accessible housing register

9.1. A register of social rented housing that has features that may assist a disabled person, shall be established and maintained by Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council.

9.2. Private registered providers of social housing which hold social rented housing in the borough of Tameside have agreed to cooperate in establishing and maintaining an accessible housing register. The accessible housing register shall include accessible social rented housing held by the following private register registered providers of social housing –

a. Ashton Pioneer Homes Limited
b. Jigsaw Homes Tameside
c. Onward Homes
d. Regenda
e. Irwell Valley Homes
f. Accent Housing
g. Your Housing Group
h. Mosscare St Vincent
i. Guinness Partnership
j. Great Places
k. Southway Wythenshsaw Homes

9.3. The accessible housing register shall allow us to easily match disabled people with the need for accessible social rented housing with social rented housing that is accessible. The accessible housing register will be established within 12 months of these rules being published, by each private registered provider of social housing undertaking a full stock survey as a one-off project. Afterwards, the accessible housing register shall be maintained by capturing specific property attributes when they become vacant. Private registered providers of social housing shall each be responsible for amending and removing entries on the accessible housing register in respect of their own social rented housing stock.

9.4. The accessible housing register shall include the full range of accessible properties that have been designed or adapted to meet the needs of disabled people. This shall include –

a. Basic information (e.g. property address, type of dwelling, flat floor level, whether it is currently occupied by a wheelchair user, etc)

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b. Information on communal areas (e.g. communal approach route, if there is a ramp, if there are steps, communal entrance doors, communal corridors and doors, communal lifts and stairs, communal gardens, etc)
c. Information on individual dwellings (e.g. approached to front door, if there is a ramp, if there are steps, entrance doors, internal circulation and doors – entry level, internal circulation and doors – upper floor, living rooms, dining room, kitchen, bedrooms, sanitary facilities, WCs, gardens and outdoor space)

9.5. We shall inform disabled people –
a. when they apply to be included on the housing waiting list, how their application is likely to be treated under these rules (including in particular whether they are likely to be considered as a member of a group of people who are to be given priority for an allocation of social housing), and
b. once they have been put on the housing waiting list, that we maintain an accessible housing register and shall rely in the information held on the accessible housing register to inform them as to whether social rented housing appropriate to their needs is likely to be made available to them and, if so, how long it is likely to be before such social rented housing becomes available for allocation to them.

9.6. We shall prioritise accessible housing for disabled people who have housing access needs. This will be explained when a person applies to be included on the housing waiting list, when we decide to put them on the housing waiting list and when we allocate social rented housing to them. We shall allocate social rented housing to disable people that is not accessible, when we have assessed that it shall be reasonable and practical to adapt the social rented housing to meet the access needs of the disabled person.

9.7. We shall provide disabled people with additional assistance and support, when they apply to join the housing waiting list, once they have been put on the housing waiting list and when they are allocated social rented housing. The support we provide shall depend on the nature and degree of each person's disability. We shall advise individual disabled people when a suitable accessible property is about to come available for an allocation. We shall make sure that our website is accessible for people who have a visual impairment or learning disabilities. We shall provide information about properties that are being allocated, using symbols rather than, or as well as, words. This shall include information about the location of the property and relevant information about the surrounding area (local shops and public transport that are easily accessible, whether a property has a parking space).

9.8. We might require people to undertake a medical assessment to qualify for medical or welfare priority (see chapter 00, section 00). We might send medical assessments to a

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medical adviser to consider. We shall make decisions within eight weeks. We shall not adopt a recommendation of a medical advisor without considering information provided by a people applying to be included on the housing register. We shall have regard to all available information when deciding a medical assessment and clearly explain our decision.

9.9. We shall make sure our employees are familiar with the variety of scenarios affecting disabled people, including rare and unusual situations and consider the circumstances of each person applying to be included on the housing register.

9.10. We shall share appropriate information about disabled people and their households who apply to be included on the housing register, with adult social care and children services. We shall work with these services and shall have procedures with these services, for example to get an assessment of care and support needs to inform housing allocation decisions.

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10.0. Decisions and reviews

10.1. We shall notify a person in writing of our decision and of the reason for it when –

a. a person applies to be included on the housing waiting list explaining if they have been or have not been put on the housing waiting list, and
b. we remove a person from the housing waiting list, explaining why they have been removed from the housing waiting list, and
c. any decision about the facts of a person's application which are taken into account, when we consider allocating social rented housing to them, , including a person's entitlement to express a preference on the type of social housing allocated to them and the priority awarded to them.

10.2. We shall, when notifying a person that they are not eligible for allocation of social rented housing, explain whether this is because a person is subject to immigration control within the meaning of asylum and immigration law, or because of other legislation that stipulate specified persons from abroad are not eligible for an allocation of social rented housing. We shall notify them of help available from a housing aid Centre, a law centre or a solicitor.

10.3. We shall, when notifying a person that they do not qualify to be included on the housing waiting list, explain whether this is because they are guilty of unacceptable behaviour, have the financial resources available to them to meet their housing costs and housing needs from the commercial housing market, or do not have a local connection to the borough of Tameside.

10.4. We shall, whenever it is necessary to do so, take account of advice about medical and welfare grounds. We shall contact the most appropriate professional who has direct knowledge of the persons support healthcare, social care and domiciliary care needs and other support needs, as well as the impact of their medical and welfare grounds has on their housing needs.

10.5. We may make a decision to allow an applicant a priority for an allocation of social housing on medical or welfare grounds, for example when a person –

a. has mobility difficulties who lives in a flat above the ground floor level in a block which has no left and who cannot enter exit the flat without help;
b. can only use a shower but only has a bath in their property, so has to wash up the sink;
c. cannot use stairs but live lives in a property which only has an upstairs toilet;
d. with a child who has autism and needs a separate bedroom, but currently shares a room with a sibling.

10.6. We shall make a decision about a person's priority for allocation on medical or welfare grounds, based on the evidence provided by the person when they apply to

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be included on the housing register. Decisions will be based on evidence from health professionals (for example, consultant, GP, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, psychologist, social worker). To help us make a decision, we may ask a person to complete a separate form or medical questionnaire, provide them with an opportunity to describe their current home and the problems they are experiencing due to medical or welfare reasons.

10.7. We may, when making a decision about a person's priority for allocation on medical or welfare grounds, seek advice from external independent medical advisors and ask our own occupational therapist to carry out an assessment. We shall carry out assessments and some decisions without undo delay. A person who says they have sent information to another local authority team who says another team has carried out an assessment that is relevant to their medical or welfare grounds, we shall obtain and consider that information too. We shall consider all issues raised in medical assessments and keep a record of how we have done this. The decision we make about whether a person is entitled to priority for an allocation on medical grounds, and at what level will be made by us based on all of the evidence provided.

10.8. We shall keep a proper record to show how we have considered all evidence in the context of the decision being made and how evidence has been weighted against any conflicting evidence. We shall make our own decision about how much priority a person should be ordered, taking into account all the evidence are not automatically accepting an independent advisor view. We shall provide independent advisors with accurate information; be clear about the questions we are asking and keep a record of the advice we receive. We shall critically assess an independent advisor's opinion and balance it against any conflicting evidence provided by a person applied to be included on the housing register. Decisions shall not be made by independent advisor, but may take account of their views in any decisions we make. We shall explain in writing. the reasons for any decision made, explaining why evidence a person provided was discounted or was not sufficient to make them eligible or qualifying for an allocation of social housing or was not sufficient to award them a high priority.

10.9. We shall make decisions about a person's application to be included on the housing register, including the priority they shall be awarded, within eight weeks of a person making an application, unless there is good reason why this was not possible, for example, with further evidence was needed and a delay and obtaining that was outside our control. Where we know there will be a delay, we shall keep a person informed about the reasons for the delay and the likely times for a decision.

10.10. A person can themself request to be removed from the housing waiting list. They can do so by notifying us in writing or on the telephone. We shall confirm receipt of

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such a notification in writing and also confirm in writing when the request has been acted on.

10.11. We shall inform a person in writing of their right to request a review of a decision –

a. not to include person on the housing waiting list who has applied to be put on it, due to them being not eligible for an allocation of social housing,
b. not to include person on the housing waiting list who has applied to be put on it, due to them being not qualifying to be included on the housing waiting list,
c. to remove a person from the housing waiting list (for example, because they believe their application has been unreasonably cancelled),
d. any other facts of their case which have been taken into account when considering whether to allocate social rented housing to them, including –
    i. the priority awarded and whether or not this is a fair reflection of their housing needs, medical conditions, other welfare needs, or any other facts regarding their entitlement to a reasonable preference for an allocation of social rented housing,
    ii. whether or not a person should receive additional preference due to having urgent housing needs or otherwise,
    iii. they have been unfairly suspended or their application has been unreasonably cancelled,
    iv. the number offers social rented housing refused,
    v. offences related to information given or withheld by them,
    vi. fraudulent or incorrect allocations,
    vii. the type of social rented housing which we will consider to allocate to them.

10.12. A person must make a request for a review before the end of the period of 21 days beginning with the date on which they are notified of our decision and reasons. We may, in exceptional circumstances, allow a person a longer period to make a request for a review. A person may make a request for a review in writing (e.g. via a letter or email) or orally (e.g. via a telephone call or visiting our offices.) A person is entitled to instruct another individual or organisation to submit a request for a review on their behalf.

10.13. When making a request for a review, a person should set out the reasons for their request. This might be for the following types of matters (this is not intended to be exhaustive and the matter shown below are provided for illustrative purposes only) –

a. the reliability of the evidence we have relied on to make our decision,
b. how we have interpreted the evidence we have relied on to make our decision,
c. the compatibility of our decision compared to housing allocation legislation,

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d. whether there are sufficient facts available to us to reach a decision,
e. whether a person has been given the benefit of the doubt by us when we made a decision.

10.14. A person cannot request a review of a decision reached on an earlier review. Upon receipt of a review request, we shall carry out a review of their decision in accordance with the procedure set out in the next chapter of these rules.

10.15. We shall notify a person in writing when a review of a decision commences, as well as the decision reached at the conclusion of the review.

10.16. We shall notify people in writing of the formal complaints process that is in place, including service standards and time frames for handling and responding the complaints, so people know what to expect. People will be informed of their right to make a complaint whenever we make a decision.

10.17. We shall notify a person when they have exhausted our complaints process, of their right to make a complaint to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (if a complaint concerns Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council) or the Housing Ombudsman Service (if a complaint concerns a private registered provider of social housing).

10.18. We shall monitor complaints, to get an indication of improvements that need to be made. This might include –

a. the nature and number of complaints and whether this is changing,
b. the outcome of complaints,
c. customer satisfaction, not just about the outcome of the complaint but how it was handled,
d. how we have changed ways of doing things in response to feedback.

We shall publish information so people on the housing register and social housing tenants know that we are taking their complaints seriously and that we are using them to improve the way services are provided.

10.19. We shall invite people to provide feedback on their satisfaction with being allocated social housing using our housing allocation scheme and service. People shall be invited to provide feedback on the following types of matters (this is not intended to be exhaustive and the matters shown below provided for illustrative purposes only) –

a. quality of information received on housing allocations and assistance received to make an application to join the housing waiting list and express a preference for the type of property to be allocated,

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b. duration of time waited for decision on application to join the housing waiting list and confirmation of priority afforded,
c. ease of being able to express a preference on social rented housing to be offered and view information concerning housing waiting list application and offers of social rented housing,
d. effectiveness of nomination arrangements between Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council and private registered providers of social housing.

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11.0. Review procedure

11.1. We shall carry out a review of a decision as per the procedure set out below.

11.2. We shall appoint an employee of an appropriate seniority to that of the employee who made the original decision, who was not involved in the original decision, to carry out the review.

11.3. We shall allow a person to make written representations which should be received by us within at least five days of them submitting their review request.

11.4. We, at our discretion, shall allow a person an oral hearing and allow a person to be represented by a third-party of their choosing at any such hearing. We shall determine whether or not an oral hearing takes place, based on the facts and circumstances of the particular case. We are more likely to hold or hearing, when an applicant has not made any written representations. If there is to be an oral hearing, we shall give notice to a person of the date, time and location that the oral hearing will take place, no sooner than five days after a request for a hearing, unless a person consents to a lesser notice. At a hearing, we shall allow a person to be heard, accompanied, and represented by another person, whether that person is professionally qualified or not (the representative shall have the right and powers which the person has). We shall allow a person to call their own supporting witnesses to give evidence (this does not give the person the power to require witnesses to attend), put questions to any person who gives evidence at the hearing, and make representations in writing. We shall proceed with an oral hearing even in the absence of a person, taking account of any explanation offered for their absence. We shall allow for the postponement of an oral hearing and will determine whether or not to grant or refuse a request to postpone a hearing, as we see fit. We shall adjourn a hearing at any time during a hearing, as we see fit. If a hearing is rescheduled, and the person carrying out the hearing on our behalf has changed, the hearing shall be a complete rehearing of the case.

11.5. When carrying out a review, we shall consider all of the facts previously made available to us when the original decision was made, along with any new or additional information available at the date the review decision is made. A review decision will concentrate on reaching conclusions as to whether the original of decision was made consistently with these rules and whether the original decision was compatible with the law. We shall also take into account the circumstances of the person at the time of the review. This will allow for a change in circumstances since original decision, to be considered. A review decision will set out whether the original decision is being upheld or overturned or varied and give reasons for any conclusions reached.

11.6. We shall notify the person concerned of the decision on the review in writing.

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11.7. We shall notify a person of the reasons for the review decision. We shall provide a person with information about their right to seek a judicial review or make a complaint.

11.8. We shall complete a review of a decision and notify a person of the decision in writing within 56 days of receiving the review request. We may, in agreement with the person who requested the review, extend the period of time in which the review shall be completed.

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12.0. Information about the housing waiting list

12.1. We shall tell a person in writing when they apply to be included on the housing waiting list, that we shall make available to them, within a reasonable period of time and free of charge, details of the information which they have given to us about themselves and their usual household members and which we have recorded as being relevant to their application for social housing.

12.2. We shall tell a person in writing when they are put on the housing waiting list, and on the anniversary of their registration date, that they are allowed to see the entry relating to themselves and to receive a copy of it free of charge.

12.3. We shall not share the fact that a person has been put the housing waiting list nor any information about them that is included on the housing waiting list, to any member of the public.

12.4. We shall ask people applying to be included on the housing waiting list for written authorisation to disclose their information contained on the housing waiting list with people or organisations that allow us to make a decision about their application to be included on the housing waiting list and to make a decision about the allocation of social rented housing to them. We shall not disclose or use any information that would contravene data protection legislation.

12.5. We shall share information about a person (with their consent) we have put on the housing waiting list, for example, to ensure that a person is properly assisted to make decisions about any allocation of social rented housing that is made to them.

12.6. We shall, prior to sharing information about people who are victims of domestic abuse, enquire as to whether the organisation we are sharing information with, has employees who are trained in supporting victims of domestic abuse. We shall make sure employees responsible for making decisions about the allocation of social rented housing, have appropriate knowledge and training to allow them to identify possible victims of domestic abuse.

12.7. We shall share personal information without consent if a lawful basis can be identified, for example a person's safety is at risk. We shall determine on a case-by-case basis whether it is appropriate to share information regarding safeguarding concerns, including, but not limited to concerns about domestic abuse, with other agencies. Where there is a need to share data without consent, this shall be done in accordance with data protection law.

12.8. We shall, when seeking references from a person's current and former landlords (from no more than three years prior), only do so with a person's written consent

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and in line with data protection law. We shall not seek references that go back more than three years as they may not provide a useful indicator of how a prospective contract holder would manage if allocated social housing.

12.9. We shall adopt information sharing protocols to make sure that we and other agencies are clear about the type of information which shall be shared, with whom and for what purposes. We shall adopt information sharing protocols with organisations such as social services, other statutory agencies and voluntary agencies. We shall when devising information sharing protocols, and when passing on information about individuals on the housing waiting list, will be mindful of responsibilities under data protection legislation.

12.10. We shall inform people in writing of their right to make a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office, if they believe the data has been shared without their consent, when –

a. they apply to be included on housing waiting list,
b. when we make any decision about their application to be included on the housing waiting list, including when we amend it or remove it,
c. when we carry out a review and make a review decision, and
d. when we allocate social rented housing.

12.11. We shall process and store personal data provided by people applying for an allocation of social rented housing, in compliance with data protection law.

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13.0. Applications for social rented housing

13.1. We shall aim to process applications within eight weeks. We have established an online application system. People applying to be put on the housing waiting list will need to provide all the information requested on the application, to allow us to assess the eligibility, qualification and any priority for social housing. This will help to minimise delays in processing applications. People applying to put on the housing waiting list will need to declare that the information they have provided is correct to their knowledge. The application shall include information about the fact that we can raise action in the court for recovery of possession where social housing has been allocated on the basis of false information supplied by a person who made the application.

13.2. We are aware of our public sector equal duty and shall work to ensure that no people apply to be included on the housing waiting list are discriminated against or treated unfairly. We shall provide advice and information, free of charge, to people in the borough of Tameside, about the right to make an application to be included on the housing waiting list, regardless as to whether or not a person might wish to make an application. This shall include information about –

a. application procedures,
b. eligibility, qualification and prioritisation criteria,
c. how to expresses a preference of social rented housing allocated that might be allocated to them,
d. how people on the housing waiting list are selected for an allocation of social housing;
e. lettings criteria (e.g. priority for bungalows is given to older people or accessible housing for disabled people.), and
f. review procedures.

13.3. We shall provide guidance that is easy to understand and in a plain language, to help a person complete their application to be included on housing waiting list. We shall only request information needed to assess whether a person is eligible to be allocated social rented housing, qualifies to be included on the housing waiting list and their priority for an allocation of social rented housing. In cases involving harassment or domestic abuse, we shall never ask a person for evidence of this and shall take a person stated fears as sufficient. A person might be asked to provide appropriate evidence to support their application, for example –

a. proof of identity,
b. proof of nationality and immigration status,
c. a contract of employment a contract of employment,
d. wage/salary slips covering a certain period of time, or bank statements,
e. tax and benefits information, for example proof that a person is in receipt of welfare benefits, etc.

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13.4. We shall provide any assistance necessary, free of charge, to people in the borough of Tameside, who are likely to have difficulty without assistance to make an application to be included on the housing waiting list. We shall obtain information from applications completed by people applying to be included on the housing waiting list, to assess and determine if they are likely to have:

a. priority under these rules,
b. difficulty in making an application or choosing their accommodation without assistance, or
c. access or support needs.

13.5. We shall, when identifying such people, shall make further enquiries as to what assistance they might require. For example, assistance may be provided to people with physical or mental impairments, people who may have difficulty in living independently in the community without care and or support, etc.

13.6. We shall work together with other relevant agencies and providers, to ensure people can make an application to be included on the housing waiting list and consider support requirements at different stages of the allocation process. We shall, together with social services, prisons, probation and relevant health bodies and professionals, other housing providers, the voluntary sector, carers and user groups, identify people who are likely to require intensive support throughout the process, such as assistance to choose accommodation that is appropriate to their needs, and make sure that suitable assistance is available. We shall provide assistance ourselves or rely on other organisations and individuals to provide assistance.

13.7. We shall provide access to translation and interpreting services, to people whose first language is not English. Where is a significant number of speakers of a particular language, we might publish information in that language.

13.8. We shall provide information in other accessible formats for people with various communication needs, for example people with learning disabilities, people with literacy issues and people with a visual or hearing impairment. This might include large print, British Sign Language (BSL), braille or audio.

13.9. We shall provide information to people who are likely to have difficulty accessing information, for example, via outreach work, home visits or housing advice surgeries to prisoners, the Gypsy and Traveller community, etc.

13.10. We shall provide user-friendly information about our housing allocation scheme via our websites, the telephone and in printed form.

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13.11. We shall provide information to a person when they apply to be included on the housing waiting list, how their application will be treated, how much priority they might be given to be allocated social rented housing and whether social rented housing appropriate for their needs is likely to be made available to them and if so, how long it is likely to be before such social rented housing becomes available for allocation to them.

13.12. We shall provide information to a person once they have submitted the application, about what happens next. This might include –

a. sending confirmation that the application has been received, when it will be assessed and what checks will be made,
b. asking for any information that has not been supplied by the person making the application, including timescales for this to be provided as well as explaining how it might affect the application if they fail to provide it,
c. advising the person that they must inform us about any changes in circumstances that could affect their application and level of priority,
d. explaining when we will next be in contact with the person and the contact they can expect throughout the allocation process,
e. advising the person of their rights to appeal against any decision.

13.14. We shall inform applicants, once we have assessed their application, about the outcome. This will include the level of priority the person has been awarded. It might also include information about other housing options, particularly if the person has a relatively low chance (e.g. they have been placed in Band C or lower) of being allocated social housing in the near future. We will also make sure that people know how the choice based letting system works, how to bid for properties, and where they can get support if they need help to bid.

13.15. We shall make available general information about the profile of social rented housing stock in the borough of Tameside. This might include the type (e.g. general needs housing, supported housing, rent rate (e.g. social rent rate, affordable rent rate), size (e.g. number of bedrooms), how old (e.g. decade built), location (e.g. electoral ward), whether it is accessible or could be adapted, and how frequently it is likely to become available.

13.16. We shall provide information about appropriate housing options which might be available to people in the borough of Tameside. This information shall be made available when people apply to join the housing waiting list and more generally. This might include information about –

a. low-cost homeownership accommodation (including shared ownership),
b. mutual exchange services,
c. tenancy sustainment support,

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d. home improvement scheme or aid and adaptation services which enable people to remain in their existing accommodation for longer, and
e. private sector rented accommodation.

Housing options information will include the potential short, medium and long-term financial implications of the different options.

13.17. We shall provide information to people when they are first put on the housing waiting list, about the extent of choice they're entitled to express about the social rented housing they might be allocated. This will include information about the choices a person makes about the type of property they are interested in, can affect their likelihood of being made an offer.

13.18. We shall provide generalised information about social rented housing which has been allocated through our housing allocation scheme, to help people on the housing waiting list make decisions when they offered an allocation of social rented housing. This information might specify the number of people on the housing waiting list, give an indication of the reason why the property was allocated to the successful person and the level of priority they had under these rules (including the number of months and years since their registration date).

13.19. We shall provide generalised information about the number of direct lettings made.

13.20. We shall, upon request from a person we have put on the housing the length, provide personalised feedback about a particular vacancy they might have been interested in but it was not allocated to them. This might include their relative position on the housing the length or why they were unsuccessful. We shall provide advice about alternative housing options available.

13.21. We shall provide information on estimated waiting times, for example, by property type, number of bedrooms, electoral ward area, etc.

13.22. We shall provide people we have put on the housing register, information about particular social housing which they are being allocated or offered. As much as possible, this information shall be provided using symbols and maps. This information shall also be provided in large print, braille, made available on disk or tape, and be translated upon request. This information shall help people to decide whether to accept or reject an allocation or an offer of social housing and whether a property meet their needs and any other requirements. We shall provide people with basic details about a property, for example –

a. location,
b. type (e.g. flat, bungalow, etc),
c. size (e.g. number of bedrooms),

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d. floor number (when the property is above the ground floor) , and whether or not it has a lift,
e. type of heating,
f. whether it has a garden,
g. the amount of rent payable,
h. type and level of adaptations,
i. condition of the property,
j. access to services (for example, GP surgery, schools, public transport),
k. information about transport, education and other local public services, and
l. what type of applicant is entitled or excluded from bidding for a property, or who will be given a preference for a property.

13.23. We shall obtain from applications, information to monitor the fairness of social housing allocations and compliance with equal opportunity requirements. Information about ethnicity, disability, gender, age, religion, and sexual orientation shall be collected through applications and information held on the housing waiting list.

13.24. We shall inform people of their right to make a complaint to the Equality and Human Rights Commission if they believe they have been discriminated against when decisions about the allocation of social rented housing have been made, when –
a. they apply to be included on housing waiting list,
b. when we make any decision about their application to be included on the housing waiting list, including when we amend it or remove it,
c. when we carry out a review and make a review decision, and
d. when we allocate social rented housing.

13.25. We shall, once an application is submitted, keep people informed about what happened next. This might include –
a. sending confirmation that the application has been received, when a decision will be made and what checks will be made,
b. asking for any information that has not been supplied by the person making the application and give a clear timescale for providing it and make them aware of how it may affect their application if they fail to provide it,
c. advising people that they must inform us about any changes in circumstances that could affect their application and level of priority, or
d. explaining when we will be in contact with them and the contacts they can expect throughout the allocation process.

13.26. We shall, once a decision has been made about whether an application is to be included on the housing waiting list, inform the person making an application about the decision and the reasons for it. When a decision is made to put a person on the housing waiting list, a person shall be informed about the level of priority they have

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been awarded, and that they should notify us about any changes in circumstances which could affect their application and their level of priority.

13.27. We shall aim to make decisions about a fully completed application to be included on the housing waiting list, once relevant supporting evidence has been submitted, within eight weeks of receiving an application. We shall not be able to make a decision about partially or incomplete application or when relevant supporting evidence has not been submitted. We shall verify applications when we receive them and make an initial assessment of the extent priority a person should be awarded. We will also carry out verification checks once again when an allocation of social housing is made. We shall not make unreasonable or onerous request for information and will only request information needed to assess eligibility and priority for social housing. In cases involving harassment or risk of domestic, sexual or other abuse, we shall never ask the alleged victim for evidence and shall take a persons stated fears as a sufficient.

13.28. We shall carry out checks to verify an application when it is received and when an allocation or an offer of social rented housing is made.

13.29. We shall be alert to applications for social housing which trigger a homelessness duty. We shall allow people applying to be included on the housing register, the opportunity to tell us about relevant information, including domestic abuse, as part of their application, to prevent people having to tell their story too many times and We shall make sure that we act on our duties at the earliest opportunity. Our staff shall have access to training and guidance about homelessness, domestic abuse, customer services, children's social care, and adult social care. They shall be able to refer to the relevant team or department or signpost the person appropriately.

13.30. We shall ask people when applying if they are a member of staff or related to a member of staff. Where this is the case, the member of staff concerned shall play no role in assessing the application and deciding the level of priority to be awarded or in making any offers of housing.

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14.0. Choice-based lettings

14.1 We shall offer people on the housing waiting list a choice of social rented housing that might be allocated to them. People will be able to express a preference (referred to as 'bidding') for particular social rented homes which are advertised as vacant on a website for our housing allocation scheme. This will allow people to express their preference for the social rented housing they wish to be allocated. We shall, whenever possible, take such preferences into account when allocating social rented housing.

14.2. We shall operate an 'open advertising' approach whereby all people on the housing waiting list, and members of the wider population, can find out about vacancies which are advertised on the housing allocation scheme website.

14.3. Supported accommodation shall be advertised via the housing allocation scheme website, to extend choice to as many people as possible. However, where supported housing and other social rented housing designated for a specific purpose (e.g. housing for older people, accessible housing adapted for disabled people, housing for people sleeping rough, etc) or is advertised alongside other homes, it will be made clear that only those people with relevant housing and/or support needs may express a preference for it. This shall be done, for example, by making clear in the details of the advert, only certain categories of people will be considered for the homes.

14.4. We shall work together with other relevant agencies and providers to ensure people can express a preference for social rented housing that is advertised on the housing allocation scheme website. This extends to people who do not have access to, or are unable to use a computer or the internet. People that that may have difficulty in express a preference for social rented housing without assistance, for example people with physical or mental impairments, shall have access to any necessary assistance to express a preference.

14.5. We shall make sure people receive sufficient information about social rented housing which are advertised, to enable them to make an informed decision as to whether or not to express a preference for it and whether to accept or reject an allocation or an offer of social rented housing. The following information will be made available when a social rented house is advertised:

a. provider type (e.g. private registered provider of social housing)
b. needs type (e.g. general needs, supported housing),
c. property type (e.g. bedsit, bungalow, flat or maisonette, house, shared bungalow, shared flat or maisonette, shared house, other, etc),
d. rent type (e.g. social rent rate, affordable rent rate or any other rent rate)
e. rent payable (e.g. per week),
f. tenancy term (e.g. fixed-term licence agreement, lifetime, other, etc),

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g. tenancy type (e.g. assured, assured shorthold, licence agreement, other)
h. location (e.g. property number, street address, post code),
i. number of bedrooms (e.g. one, two, three, four or more)
j. disability related adaptations (e.g. approach routes, ramps, steps, entrance doors, corridors and doors, lifts and stairs, gardens, adaptations already made to individual homes, etc)
k. support services (e.g. high levels of care/support to care home/similar provision, medium levels of support to an accommodation-based support service, low levels of support an accommodation-based support service, nursing care services to a care home),
l. condition of home (e.g. type of windows/boiler/insulation/walls, whether it has a loft, number of floors, installation of renewable technology (if so, what type), state of repair, modernity of amenities and services, heating system and energy performance certificate, year of build, whether it has a garden, etc).
m. local public services (e.g. distance to nearest GP surgery, schools/colleges, Jobcentre Plus, post office, public transport, etc)
n. typical running costs (e.g. Council Tax, heating, water, internet, etc)

14.6. We shall attach advertising criteria to particular homes, specifying that only people of a particular description may apply for that particular home, or people of a particular description will be given preference for that particular home. Advertising criteria will be used for:
a. when local lettings policies are being used to achieve housing management and other housing policy objectives; or
b. a certain proportion of social rented housing is to be let to people who have no identified housing need or only low-level need; or
c. too match people with access needs to accessible social rented housing.

14.7. We shall not allow every person to express a preference for any and every available social rented housing available to let. People shall not be permitted to express a preference for social rented housing, which would result in statutory overcrowding or under occupation (on a case-by-case basis, under occupancy might be allowed for hard to let properties or where we wish to bring down the child density ratio on an estate). Therefore, couples and single people will not usually be permitted to express a preference for a home that has more than one bedroom. We shall provide information when a property is advertised, to assist people in establishing whether or not they are entitled to express a preference in a particular social rented house available to let.

14.8. We reserve the right to make a direct let to manage the risk posed by some people or for other management reasons. A direct let is when a person is not offered a choice of accommodation. A direct let shall be made when a person is not expressing a preference for social rented housing that they would otherwise have been allocated

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or offered, except regarding some homeless applicants who will always be made a direct let. Examples of when a direct let might be made, include (the following list illustrative only and is not intended to be exhaustive):

a. people whose home has been compulsory purchased (where Tameside Council a private registered provider of social housing is required to offer a specific property to meet legal requirements); or
b. people who are social rented housing tenants, who need to leave their original home to facilitate an area regeneration scheme, who do not express a preference for any advertised social rented housing that would be suitable for them to occupy; or
c. people seeking a move under a witness mobility scheme; or
d. people subject to multiagency public protection arrangements (for assessing and managing the risks opposed by sexual and violent offenders), who pose a very serious risk to the community (e.g. MAPPA level 1 and 2 cases).
e. people who are homeless or owed a homelessness duty and are occupying temporary accommodation under the following duties or powers.
    i. the interim accommodation duty[1]
    ii. the short-term accommodation duty[2]
    iii. the main housing duty[3]
    iv. the duty to accommodate applicants who had deliberately and unreasonably refused to cooperate[4]
    v. the power to accommodate pending a decision on review[5]
    vi. the power to accommodate pending the determination of an appeal[6]
    vii. the power to secure accommodation and performance of the prevention duty or the relief duty[7]

14.9. We shall allow people the choice to reject an allocation of social housing. There will be a limit on the number of rejections allowed for people with – limited to one rejection of allocation of social housing

14.10. People that have a limit on the number of homes allocated to them that they are allowed to reject, shall once they have reached the limit of rejections they're entitled

[1] HA 1996, s 188(1), as amended by HRA 2017, s 5(2) for applications for homelessness assistance made on or after 3 April 2018.
[2] HA 1996, s 190(2), as amended by HRA 2017, s 5(2) for applications for homelessness assistance made on or after 3 April 2018.
[3] HA 1996, s 193(2), as amended by HRA 2017, s 5(2) for applications for homelessness assistance made on or after 3 April 2018.
[4] HA 1996, s 193C(4), as amended by HRA 2017, s 5(2) for applications for homelessness assistance made on or after 3 April 2018.
[5] HA 1996, s 188(3), as amended by HRA 2017, s 5(4), for applications for homelessness assistance made on or after 3 April 2018.
[6] HA 1996, s 204(4), as amended by HRA 2017, ss 4(6) and 5(11) for applications for homeless assistance made on or after 3 April 2018.
[7] HA 1996, s 205(3), as amended by HRA 2017, s 6, for applications for homelessness assistance made on or after 3 April 2018.

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to, be given a reduced preference for a period of 12 months. This approach is designed to minimise the time loss in making offers that are not accepted. We shall remind people on the housing register of the limit to the number of homes allocated to them, each time social housing is allocated to them. When a when a person rejects one or more allocation of social housing, a first step will be to encourage the person to review and discuss the decision they have made and any preferences they might have about the social housing to be allocated to them. Where they decline to do this or do so but then continues to reject allocations of social housing, a person shall be given reduced preference for a period of 12 months. When we make initial contact with a person to see if they're interested in a particular home, if they are not, for example because they are currently unwell, or the property is too far from their child's school, we might choose to bypass the person.

14.11. People that are owed a homelessness duty occupying temporary accommodation, shall not be allowed to reject social housing allocated to them, except when the home allocated would not be a suitable offer to bring a homelessness duty to an end.

14.12. We shall provide details about the properties which have been let, for example the level of priority that successful person had, the date they applied to be included on the housing register and any other feedback that enables people to assess their chances of success when they subsequently express a preference for social housing that is advertised on our housing allocation scheme website.

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15.0. People to have priority on the housing register

15.1. We shall prioritise people we have put on the housing waiting list in the following order –

a. people with urgent housing needs: Band A
b. people with priority housing needs: Band B
c. people with unmet housing needs: Band C
d. people with other housing need: Band D
e. people with reduced priority for housing: Band E

15.2. **Band A:** People with urgent housing needs –

a. urgent medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability, because –
    i. a condition is expected to be terminal and re-housing is required due to unsuitable accommodation or to provide a basis for the provision of suitable care; or
    ii. a condition is life threatening and existing accommodation is a major contributory factor; or
    iii. planned discharge from hospital is imminent and there is no accommodation available that is reasonable to occupy
b. being a member UK Armed Forces community who urgently need to move to suitable adapted accommodation because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability which they or a member of their household has sustained as a result of service in the UK armed forces or people needing accommodation as a result of leaving the UK armed forces and the loss of military accommodation, who are –
    i. former members of the UK Regular Armed Forces (including those who are close to leaving or have recently left the Regular Armed Forces); or
    ii. serving in the UK Regular Armed Forces and are suffering from a serious injury, illness (including mental ill health) or disability which is wholly or partially attributable to the person's service, including those who need to move to suitable adapted accommodation; or
    iii. serving or have served in the reserve forces and suffering from a serious injury, illness (including mental ill health) or disability which is wholly or partially attributable to the person's service; or
    iv. divorced or separated spouses or civil partners of Regular Armed Forces service personnel, who need to move out of accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence; or
    v. adult children of Regular Armed Forces service personnel, who cannot remain the family home;
c. You are suffering from serious domestic abuse, extreme violence or harassment that means it is immediately dangerous to stay living in your home and rehousing is part of a multi-agency plan to protect and safeguard you.
d. under-occupying social rented housing by the UK Government's Local Housing Allowance bedroom criteria (regardless of whether they claiming help for housing costs),

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e. a civic emergency, such as a flood, fire or other natural disaster.

15.3. **Band B**: People with priority housing needs –

a. being homeless and having no accommodation available to live in which they have a right to occupy, or because they cannot gain access to their accommodation or because their accommodation is movable and there is no place for them to put it and live in it,
b. owed a homelessness duty to;
    i. being threatened with homelessness, eligible for help and the local authority owes them a duty to prevent them from becoming homeless,
    ii. being homeless and eligible for help and the local authority owes them a duty to secure accommodation,
    iii. being homeless and eligible for help and in priority need and the local authority owes them a duty to secure accommodation,
c. being a care leaver who is
    i. a child aged 16 or 17, being looked after by Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council, and has been looked after by the local authority until after they reached the age of 16,
    ii. a child aged 16 or 17, who is not being looked after by Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council but was immediately before they stopped to be looked after, who was looked after by the local authority until after they reached the age of 16,
    iii. aged 18 or over who immediately before stopping to be looked after was looked after by Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council until after they reached the age of 16, and would continue to be so if they were under the age of 18, or they were being looked after by the local authority when they reach the age of 18 and immediately before stopping to be looked after they were a child who had reached the age of 16
    iv. aged 18 or over who immediately before stopping to be looked after was looked after by Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council until after they reached the age of 16, and would continue to be so if they were under the age of 18, or they were being looked after by the local authority when they reach the age of 18 and immediately before stopping to be looked after they were a child who had reached the age of 16, whom the local authority no longer have a duty to keep in touch, arrange for them to have a personal adviser, prepare and maintain a pathway assessment and plan and keep it under regular review, or support them.
    v. aged 16 but not yet 21, who has a special guardianship order in place (or if they are aged 18, it was in place before they reached that age, and who was looked after by Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council immediately before the special guardianship order was in place
    vi. aged 16 but not yet 21, who is no longer but was looked after, accommodated or fostered for at least three months when aged 16 or 17.

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d. Occupying overcrowded housing by the UK Government's Bedroom Standard, by 2 bedrooms or more.
e. medical or welfare ground, including grounds relating to a disability, that is adversely affected by current housing due to;
    i. a mental illness or disorder (including Armed Forces veterans with mental ill health, or
    ii. chronic or progressive medical conditions, or
    iii. infirmity due to old age, or
    iv. need improved heating (on medical grounds), or
    v. need sheltered housing (on medical grounds), or
    vi. need ground floor accommodation (on medical grounds), or
    vii. need for adapted and/or extra care facilities, bedroom or bathroom housing (where a person's existing home cannot be adapted due to the type of adaptations required, and/or the timescales involved to making adaptations, and/or the cost associated with making the adaptations), or
    viii. need to move, following hospitalisation or long-term care, or
    ix. making a planned move on from a drug or alcohol recovery programme, or
    x. a physical or learning disability or sensory impairment, or
    xi. learning difficulties, or
    xii. need to give or receive care, or
    xiii. need to recover from the effect of violence or threat of violence, or physical, emotional or sexual abuse (e.g. victims of domestic abuse), or
    xiv. ability to fend for self is restricted for other reasons, or
    xv. being approved to foster or adopt or being a special guardian, and family and friend carers (who have taken on the care of a child because their parents are unable to provide care), who need a larger home in order to accommodate a looked after child, or
    xvi. young people at risk (i.e. child(ren) in need, 16–17-year-olds, lone parents under 18), or
    xvii. people with behavioural difficulties, or
    xviii. being ready to make a planned move from supported housing (commissioned by us), where they are provided with care, support or supervision in resettlement accommodation, or a managed property, or a hostel for homeless people, or
    xix. being vulnerable (e.g. having learning disabilities) and not expected to find their own accommodation, who wish to live independently in the community, with appropriate care and support.

needing to avoid hardship to themselves or to others, by moving to another area of the local authority, for example to accessing specialised medical treatment.

15.4. **Band C:** People with unmet housing needs –

a. occupying housing which is short-term or occupied on insecure terms, who have a need for settled housing and they cannot reasonably be expected to find settle housing for themselves in the foreseeable future, due to –
    i. family or friends being able to accommodate only for a short-term period; or
    ii. social or private rented tenancy coming to an end; or

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iii. non-violent relationship breakdown; or
iv. required to leave asylum support accommodation

b. Occupying overcrowded housing by the UK Government's Bedroom Standard, by 1 bedroom.
c. being a large family needing four or more bedrooms, whose housing needs are not capable of being met by the housing options which are available,
d. having social or economic circumstances that mean they have difficulty in obtaining settled housing, due to –
    i. being in low paid, work or employment related training, earning no more than the National Minimum Wage (for those of at least school leaving age) or the National Living Wage (for those aged 21); or
    ii. in particular types of employment, where skills are in short supply in the local authority area, such as those defined as key worker, including the following occupations:
        a. education and childcare
        b. food and necessary goods
        c. health and social care
        d. key public services
        e. national and local government
        f. public safety and national security
        g. transport
        h. utilities and communication
e. Needing to move to for work (including an apprenticeship) related reasons, or needing to move to take up an offer of work and have a genuine intention to take up the offer, and the work is intended to last for more than 12 months, of 16 hours or more a week, or other similar reason
f. Being a Care Leaver who has no local connection to Tameside.

15.5. **Band D:** People with other housing needs –

a. living in tied accommodation and are required to leave because of retirement or redundancy;
b. an agricultural worker who is displaced from their home to accommodate another agricultural worker and the farmer cannot provide suitable alternative accommodation for the displaced worker and the displaced worker needs to be reused in the interests of efficient agriculture;
c. being social rented housing tenants seeking to transfer their tenancy to another social rented housing home,

15.6. **Band E:** People with reduced priority for housing –

a. having reached the limit of rejections of allocations of social rented housing they're entitled to and being given a reduced preference for a period of 12 months,
b. being a person that tried to manipulate the housing system, because they deliberately did or failed to do something in consequence of which the person ceased to occupy housing that was available for their occupation and which would've been reasonable for them to continue to occupy (including a person who entered into an arrangement under which they would be required to stop occupying their home) and they either intended by doing or failing to do that thing, to enable them to improve their chances of being

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allocated social housing or before doing or failing to do that thing, received information advice or other support provided or otherwise arranged by the local authority or other public authority that was adequate for the purpose of helping them to continue occupying their accommodation. This includes people who entered into an arrangement under which a person was required to stop living in their home, which it would have been reasonable for them to continue to occupy.

15.7. We shall use our housing ITC system to generate a list for any allocation based on property size, the choices made, and priority under these rules. The list will include anyone needing a property of that size and will then show applicant in descending order of priority. As a general rule, we shall allocate social housing to a person we have put on the housing waiting list who –

a. has the highest housing needs under these rules; and
b. has been on the housing register the longest amount of time (by registration date and then time); and
c. has attained the age of 16 years.

15.8. People who might fall into more than one band shall be placed in the band that gives them the greatest priority. We shall, when making decisions about prioritisation, disregard a persons' household members, if such household members are ineligible for an allocation of social housing.

15.8. Awarding of priority to a member of staff or family members shall be checked and approved by a senior manager of staff who are not involved in the day-to-day social housing allocations work. A full record of why a member of staff or family members was awarded any priority shall be kept.

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16.0. Allocations

16.1. We shall prioritise people we have put on the housing waiting and allocate social rented housing, following the procedure set out in these rules. Decisions about social rented housing allocations will be made by our employees tasked with administering social rented housing allocation functions.

16.2. When we allocate social housing to a person, we shall reconfirm that they remain eligible for an allocation of social housing and reconfirm their need for rehousing. We shall also highlight how long they have to make a decision about whether to accept the offer. We shall inform people that if they fail to respond to an allocation of social housing, without a good reason, then this will be considered a rejection of the allocation and count towards the overall total of rejections permitted. We shall allow people a reasonable period of time to make a decision about any social rented housing allocated to them, providing them with an opportunity to view the social rented housing before making a decision. We shall allow sufficient time for people who require additional assistance and/or support to arrange for an adviser or an advocate (who may be a friend or family member) to accompany them when viewing a home and to take advice in making their decision to accept or reject an allocation. When determining a reasonable period of time for a person to arrange a viewing, we shall take account of –

a. any difficulty a person might have who is working or has child or other care commitments to make arrangements to view the property,
b. the need for advocates or support workers to be present at the viewing, and
c. The persons circumstances, with consideration for each person with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

16.3. We reserve the right to not make allocation of social housing on grounds of risk. People shall be informed of the reasons for such decisions. People who pose a risk to themselves, to other individuals, or are risk from other individuals, for example due to sexual or violent offences, shall be restricted in the social rented housing that they will be allocated. The extent of risk posed shall be determined based on the facts and evidence available concerning a person's application. We shall seek reliable evidence to determine the extent of current or future potential risks and shall proportionately weigh this when making any decisions concerning risk. Any decisions made about risk shall give a person the benefit of the doubt where evidence is inconclusive. Before any final decision is reached about the extent of risk associated with a person, we shall provide a person an opportunity to comment on the intended decision concerning the extent and nature of the risk.

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16.4. Social rented housing designated or designed or substantially adapted (e.g. structural or other permanent changes to a house, for people are particular housing need, or for a specific purpose (e.g. housing for older people, accessible housing adapted for disabled people, housing for people sleeping rough, etc) or supported housing (e.g. extra care housing for vulnerable adults and older people, foyers for young people, etc) shall allocated or offered only to people with relevant housing and/or support needs.

16.5. A different criterion will be followed when allocating or offering social rented housing for the first time on new housing developments, or due to a local letting policy being in operation. Additionally, we shall also bypass a person on the housing register for an allocation of social rented housing, which would they otherwise have been allocated, where the home would not be suitable for that particular person (for example, due to needing to manage risks posed by or to a person from or to other people, or the accommodation would not meet their identified needs). We shall not bypass a person unless there are sound reasons for doing so. There will sometimes be good reasons why the person at the top of the housing waiting list is not allocated social rented housing and is bypassed on that occasion. Where we do bypass a person, which would otherwise have successfully been allocated social rented housing, we shall be provided them with the reasons for this decision. We shall keep a record of reasons behind decisions to bypass a person on the housing waiting list. This information will help in monitoring the operation of these rules and make sure that there is no systematically disadvantaging of particular individuals or groups. Typical reasons for bypassing a person on the housing waiting list might include –

a. the social rented housing is ground floor and accessible and the person does not need those features and there is another person who does,
b. the person has already refused a very similar the social rented housing and has said they're not interested in being allocated social rented housing that is similar, or
c. the social rented housing has been designed or adapted for people with particular needs and should be allocated to someone who needs a property of that type.

16.6. The fact that a person has been allocated social rented housing should not be treated as meaning that we have made a final decision to let it to them. We shall, on occasions, withdraw an allocation of social rented housing, when for example, a person;

a. is no longer eligible to be allocated social rented housing,
b. would be overcrowded or under-occupy the social rented housing if it was allocated to them,
c. does not require such adaptations, but they have been allocated social housing that has adaptations to make it accessible for a disabled person,

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d. is disabled and requires adaptations to be made to the social rented housing that has been allocated, to make accessible for them, but it is not possible for adaptations to be made to the social rented housing,
e. the social rented housing is designated as supported housing (e.g. sheltered housing, extra care housing) and the person does not need such social rented housing, or
f. the person would be at risk of domestic abuse, violence, or threat of violence due to the locality of the social rented housing that has been allocated to them.

16.7 . We shall on occasions, use our discretion and make an allocation outwith these rules. An example of this is if a police service recommends someone moves home because they are being harassed and asks for help to rehouse a person immediately. Another example would be when a local authority requests a reciprocal letting. We shall when using discretion, make sure that a person has exceptional level of need, greater than others on the housing waiting list or the circumstances are also extreme or unusual that they would not be adequately prioritised for social rented housing. We do not expect to need to exercise discretion on a regular basis. We shall keep clear audit trails when discretion has been used and record the reasons for the allocation of social housing. There shall be clear authorisation processes in place, with authorisation by a chief officer.

16.8. We shall make suitable and sustainable allocations and offers where there is a good probability of providing a long-term and stable solution for a person on the housing waiting list and surrounding neighbours. We shall make sure that allocations do not lead to housing management problems and instead result in a sustainable tenancy. To do this we shall make use of sensitive allocations or offers. When making a sensitive allocation, instead of automatically allocating social rented housing to a person at the top the housing waiting list, careful consideration shall be given to the suitability of a person for the vacant social rented housing, based on the information about that person and knowledge of the property, it's location or neighbours. We shall balance a range of factors including a person's housing need, their suitability for a social rented house, and needs of prospective neighbours. For example, allocating a hard to let social rented house which may exasperate problems which led a person to become homeless in the first place, or placing a person with social or other problems in the same area which can cause problems for both those from the area itself and for housing management, shall be kept in mind when allocating social rented housing to any person on the housing waiting list. We shall only use a sensitive allocation where there are good reasons for doing so and keep a record of all decisions were made, to make sure the decisions are accountable and transparent. We shall monitor the use of sensitive allocations.

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16.9. People who are owed a homelessness duty have the right to refuse an allocation of social rented housing, but shall still be subject to an overall limit on the number of allocations or offers they are allowed to reject. If a person does refuse a suitable allocation or offer of social rented housing (within the meaning of the term set out homelessness law), Tameside Metropolitan borough Council shall make them aware that a duty of homelessness assistance might have come to an end. People shall be allowed to remain on the housing waiting list if they continue to be eligible for an allocation of social rented housing, although they will no longer be given priority due to being owed a homelessness duty. Instead, their housing needs will be reassessed and any priority given will be based on their housing needs at this time. If a person continues used to be homeless at this time, then they will continue to be afforded a priority due to this fact.

16.10. We shall make a final decision on whether it is appropriate to allocate any particular social rented housing to any particular person on the housing waiting list. When doing so the following shall be taken into account –

a. provision type (for example, the social rented housing is supported housing or housing for older people and person has no need for such housing, or the social rented housing is general needs housing and a person has a need for supported housing or housing for older people),
b. rent type and charge (for example, a person cannot afford the pay the rent and all other property related charges for the social rented housing),
c. unit size (for example, a person and their household would be overcrowded or under-occupy the social rented housing),
d. letting criteria restrictions (for example, the social rented housing must be allocated to disabled people with accessibility needs),
e. condition of the social rented housing (for example, repairs and maintenance need to be carried out to the social housing and these cannot be completed while the social rented housing is occupied, or any repairs and maintenance required cannot be completed within a reasonable period of time after person might otherwise have moved into the social housing),
f. accessibility (for example, it is not possible to make necessary adaptations, either at all or within a reasonable period of time after a person might have otherwise moved into the social rented housing),
g. location (for example, the social rented housing would result in a person or members of their household being at risk to or from others).

16.11. We shall when deciding if a person's household is overcrowded, for the purpose of determining the priority they should be afforded, make an assessment against the UK Government's bedroom standard.

16.12. We shall when deciding if a person's household is under-occupied, for the purpose of determining the priority they should be afforded, make an assessment against the

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UK Government's Local Housing Allowance bedroom criteria, which can be viewed here.

16.13. We shall when allocating or offering social rented housing, use the UK Government's Local Housing Allowance bedroom criteria, to decide the number of bedrooms a person (taking account of who is usually a member of their household) requires. The following types of number of bedrooms will be allocated to people with the following bedroom need:

Bedsit	Any adult/couple or Any person aged 16 years or over
One-bedrooms	Any adult/couple or Any person aged 16 years or over
Two-bedrooms	Any adult/couple With any <u>one</u> of the following: i. Any person aged 16 years or over ii. Two children of the same sex aged 15 years or under iii. Two children aged 9 years or under iv. Any other child v. A member of a couple who cannot share because of a disability or medical condition vi. A child who cannot share because of a disability or medical condition vii. A foster child viii. A non-resident carer providing overnight care to a person or a member of their household
Three bedrooms	Any adult/couple With any <u>two</u> of the following: i. Any person aged 16 years or over ii. Two children of the same sex aged 15 years or under iii. Two children aged 9 years or under iv. Any other child v. A member of a couple who cannot share because of a disability or medical condition vi. A child who cannot share because of a disability or medical condition vii. A foster child viii. A non-resident carer providing overnight care to a person or a member of their household
Four bedrooms	Any adult/couple With any <u>three</u> of the following:

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	i. Any person aged 16 years or over ii. Two children of the same sex aged 15 years or under iii. Two children aged 9 years or under iv. Any other child v. A member of a couple who cannot share because of a disability or medical condition vi. A child who cannot share because of a disability or medical condition vii. A foster child viii. A non-resident carer providing overnight care to a person or a member of their household
Five bedrooms	Any adult/couple or Any person aged 16 years or over With any <u>four</u> of the following i. Two children of the same sex aged 15 years or under ii. Two children aged 9 years or under iii. Any other child iv. A member of a couple who cannot share because of a disability or medical condition v. A child who cannot share because of a disability or medical condition vi. A foster child vii. A non-resident carer providing overnight care to a person or a member of their household
Six bedrooms	Any adult/couple With any <u>five</u> of the following: i. Any person aged 16 years or over ii. Two children of the same sex aged 15 years or under iii. Two children aged 9 years or under iv. Any other child v. A member of a couple who cannot share because of a disability or medical condition vi. A child who cannot share because of a disability or medical condition vii. A foster child viii. A non-resident carer providing overnight care to a person or a member of their household

16.14. We shall use local letting policies to allocate particular social rented housing to people of a particular description and achieve a wide variety of housing management and other housing policy objectives, for example –

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a. to reduce the proportion of older children/young adults on an estate to reduce the incidences of antisocial behaviour;
b. to deal with concentrations of deprivation or create more mixed communities, by setting aside up proportion of social rented housing for people who are in employment or to enable people to take up employment;
c. attract essential workers or people in particular types of employment where skills are in short supply, into an area by giving them priority for a small number of social rented housing;
d. set aside portion of social rented housing to help the housing of people whose employment requires them to be mobile, such as members of the UK Armed Force community.

16.15. A local letting policy shall be operated alongside this main rules and act as an additional set of rules which will be considered and applied. A local letting policy shall be supported by evidence on why it is required. A local letting policy shall have clear outcomes and have a time limit for when the policy needs to be reviewed, to determine whether it continues to be necessary for a policy to remain enforce. A local letting policy shall be published. Local lettings policies shall not prevent the local authorities from meeting their statutory duties, need of applicants owed statutory duties shall take priority over the objectives of local lettings policies. Local lettings policies shall not be discriminatory of people with protected characteristics to defined by the Equality Act 2010.

16.16. We shall, before adopting a local letting policy, consult with people (e.g. social rented housing tenants, people on the housing waiting list and other key stakeholders) who are likely to be affected by it. For example, when a local lettings policy is to apply to particular area, social rented housing tenants and residents in the area shall be consulted. Private registered providers of social housing shall also be consulted a relation to and where appropriate (e.g. where stock they own is included in a relevant area) involved in developing local letting policies.

16.17. The proportion of social rented housing which shall be made available through a local letting policy will depend on the particular circumstances and factors at play, such as the size and composition of the waiting list, the stock profile, and the number and type/size of vacancies which are available overall.

16.18. We shall publish local letting policies as separate documents, which will be revoked or revised as appropriate. They shall include an explanation of the local letting policy which shall be evidence based. Where is intended that a local letting policy shall be time limited, it shall include an appropriate exit strategy.

16.19. We shall monitor and review local letting policies regularly, as to their effectiveness, to make sure decisions are fair and not discriminatory, and where they are no longer

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appropriate or necessary. Copies of local lettings policies can be viewed on our websites.

16.20. We shall regularly review and update this scheme. We shall, before modifying this scheme, have regard to all relevant statute and local strategies and policies, including Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council's:

a. homelessness strategy
b. tenancy strategy

16.21. Making an allocation of social housing to a member of staff or family members shall be checked and approved by a senior member of staff who is not involved in the day today social housing allocations work. A full record of why a member of staff or their family member was allocated any specific social housing shall be kept.

16.22. If a person accepts an allocation, we shall provide them with all the appropriate tenancy start information. This shall include information about signing the occupancy contract and when and how rent should be paid. we shall explain to them that we have separate policies and procedures explaining our tenancy start processes and tenancy sustainment help These are available upon request.

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17.0. Consultation

17.1. We shall, before making an alteration to these rules, which would be a major change of policy, send a copy of proposed alterations to every private registered provider of social housing which own stock in the borough of Tameside and provide them with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposals.

17.2. Before changing or making new rules about who gets housing, we shall:

a. consult with

    a. anyone who has been put on our housing registers,
    b. social housing tenants
    c. tenant organisations
    d. other people who are interested in the allocation of social housing

b. put together and share a report about what we consulted about.

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18.0. Information about these rules for allocating social housing

18.1. We shall publish a summary of these rules and provide a copy of the summary free of charge to any person who requests one. A copy of the summary is available to download from our website. Copies of the scheme summary can also be requested by contacting us.

18.2. We shall make available a copy of these rules for inspection at our offices. We shall, upon request from a person, provide a copy of these rules, on payment of a reasonable fee to cover the cost of printing a copy.

18.3. We shall, when making a significant change to these rules, which would affect a large number of people on the housing waiting list, notify them of the change. We shall, consult on changes to these rules. We shall engage with a wide range of stakeholders (e.g. health services, community justice services, voluntary organisations, etc), as well as people on the housing waiting list, social housing tenants, the general public, anyone who is affected by or interested in the way social housing shall be allocated and anyone who is affected by or interested in the way we shall allocate social rented housing. The approached taken to consultation will depend on the nature extent of the changes that are being proposed to be made. This might involve –

a. a small sounding board group of tenants and people on the housing waiting list,
b. a tenant scrutiny panel, or
c. surveys.

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19.0. Guidance

19.1. We shall refer to statutory guidance published by the UK Government when reviewing and amending these rules and when making decisions about social housing allocations.

19.2. We shall refer to other relevant guidance published by other public bodies, such as the Equality and Human rights Commission, the Information Commissioners Office, the Public Services Ombudsman, etc, when reviewing and amending these rules and when making decisions about social housing allocations.

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20.0. Co-operation between registered social landlords and local authorities

20.1. Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council shall work together with private register providers of social housing that own and manage stock in the borough of Tameside, to make best use of the available social housing in the local authority area. Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council shall make requests to private registered providers of social housing, for them to offer an allocation of social housing to people on the housing waiting list.

20.2. Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council shall comply with requirements set out in a nomination agreement with private registered providers of social housing, when making requests for social rented housing to be made available to persons from the housing waiting list.

20.3. Nomination agreements shall have clear aims and be based on a robust analysis of need and demand. Nomination agreements shall set out the proportion of letting that will be made available by private register providers of social housing that own or manage stock in borough of Tameside, to Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council. Nomination agreements shall set out any criteria which has been adopted for accepting or rejecting nominations and how any disputes shall be resolved. Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council shall monitor and regularly review nomination agreements, to demonstrate that obligations are being met and to ensure they reflect changing needs and demand.

20.4. Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council shall, when making nominations to a private registered provider of social housing, make sure the details of a nominated person are accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date and in particular provide information about any vulnerability, support needs and arrangements for support, where this information is available.

20.5. Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council shall also agree information shown protocols with private register providers of social housing who own or manage stock in the borough of Tameside, covering issues such as rent arrears, antisocial behaviour and support needs.

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21.0. False statements and withholding information

21.1. We shall consider, when a person knowingly or recklessly makes a false statement, or knowingly withholds information that would be reasonable to provide on a housing waiting list application, (including in response to subsequent request to update their application and also during review proceedings), as a reason for disqualification from joining the housing waiting list.

21.2. We shall look at the circumstances of each person rather than applying a blanket approach and whether to institute criminal proceedings against a person who has given false information or withheld information.

21.3. We shall take appropriate steps to vet employees who make decisions about social housing allocations or require some decisions to be validated by a senior member of staff, via a system of random checks, to minimise the risk of employees allocating social housing incorrectly or potentially fraudulently.

21.4. People applying to be included on the housing waiting list shall be asked to sign a declaration that the information they have provided is correct to their knowledge. People will be advised that we shall raise action in the court and they could be liable to pay a fine. People allocated social housing shall be informed that we will raise action in the court for recovery of possession where a tenancy has been given on the base of information being knowingly withheld or false information knowingly supplied by a person.

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22.0. Elected members and private registered provider management committees

22.1. Elected members of Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council shall not be part of a decision-making body at the time an allocation decision is made, when either the accommodation concerned is situated in their electoral ward or the person subject to the decision has their sole or main residence there.

22.2. Elected members shall be permitted to represent their constituents in front of any decision-making body, such as seeking or providing information on behalf of their constituents, and be permitted to participate in the decision-making bodies deliberations prior to a decision.

22.3. Elected members shall not attempt to confer an advantage on any person seeking an allocation of social rented housing. Elected members shall ensure compliance with the Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council's code of conduct and shall consider whether they are required to declare an interest before participating in such deliberations. Elected members shall seek obtain advice from Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council's monitoring officer, should there be any doubt.

22.4. Elected members shall be involved in policy decisions that affect the generality of social rented housing in their electoral ward.

22.5. Elected members shall be involved in policy decisions that affect the generality of social rented housing in local authority area.

22.6. Elected members shall be responsible for determining social housing allocation policies and monitoring the implementation of these rules, to ensure the operation of the rules is open and accountable and systems are compliant with Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council's policy objectives.

22.6. Private registered provider governing body management committee members have a role to set and review rules for allocating social housing, monitoring progress against organisational aims, generally approving social housing allocation rules and procedures and having overall responsibility for making sure rules are adhered to

22.7. Private registered provider management committees must have no involvement in discussions or decisions about individual allocations of social housing.

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Terminology

Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council means the local housing authority for the borough of Tameside

Private registered provider of social housing means the landlord of social rented housing that is on a register of providers of social housing established by the Regulator of Social Housing. These are commonly known as housing associations and are also often charitable organisations.

Social rented housing means homes low-cost rental accommodation that is made available for rent below the market rate, for people whose needs cannot be met by the commercial housing market.

General needs housing means bulk of social rented housing. It includes both self-contained units and non-self-contained bedspaces. It is stock that is not designated for specific client groups or delivered under specific investment programmes.

Supported housing means social rented housing provided by a private registered provider that is made available only in conjunction with the supply of support and is made available exclusively to a person who has been identified as needing that support and falls into one or both of the following categories (i) accommodation that has been designed, structurally altered or refurbished in order to enable residents with support needs to live independently, and (ii) accommodation that has been designated as being available only to individuals within an identified group with specific support needs. For the purpose of this definition, support includes –

- Sheltered accommodation
- Extra care housing
- Domestic violence refuges
- Hostels for the homeless
- Support for people with drug or alcohol problems
- Support for people with mental health problems
- Support for people with learning disabilities
- Support for people with disabilities
- Support for offenders and people at risk of offending
- Support for young people leaving care
- Support for teenage parents
- Support for refugees

Social rent means low-cost rental units that are general needs or supported housing.

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Affordable rent means social rented housing that is provided by a private registered provider let at an affordable rent (inclusive of property related service charges) that must not exceed 80% of gross market rent of an equivalent property.

Non-self-contained unit (bedspace) means social rented housing that consists of an area in a hostel/dormitory or other similar entity or a room or rooms (with a block of flat, sheltered scheme, house in multiple occupation or similar entity) which are private to the tenant but which requires sharing of some or all living, cooking, bathroom or toilet amenities.

Self-contained unit means social rented housing in which all the rooms (including kitchen, bathroom and toilet) in a home are behind a door which only the occupied household can use and therefore allows that household exclusive use of them. Some self-contained units, especially flats, may have some common areas (such as a shared entrance hall) or services (such as essential boiler for heating and/or hot water).

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