

Oxford City Council Allocations Scheme Summary

Effective from 18 December 2024

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1. Introduction

The Allocations Scheme is the policy the Council uses to allocate social housing in Oxford and to prioritise those in housing need on the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing for offers of housing. This is a summary provided for guidance only. A full copy of the Allocations Scheme is available on the Council website

<https://www.oxford.gov.uk/>.

Below a summary of the number of properties that have become available to let over the last 2 years (see Appendix I for a more detailed breakdown of the type and size of properties that have become available).

Number of Properties Let During 23/24: 563

Number of Properties Let During 24/25: 450

There are currently over 3800 households on the Housing Register and only around 530 properties are expected to become available to let in Oxford during 2025/26. Due to the high number of households applying for housing in Oxford and the low amount of properties that become available each year many housing applicants will not receive an offer of housing. Only households in high housing need are likely to receive an offer of housing and some may have to wait many years before they are housed.

The Council works within the legal and regulatory framework governing the allocation of social housing. The Allocations Scheme seeks to balance local needs and aspirations with current legislation, guidance, and best practice as well as local housing conditions.

2. Applying for housing

2.1 The Housing Register

Oxford City Council has formed a partnership with the major Private Registered Providers (PRPs) of Social Housing within the City. This is the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing (ORAH) Partnership. The Council maintains a common Housing Register on behalf of the partnership. There is a single application process for all housing. Most social housing in Oxford is allocated through the scheme. See Appendix II for a list of the ORAH partners.

The Housing Register consists of three separate housing lists.

The Homeless List is for applicants to whom the Council has accepted a statutory homeless duty and placed in temporary accommodation waiting an offer of housing. Not all housing applicants on the Homeless List will be offered social housing. Homeless applicants have less choice about where they are housed or the type of

property they can apply for. Homeless applicants can be offered private rented accommodation and this will normally be outside of Oxford. If a homeless applicant refuses an offer of housing without good reason the Council will no longer have a duty to accommodate them and they will need to move from temporary accommodation and will be removed from the Homeless list. Housing applicants who are homeless or threatened with homelessness should contact the Housing Needs Team to discuss their housing options.

The Transfer List is for tenants of the Council and other ORAH partners living in social housing in Oxford applying to move to alternative housing. Tenants seeking to transfer need to complete a Transfer application form (available on the Council website) and their Housing Officer will need to complete a Landlord Reference for them. For any queries about applying for a transfer or assistance tenants should contact their Housing Officer or a member of the Housing Needs Team.

Many tenants seeking to move on the Transfer List are unlikely to receive an offer of housing unless they are in high housing need and some, particularly larger families, may have to wait many years before they are re-housed. Tenants should consider other housing options too such as applying for a mutual exchange as this may be a quicker solution. To apply for an exchange tenants should register on-line on the national mutual exchange website www.homeswapper.co.uk or contact their Housing Officer for assistance or more information about how to do this.

Tenants seeking to downsize to a smaller property or older persons housing (suitable for households 55+) where the property they are leaving can be re-let to a family in housing need are awarded high priority to move on the Transfer List. The Council offers financial compensation and assistance to tenants of the Council seeking to downsize (more information is available on the Council website or from the tenant's Housing Officer or the Housing Needs Team and a call back or home visit can be arranged if required). Other ORAH tenants may also be able to get assistance from their own Registered Social housing provider and should check with their Housing Officer.

The General Register List is for all other households applying for social housing in Oxford. To apply for inclusion on this list an applicant must complete a General Register housing application form and supply the supporting information indicated on the form. Most housing applicants on the General Register List seeking re-housing are unlikely to receive an offer of housing unless they are in high housing need and should consider other housing options to resolve their housing situation. Households in high housing need may still have to wait many years before they are made an offer of housing – particularly larger families.

For information on the Housing Options available customers should check on the Council's website or contact the Housing Needs Team.

3. Eligibility and Qualification for Inclusion on the Housing Register

Only housing applicants who are eligible for housing and who qualify for an allocation of housing in Oxford will be included on the housing register and considered for offers of accommodation.

Applicants who are not eligible or do not qualify for housing will not be included on the housing register. If an applicant has already been included on the Housing Register and is found to no longer be eligible for housing, or to no longer qualify for housing, they will be removed from the housing register and notified.

3.1 Housing Applicants Not Eligible For Housing

- Persons from abroad are not eligible for inclusion on the housing register if by virtue of their immigration status they are ineligible for an allocation of housing
- Persons aged under 18 will not normally be offered social housing unless there are exceptional circumstances

3.2 Housing Applicants Who Qualify For Inclusion on the Housing Register

Only housing applicants who have a qualifying connection to Oxford, with some exceptions, will normally qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register and a possible offer of housing. However, some housing applicants applying to be included or already included on the Housing Register who would normally qualify can effectively be disqualified and excluded or removed from the Housing Register under certain circumstances. See section 3.3 on “Who may Not Qualify for Inclusion on the Housing Register”.

A qualifying connection is established by way of one or more of the following:

1. The applicant or joint applicant is permanently resident in Oxford and that residence is of their own choice and has been continuously so for at least 6 months.
2. The applicant or joint applicant was previously a permanent resident in Oxford as a matter of choice and the period of residence was either:
 - At least six out of the last twelve months or
 - Three out of the last five years
3. The applicant or joint applicant is employed in Oxford for a minimum of sixteen hours per week and the work is not of short-term, marginal or of a temporary nature. Employment ancillary to work in another District outside of Oxford and voluntary work is excluded.

4. The applicant or joint applicant has close family associations with Oxford.

Family association will normally be defined in relation to close relatives (parents, adult children or siblings) and where there is no estrangement. However, other family associations may be taken into account (for example dependent children, grandparents, grandchildren and step relations) where there is evidence of frequent contact, commitment or dependency.

To qualify, the relatives must live in Oxford now and have been continuously resident for a minimum of five years.

5. These are the exceptions to the above:

- Existing or former members of the regular armed forces;
- Bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the regular armed forces who are no longer entitled to reside in Services Family Accommodation and the death of the spouse or civil partner was attributable (wholly or partly) to service; or
- Serving or former members of the reserve forces who need to move because of a serious injury, illness or disability attributable (wholly or partly) to that service.
- Applicants aged 60 years or older with no local connection to the City assessed as eligible and suitable for older persons housing;
- “Life and Limb” and other exceptional cases, such as those fleeing domestic abuse who need to move away from another area to escape violence or harm, or that have moved to Oxford and approached the Council for housing assistance who are considered to be in high housing need and others on a case-by-case basis. It is expected these cases will be very rare due to the high levels of applicants in housing need with a connection to Oxford already on the Housing Register.
- Homeless clients within the Homeless Alliance accommodation in the City awarded an exemption prior to entering the Pathway in relation to Rough Sleeping who have no qualifying connection with any area may at the discretion of the Allocations Manager be included on case-by-case basis.
- Residents in Homeless Alliance accommodation living in Oxford with only a pathway connection to Oxford that have continuously lived in there (normally for at least 12 months) may be included at the discretion of the Assessment and Allocations Team.
- Long term residents in Mind or Response Housing (normally for a minimum of 2 years) without a qualifying connection to Oxford or elsewhere may be included at

the discretion of the Allocations Manager and awarded a qualifying connection to Oxford.

- Long term residents of other “temporary” accommodation (normally a minimum of 2 years), including Emmaus, without a qualifying connection to Oxford or elsewhere, maybe included at the discretion of the Allocations Manager and awarded a qualifying connection to Oxford.
- Qualifying tenants living in social housing outside of the City who work or need to move to Oxford to take up an offer of work and if they are unable to do so would cause them hardship. Any such applications will be assessed under Right to Move legislation and guidance.
- Care leavers who have been placed in accommodation under s.22A of the Children Act 1989 (accommodation arranged for and provided by a local authority) so as to have been normally resident in the council’s district for a continuous period of at least 2 years, including some time before they turned 16, will also have a qualifying connection with that district until they turn 21 years of age.

A qualifying connection through residence is not established in situations including, where the applicant is:

- In prison, a probation hospital or similar accommodation such as the Compass Project within Oxford;
- Detained in Oxford under the Mental Health Act;
- Living in temporary or supported accommodation, which would normally be able to access the “Move-on” scheme within City, but whose only connection to Oxford is established through residence in such accommodation. This includes, but not exclusively, residents living in accommodation that forms part of the Homeless Pathway, Mental Health Pathway or the Sapling Project;
- Living in any other form of accommodation considered “temporary” in nature, including hospital accommodation and other forms of supported accommodation not normally able to access the “Move-on” scheme and emergency interim accommodation provided by an authority in fulfilment of a homeless duty.

3.3 Who May Not Qualify for Inclusion on the Housing Register

Where the behaviour of a housing applicant or a member of the applicant’s household is unacceptable, or where the applicant has not demonstrated financial

responsibility; the Council may not register the applicant or may remove them from the Housing Register. A member of the Allocations and Assessment Team will normally exclude an applicant whose behaviour has been unacceptable. Unacceptable behaviour includes rent arrears and anti-social behaviour.

3.3.1 Housing Applicants with Rent Arrears

The Council and the other ORAH partners treat the non-payment of rent very seriously. Where a housing applicant has rent arrears they can be excluded from qualifying for inclusion on the Housing Register.

Rent arrears are defined as any money owed in the form of non-payment of rent, former tenant arrears, hostel charges, chargeable repairs (including any deductions from deposits paid for by the Council's Private Sector Team where the damage is considered to be wilful or unreasonable) and associated Possession Order court costs. Amounts under £200, when combined, may be disregarded for this purpose.

Housing applicants with rent arrears relating to a property where they have previously lived will not normally qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register and will be excluded where they are:

- A former tenant of the Council, another Local Authority or a Private Registered Provider of social housing and have been evicted from, or given up their former property, owing rent arrears and still have unpaid rent arrears outstanding (which are legally recoverable) and have not been re-paid in full.
- A former tenant of a Private Landlord and have been evicted from, or given up their former property, owing rent arrears in excess of 2 months or more (which are legally recoverable) and have not been re-paid in full. This includes the loss or partial loss of a deposit paid for the by Private Sector Team due to re-charges caused by wilful or unreasonable damage to a property (not due to reasonable wear and tear).

Housing applicants that currently hold a tenancy and meet one or more of the following criteria will not normally qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register and will be excluded where they are:

- A tenant of The Council, another Local Authority or a Private Registered Provider of social housing where a Court Possession Order has been issued regarding rent arrears, the tenant is in breach of the Court Order and/or on-going action is being taken to evict the tenant.
- A tenant of a private sector landlord where a Court Possession Order has been issued regarding rent arrears, the tenant is in breach of the Court Order and/or on-going action is being taken to evict the tenant.

Where a former tenant has been excluded from the housing register and still owes rent arrears that have not been re-paid in full they will not usually qualify for inclusion

on the housing register until the Council is satisfied that they have proved they are suitable to become a tenant. Suitability can be demonstrated by the applicant making a reasonable re-payment agreement with the landlord, and adhering to it consistently for at least 12 months. The exclusion may be re-imposed where an applicant who has kept to a re-payment arrangement later defaults after being included on the housing register.

Where a current tenant with rent arrears has been allowed to join, or remain on, the Housing Register they will not normally be considered for an offer of housing until they have demonstrated they are suitable to be a potential tenant and have paid their arrears in full or maintained a satisfactory payment arrangement for a reasonable period of time. See the full Allocations Scheme for more details.

3.3.2 Housing Applicants Responsible for Unacceptable Behaviour

Oxford City Council and its ORAH partners take Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) very seriously.

Individual applicants where they, or members of their household, meet one or more of the following criteria will not normally qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register and will be excluded:

- Applicants who have been evicted from a Council, PRP or private rented property, for illegal subletting or antisocial behaviour;
- Breach of tenancy for behaviour which is a nuisance or annoyance to those in the locality of the dwelling; or a conviction for using the dwelling for immoral or illegal purposes, or committing an indictable offence in the dwelling, house, or in the locality of it;
- Domestic abuse/violence causing a partner or other family member to leave the property/or loss of an applicant's accommodation due to this;
- Deterioration of the dwelling house or furniture provided for use under the tenancy due to waste, neglect or fault;
- Tenancy induced by false statement or False statements
- Housing applicants or members of their household who are considered by the Council responsible for serious ASB including abusive or threatening behaviour to others;
- Applicants or household members who permit visitors that cause serious ASB; or,
- Where they have assaulted a member of staff.
- False or misleading statements or omissions, in connection with a housing application, benefit claim or award

Exceptions may be made by the Allocations Manager if there is persuasive evidence that behaviour has been amended and another tenancy has been successfully maintained.

Duration of Exclusion for Anti-Social Behaviour

Where an applicant has been dis-qualified for inclusion on the Housing Register:

For unregistered applications the sanction for anti-social behaviour will normally last for a minimum period of 5 years, after which the applicant must be able to prove that the exclusion is no longer valid.

If after a minimum of a year an applicant's circumstances change significantly and there is persuasive evidence, they have successfully modified their behaviour for a satisfactory period of time they may reapply. This is only expected to be in exceptional circumstances due to the serious nature of unacceptable behaviour and the impact and risk it has to others.

Note where an offence has been committed which potentially compromises another person's safety, this condition may be indefinite pending review.

3.3.3 Housing Applicants with Property or Savings

The Council may take into account the financial circumstances of housing applicants (including existing tenants living in social housing) when considering if an applicant qualifies for inclusion on the Housing Register. Social housing in Oxford is a scarce resource, and those applicants or members of their household with sufficient resources to secure alternative forms of accommodation without undue hardship may be excluded from the Housing Register. Housing applicants or members of their household with savings, investments or assets of £16 000 or more will not normally qualify for inclusion on the housing register and be considered for offers of housing. Housing applicants joining the Housing Register to apply for Shared Ownership accommodation will be allowed to join the housing register but will not normally be considered for an offer of social housing.

4. Assessment Of Housing Need And Priority For Housing

Housing applicants who are eligible and qualify for inclusion on the housing register will have their housing need assessed based on their current circumstances and be placed in one of five Housing Need Priority Bands and will also be notified of their Priority Band Start Date. A summary of the Housing Need Priority Bands is shown in Appendix III. The "band reasons" used are derived from the "reasonable preference groups" the Council is required to take into account when framing the Allocations Scheme and also includes "additional preference groups" too. See the Allocations Scheme for more details.

Before submitting a housing application form a housing applicant should ensure the form is fully completed. Housing applicants must also provide supporting information for their housing application including proof of identity, for each household member, proof of their income, proof of any savings or investments and proof of address.

Proof of residence rights in the UK and a landlord reference may also be required. Further information may also be required depending on a housing applicant's

circumstances, for example if have they a health or disability affecting their housing or other exceptional circumstances. The Housing Needs Team can provide further advice or arrange for assistance in completing a form if required.

If a housing applicant fails to fully complete their housing application form, provide all the information requested or notify the Housing Needs Team of a change in their circumstances this will result in a delay in their housing application being assessed. This may also affect their Housing Need Priority Band Start Date and can result in their housing application being cancelled altogether.

4.1 Calculation of the Size of Property a Household Requires & Overcrowding

The size of property a housing applicant is eligible to apply for is dependent on the size and make up of their household (see the Allocations Scheme for more details about the rules about who can and cannot be considered part of an applicant's household for re-housing purposes).

When assessing an applicant's housing need and the size of property they require, the number of bedrooms they have available is compared to the number of bedrooms they are assessed as requiring. If an applicant is considered to be lacking one or more bedrooms they will be considered to be overcrowded and this will be reflected in their Housing Need Priority Band (see Appendix III).

When assessing the number of bedrooms a housing applicant has available the Council will consider how the bedrooms available could be used, rather than how they are actually used by applying:

The Best Use Principle - best use should be made of the bedrooms available so that, for example, if 2 children of the same or opposite sex are considered young enough to share a bedroom, it will be assumed that they do for assessment purposes.

The Control Principle – there may be sufficient bedrooms in a property but the applicant cannot control how the bedrooms are actually used. They may, for instance, be a lodger or living with a family who control how bedrooms are used.

4.2 Bedroom Calculation Rules

Below are the rules that are used to decide whether a household has either too many or too few bedrooms available for its use when assessing their housing need and priority.

Each of the following will normally be considered to require their one bedroom:

- Each couple or a single applicant
- Each additional adult (aged eighteen and over) considered eligible to be part of the household
- Two children of the same sex aged under 16

- Two children of the opposite sex aged under 10
- Any other child

Note an unborn child will not be “counted” as a member of the household when calculating overcrowding and the size of property a household requires.

Appendix IV shows a summary of the size of property a housing applicant can normally apply for.

In exceptional circumstances larger families may be allowed to move to properties smaller than they require if it improves their housing situation and the property is considered large enough for the household. Similarly, if there is sufficient evidence an applicant or child requires a separate bedroom due to a health or disability issue or social and welfare reasons they may be assessed as eligible to apply for a larger property to meet their housing requirements.

Council or other ORAH partner tenants on the Transfer List seeking to downsize to a smaller property or move to a sheltered scheme are permitted to move to a property with one-bedroom more than they require to free up a property that could be re-let to a family in housing need (subject to it being considered affordable). See the Allocations Scheme for more details or contact the Housing Needs Team.

4. Choice-Based Lettings

The Council operates a Choice-Based Lettings (CBL) scheme to advertise the limited amount of properties becoming available to let each year in Oxford for those who are eligible and qualify for inclusion on the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing. CBL increases the choice available to most housing applicants (with some restrictions such as those on the Homeless List see the full Allocations Scheme for more details) but it cannot increase the number of properties becoming available each year.

Properties becoming available are advertised in a Lettings Cycle (currently every week) on the Council website.

Housing applicants on the Housing Register can then bid on suitable properties they are eligible to apply for during the Lettings Cycle and they are placed on a shortlist for the property. The CBL guide, available on the website, provides more details about how to use the CBL. After the lettings cycle closes a final shortlist is created listing all the housing applicants who have bid (applied) for the property in priority order taking into account their Priority Band, Priority Band Start Date and any other preferences stated on the advert.

5. Offers And Refusals

An Allocations Officer will check the shortlist after a property has been advertised and contact the successful housing applicant and send them a written offer of housing. The successful housing applicant is then given an opportunity to view the property before making a final decision about whether to accept the offer of the accommodation they have bid for.

The person who finishes first on the shortlist will normally be offered the property although this is not always the case. The Council and ORAH partners reserve the right not to offer the property to the person highest on the shortlist if the property offers a better match with the needs of another high priority applicant, the person is not considered suitable for an offer of housing or the property is not considered suitable for their housing requirements. If a housing applicant's circumstances have not been fully verified they may also be overlooked.

If a housing applicant is offered a property and refuses without good reason a penalty may be applied. Unreasonable refusals delay other applicants in housing need moving into a property, cost the Council and other landlords in lost staff time and can result in the landlord losing rental income from having longer void periods. If a housing applicant's reason for refusing is considered reasonable by the Allocations Team they will be able to continue to bid as normal.

Applicants on the Homeless List will normally be made one suitable offer of accommodation; this could be an allocation of social housing through the Allocations Scheme or an offer of suitable accommodation within the private rented sector made outside of the Allocations Scheme by a member of the Housing Needs Team to discharge the Council's homeless duty. This is subject to the right of review (see section 6).

If a homeless applicant refuses a suitable offer without good reason the Council will no longer have a duty to accommodate them and ask them to leave their temporary accommodation and to resolve their housing situation themselves. If the applicant does not move out the Council will take action to take possession of the property.

Applicants on the General Register or Transfer Lists who are considered to have unreasonably refused two suitable offers of accommodation within the last 12 months will be suspended from bidding for 12 months. With the exception of tenants on the Transfer List occupying a property suitable for a family and seeking to downsize to a smaller property. Other exceptions may also be made on a case-by-case basis by the Allocations Manager.

6. Reviews And Appeals

An applicant has the right to request an internal review of a decision taken that:

1. The Council has decided that an applicant is not a qualifying person for an allocation.
2. Not to register the application even if the applicant is in a reasonable preference group.
3. Not to allow applicants to bid for a specific period of time, or overlook them in shortlists while an outstanding issue is being resolved (for example investigations into certain circumstances or the agreed payment of tenancy arrears).
4. Not to make an offer to the highest bidding applicant, where information is available that would make the new tenancy unsustainable or unsafe (for example where an applicant has been allowed to register and has been given a priority, there may be certain properties or areas where it is inappropriate for them to be housed).
5. They are ineligible for an allocation by virtue of being a person subject to immigration control who is ineligible for a housing allocation.
6. They do not qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register.

Appendix I: Lettings Information For Oxford From 1/4/23 To 31/3/25

Below is a breakdown of the type and size of social housing properties owned by the Council and Registered Providers of social housing in Oxford that have become available to let during the last 2 years. Due to the acute shortage of social housing becoming available in Oxford most households approaching the Council for housing assistance are unlikely to be made an offer of housing. Even households in high housing need may have to wait many years before they are made an offer of housing.

Non-family Properties Let (only suitable for singles or couples)

Properties Let during 23/24

| | |
|------------------------|-----|
| 1 Bed Studio | 14 |
| 1 Bed Flat | 126 |
| 1 Bed Bungalow | 15 |
| 1 Bed House: | 2 |
| Total 1 Bed Properties | 157 |

Properties Let during 24/25

| | |
|----------------|-----|
| 1 Bed Studio | 20 |
| 1 Bed Flat | 117 |
| 1 Bed Bungalow | 18 |

| | |
|------------------------|-----|
| 1 Bed House | 0 |
| Total 1 Bed Properties | 155 |

Family Properties Let

Properties Let during 23/24

| | |
|------------------------|-----|
| 2 Bed Flat | 169 |
| 2 Bed Bungalow | 2 |
| 2 Bed Maisonette | 13 |
| 2 Bed House | 30 |
| Total 2 Bed Properties | 214 |

Properties Let during 24/25

| | |
|------------------------|-----|
| 2 Bed Flat | 109 |
| 2 Bed Bungalow | 3 |
| 2 Bed Maisonette | 6 |
| 2 Bed House | 43 |
| Total 2 Bed Properties | 161 |

Properties Let during 23/24

| | |
|------------------------|-----|
| 3 Bed Flat | 5 |
| 3 Bed Bungalow | 0 |
| 3 Bed Maisonette | 4 |
| 3 Bed House | 107 |
| Total 3 Bed Properties | 116 |

Properties Let during 24/25

| | |
|------------------------|----|
| 3 Bed Flat | 6 |
| 3 Bed Bungalow | 0 |
| 3 Bed Maisonette | 7 |
| 3 Bed House | 78 |
| Total 3 Bed Properties | 91 |

Properties Let during 23/24

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| 4 Bed House | 20 |
| 5 Bed House | 1 |
| 6 Bed House | 1 |
| Total 4+ Bed Properties | 22 |

Properties Let during 24/25

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| 4 Bed House | 26 |
| 5 Bed House | 2 |
| 6 Bed House | 0 |
| Total 4+ Bed Properties | 28 |

Sheltered/ Older Persons Housing

Sheltered accommodation is normally only let to housing applicant's aged 60 years or older (or sometimes 55+) with an assessed support need.
Bungalows are normally only let to households assessed as requiring a ground floor property or older applicants aged 55 years or older.

Older Person/Sheltered Properties Let during 23/24 (normally 60+ only)

| | |
|---|----|
| 1 Bed Studio Flat | 5 |
| 1 Bed Bungalow | 2 |
| 1 Bed Flat | 42 |
| 2 Bed Flat | 5 |
| Total Older Person / Sheltered Properties | 54 |

Older Person/Sheltered Properties Let during 24/25 (normally 60+ only)

| | |
|---|----|
| 1 Bed Studio Flat | 0 |
| 1 Bed Bungalow | 0 |
| 1 Bed Flat | 1 |
| 2 Bed Flat | 13 |
| Total Older Person / Sheltered Properties | 14 |

Appendix II: Oxford Register For Affordable Housing Partners

The Oxford Register for Affordable Housing is a partnership between Oxford City Council and the registered providers listed below:

- o A2Dominion Housing Group
- o BPHA
- o GreenSquare Group
- o Home Group
- o Legal and General
- o Orbit
- o Peabody
- o Soha Housing
- o Stonewater

- o Sovereign Housing Association
- o Thames Valley Housing

Appendix III: A Summary Of The Housing Need Priority Bands

Band 1 Exceptional Housing Need

- 1.1 Applicants assessed as having Exceptional circumstances, where there is an immediate risk to health and safety, complex needs, 'place of safety' cases or other emergency needs
- 1.2 Council or other ORAH partner tenants under-occupying their home by two or more bedrooms seeking to downsize to a smaller property or move to a sheltered scheme
- 1.3 Council or other ORAH partner tenants requiring a Decant and other housing management moves
- 1.4 Successor tenants who need to move to a more suitable property

Band 2 Urgent Housing Need

- 2.1 Housing applicants assessed as having "urgent social or welfare needs"
- 2.2 Housing applicants assessed as having "urgent health or disability needs"
- 2.3 Council or ORAH tenants under-occupying their home by one bedroom seeking to downsize to a smaller property or move to a sheltered scheme
- 2.4 Applicants who have been assessed as ready to move on from supported accommodation (quota arrangements are in place due to the lack of properties)
- 2.5 Overcrowded families assessed as being 2 or more bedrooms short of their housing needs
- 2.6 Any applicant with two or more compoundable categories in Band 3

Band 3 Significant Housing Need

- 3.1a Homeless applicants living in temporary accommodation accepted as homeless by OCC under s.193 of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996* (not compoundable)
- 3.1b Homeless applicants to whom OCC has accepted a Prevention or Relief duty under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (not compoundable and time limited)
- 3.2 Housing Applicants assessed as having Significant social or welfare needs
- 3.3 Housing applicants assessed as having Significant health or disability needs
- 3.4 Applicants assessed as living in sub-standard unsatisfactory housing: Category Level 1 Health Hazard (normally confirmed by Regulatory Services)
- 3.5 Overcrowded families or households assessed as being one bedroom short of their housing needs
- 3.6 Insecure tied accommodation where the loss of the accommodation is through no fault of the housing applicant
- 3.7 Insecure private rented accommodation where the loss of the accommodation is through no fault of the housing applicant

3.8 Any applicant who qualifies for at least two compoundable categories in Band 4

Band 4 Moderate Housing Need

4.1 Housing applicants assessed as having “moderate social or welfare needs”

4.2 Housing applicants assessed as having “moderate health or disability needs”

4.3 Housing applicants who are homeless and not in a priority group, sofa surfers, no fixed abode or in supported “move on” accommodation (not compoundable)

4.4 Applicants assessed as living in sub-standard unsatisfactory housing:

Category Level 2 Health Hazard (normally confirmed by Regulatory Services)

Band 5 No or Low Housing Need

5.1 Applicants who are adequately housed or no immediate need for housing

For further details see the full allocation scheme, available on the Council website. The details listed above are only intended as a guide. If you require further advice or would like to view the full Allocations Scheme contact the Housing Needs Team.

Appendix IV: Property Size Eligibility Summary

Below is a summary of the size of property a household can normally apply for through the Choice-Based Lettings Scheme.

Size of Household / Bedroom Eligibility

Single housing applicant / 1

Single housing applicant who is expecting a baby / 1

A Couple / 1

A Couple expecting a baby / 1

Couple/Single and 1 child / 2

Couple/Single and 2 children* / 2 or 3

Couple/Single and 3 children* / 3 or 4

Couple/Single and 4 children* / 3, 4 or 5

Couple/Single and 5 children* / 4 or more

*Important – the size of property a housing applicant with children can apply for is dependent on the size and make-up of the housing applicant’s family.

Each of the following will normally be considered to require their own bedroom:

- Each couple or a single applicant
- Each additional adult (aged eighteen and over) considered eligible to be part of the household
- Two children of the same sex aged under 16
- Two children of the opposite sex aged under 10
- Any other child

Housing applicants with 5 children or more will be considered to require 4 bedroom properties or larger depending on the age and make up of their family. Due to the

extreme rarity of 5 bedroom properties or larger, housing applicants requiring a 5 bedroom property or larger will be able to bid for 4 bedroom properties where the property is advertised as being large enough to accommodate their household.

Examples – children sharing

A housing applicant with 2 boys aged under 16 will normally only be considered to require a 2 bedroom property. Once the oldest child turns 16 the household will be considered to require a 3 bedroom property.

A housing applicant with 2 girls aged under 16 will normally only be considered to require a 2 bedroom property. Once the oldest child turns 16 the household will be considered to require a 3 bedroom property.

A housing applicant with 2 children, a boy and a girl both aged under 10, will normally only be considered to require a 2 bedroom property. Once the oldest child turns 10 the household will be considered to require a 3 bedroom property.