



# Draft Housing Allocation Scheme

2023 Summary Document and  
Frequently Asked Questions

Housing  
Needs



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF  
KENSINGTON  
AND CHELSEA

## Summary Document and Frequently Asked Questions

### 0 Introduction

The Draft Allocation Scheme 2023 seeks to strike a balance between the great need for affordable social rent level housing and the real shortage of available properties.

#### **It focuses on a combination of:**

- an enhanced offer to those homeless families who choose a move to the private rented sector instead of living in temporary accommodation, with a new priority category being created.
- Increasing the priority and points on the Housing Register to encourage those households with extra rooms, or who are in accessible properties that they do not need, to move to another home of their choice. The homes vacated will then be available for those needing a family sized or accessible home.
- a more explicit indication of waiting times, with the new annual award of waiting points.

#### **This factsheet provides some brief answers to the following frequently asked questions:**

1. Why does RBKC need an Allocation Scheme?
2. What is the housing register?
3. Who is able to join RBKC's housing register?
4. Which types of housing needs are prioritised?
5. Will you be able to choose a property?
6. How do we decide which home may be suitable?
7. How is housing allocated?
8. How many homes become available each year?
9. What is the Council doing to increase the number of homes?
10. Who can provide advice about applying to join the housing register?
11. What should you do if you are or think you may become homeless?
12. Are there other ways to find a home?
13. Who should you contact if you have a problem with an existing housing register application?
14. What can you do if you do not agree with a decision made about your application to the housing register?
15. Glossary – words and terms explained

		<p><b>This document provides a summary of the key points and lets you know where to look in the Draft Allocation Scheme 2023 if you do not find all the information you need here.</b></p>	
			<p><b>Relevant scheme sections or other sources</b></p>
<p><b>1</b></p>	<p>Why does RBKC need an Allocation Scheme?</p>	<p>A Housing Allocation Scheme is a council policy that explains how we rehouse residents to social housing – a home you can rent that is owned and managed by the Council or by a housing association. It sets out the rules for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• who can apply to be rehoused by the Council to social housing</li> <li>• what priority for rehousing the Council gives to residents who need a more suitable home – for example, because they need to move for health reasons, because they are overcrowded, or because they are homeless</li> <li>• how the Council lets available Council and housing association homes to residents on our Housing Register.</li> </ul> <p>All local councils, that let available Council and housing association homes, must have a Housing Allocation Scheme. The law sets out some rules that all councils have to follow in their Schemes. However, different councils have different Schemes – no two Schemes are exactly the same.</p>	<p><b>S.1</b> What does the housing allocation scheme do?</p> <p><b>Appendix one: The law on housing allocation schemes</b></p>

2	What is the housing register?	<p>The Housing Register is a record of every household that we agreed should be rehoused to a new Council or housing association home. Therefore, our Housing Register is a register of households that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. can apply for social housing in Kensington and Chelsea, and</li> <li>b. have a priority for moving to a better home.</li> </ul> <p>It is not a waiting list, though sometimes people call the Housing Register the ‘Council waiting list’. It is not like a queue and being registered is not a guarantee of being offered a new home.</p> <p>Where you are on our Housing Register is based mainly on your priority for rehousing. Your priority does increase the longer you have been waiting, but that is not the main factor.</p>	<p><b>Relevant scheme sections or other sources</b></p> <p><b>S.1</b> What does the housing allocation scheme do?</p>
3	Who can join RBKC’s housing register?	<p>There are rules about who can and cannot apply to our Housing Register and be rehoused in a Council or housing association home. You need to be both eligible and meet the qualification rules to join.</p> <p><b>1. Are you ‘eligible’ to join our Housing Register?</b></p> <p><b>This is mainly about your immigration status.</b> Usually, you are eligible, or have the right, to join our Housing Register and be rehoused to social housing if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• you are a British or Irish citizen</li> <li>• you have indefinite leave to remain</li> <li>• you have settled status under the EU settlement scheme</li> <li>• you have the ‘right of abode’ as a Commonwealth citizen</li> <li>• you have refugee status or humanitarian protection</li> <li>• you have a visa that allows you recourse to public funds</li> </ul>	<p><b>S.2</b> Who can apply to our housing register?</p> <p><b>S.3</b> Equality, diversity, and inclusion</p> <p><b>Appendix four: Immigration rules</b></p> <p><b>Appendix five: Exceptions to our local residency rule</b></p>

It's important to get advice to make sure you are eligible to join a housing register.

## 2. Do you 'qualify' to join our Housing Register?

We have local rules about who can join or 'qualify' for our Housing Register.

Four main reasons why you may not be able to apply are:

- i. Not living in Kensington and Chelsea for 3 years without a break
- ii. Not being given a priority or points for rehousing
- iii. Having enough money to be able to find your own housing
- iv. Being guilty of unacceptable or unreasonable behaviour

You need to be living in Kensington and Chelsea and have lived here for at least 3 years, without a break, before being able to join our Housing Register. This is called our 'local residency rule'.

However, this may not apply to you if:

- the Council has given you housing inside or outside of Kensington and Chelsea because we have a legal duty to help you – for example, you were homeless and we gave you temporary accommodation
- the Council has given you supported housing outside of Kensington and Chelsea
- we have agreed that we will rehouse you as part of a reciprocal or 'swap' agreement with another local council, social landlord or another organisation
- we have agreed to rehouse you as part of a national, regional or pan-London agreement to help rehouse households in certain circumstances, or because we are a member of a scheme such as the Police Witness Protection Scheme
- you are serving or have served in the Armed Forces, or a family member is serving or has served in the Armed Forces

**Relevant scheme sections or other sources**

**Appendix three:  
The 'right to move' for work for existing social housing tenants**

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• you are a tenant in a Kensington and Chelsea Council home located outside of the Borough</li> <li>• you have the ‘Right to Move’ and apply to this Council for rehousing.</li> <li>• We can decide to allow other communities or people to apply to join our Housing Register even if they are not living in Kensington and Chelsea when they apply and have not lived here for at least three years without a break. For example, this might include households who are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse, members of the Travelling Community, or former unaccompanied asylum seekers who are leaving our care.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Relevant scheme sections or other sources</b></p> <p><b>S.2</b> Who can apply to our housing register?</p> <p><b>S.3</b> Equality, diversity, and inclusion</p> <p><b>Appendix four: Immigration rules</b></p> <p><b>Appendix five: Exceptions to our local residency rule</b></p>
4	Which types of housing needs are prioritised?	<p>We use a points system to prioritise households on our Housing Register.</p> <p>This means that we give different points for different reasons for needing a new home. You will find below a table explaining the points we give for different types of housing need – sometimes called priority or points categories.</p> <p>The more points you have, the higher your priority for rehousing.</p> <p>You will find more information on why we have different points categories in <b>appendix one</b>.</p> <p>As well as using points for different types of housing need, we use a banding system. Our banding system helps to explain the different levels of priority we give for different points categories.</p> <p><b>Priority Band 1</b> Acute Housing Need  <b>Priority Band 2</b> Major Priority  <b>Priority Band 3</b> Moderate Priority  <b>Priority Band 4</b> General Priority</p>	<p><b>S.8</b> Our points and banding system – how we prioritise for rehousing</p> <p><b>Appendix one: The law on housing allocation schemes</b></p> <p><b>S.9</b> Quotas</p>

Summary of our points and banding system				Relevant scheme sections or other sources	
Priority category	Points	Band	See section		
<b>Band 1</b>				<b>S.10</b> Exceptional priority	
Exceptional priority	2000	1	10		
Emergency health and independence	2000	1	15		
Serious risk to welfare	1900	1	11		
Grenfell Settled Homes	1500	1	12	<b>S.11</b> Serious risk to welfare	
<b>Band 2</b>					
Under occupation downsizing	1000 to 1300	2	13		
Accessible home hand back	1000	2	14		
Health and independence	900	2	15		
Wider Grenfell	900	2	16		
Helping adoption and fostering	700	2	17		
Redevelopment of homes	700	2	18	<b>S.12</b> Grenfell settled homes priority	
<b>Band 3</b>					
Choosing PRS	200	3	20.6		
Overcrowding	200	3	19		
Independent living	100	3	21		
Main homelessness duty	100	3	20.4	<b>S.13</b> Under occupation downsizing	
<b>Band 4</b>					
Homelessness	10	4	20.10		
Local hardship	10	4	22		
Sheltered housing and housing for older residents	0	4	30.2		
					<b>S.14</b> Moving to free up a home for a disabled resident
				<b>S.15</b> Health and independence priorities	
				<b>S.16</b> Wider Grenfell priority	
				<b>S.19</b> Overcrowding	

You need to have at least one of the points categories above to be given additional points too.			Relevant scheme sections or other sources
Additional points			
Waiting points	10 every year	23	<p><b>S.20</b> Homelessness</p> <p><b>S.21</b> Moving on from support into independent living</p> <p><b>S.24</b> Armed forces personnel</p> <p><b>S.30</b> Sheltered housing and housing for older residents</p> <p><b>Appendix three:</b> <b>Right to move</b></p>
Armed forces	50	24	
Paid work (limited situations)	50	25	
Succession	50	27	
		<p>Quotas will be used to make sure that every type of housing need has a fair chance of being rehoused.</p> <p><b>What are quotas, and how will we use them to allocate homes?</b></p> <p>A quota is a share of something. In this case, it is a share of the total number of Council and housing association homes that become available each year that we let to households on our Housing Register.</p> <p>Each year, we will set and publish a quota or a share of the total number of available homes that we will try to allocate or let to different types of housing priority on our Housing Register. In other words, we will set a ‘target’ for the number of homes we let to different types of housing need. We will also publish figures on our actual lets to the different types of housing need, so you can compare our lettings to our quotas.</p> <p>Because we will not know at the beginning of the year how many Council and housing association homes will become available, we will usually set the quotas as percentages (%) of the total lets. In some specific cases, we will set the quota as an actual number of homes.</p>	



### What types of housing need will have quotas?

We will set quotas for the following types of housing need or priority.

Type of housing need	Points categories
Homeless households and households who have chosen to move to a private rented home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• choosing PRS</li> <li>• main homelessness duty</li> <li>• homelessness</li> </ul>
Tenants with spare bedrooms willing to move to smaller home, and tenants in accessible homes willing to move to free it up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• under occupation downsizing</li> <li>• accessible home hand back</li> </ul>
Overcrowded families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• overcrowding</li> </ul>
Needing to move for health reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• health and independence</li> </ul>
Special rehousing pathways	
Moving on from supported housing Care Leavers Adults with learning disabilities or autism Adopting and fostering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• independent living</li> <li>• independent living</li> <li>• independent living</li> <li>• helping adoption and fostering</li> </ul>
Our housing commitments to residents most affected by the Grenfell Tower tragedy will sit outside of the quotas.	

5

Will you be able to choose a property?

**Adverts**

We advertise most of the available Council and housing association homes on a website called Home Connections. Home Connections can be found at these links – [Home Connections](#) and [RBKC Home Connections](#).

The website uses a system called choice-based lettings (CBL). You will see details on available homes and will be able to let us know that you are interested – sometimes called expressing your interest or ‘bidding’.

We advertise homes every week. Usually, new adverts will go on to Home Connections on a Monday or Tuesday, though look out for homes we might advertise later in the week. The deadline for expressing an interest is usually Sunday at midnight – this is when the advert will close.

**Direct Offers**

Direct offers may be used where a household has housing needs that require a particular property: for example, an accessible home.

This means that the household offered the home did not express an interest in it on Home Connections.

Based on our recommendations about the type of home you need, and the information you have given us, we will make sure that any home directly offered to you will be suitable.

Usually, we will make direct offers in order of priority/points.

We can make a direct offer to any household on our Housing Register.

6

How do we decide which home may be suitable?

Offering a suitable home:

- i. The home you are offered should be suitable for you. This means that it has the right number of bedrooms, it is suitable for any assessed health needs you or a family member may have, and that you will be able to afford the rent and service charges.
- ii. Social landlords have their own rules on suitability. This means that even if we think an available home is suitable for you and we nominate you for it, the landlord for that home may say no.

**The following table should help you work out how many bedrooms you need.**

**Relevant scheme sections or other sources**

**S.5**  
Who can be included in your family or household?

**S.6**  
How many bedrooms do you need?

**S.29**  
How we let available homes?

**One adult or couple plus:**

	Single person	Couple	Two adults not living as a couple	One child or another adult	Two children of the same sex aged 21 or under	Two children of different sexes aged under 10	Two children of different sexes, one or both over the age of 10	Three children	Four or more children
Studio flat	X								
One bed		X							
Two beds			X	X	X	X			
Three beds							X	X	X
Four beds									X

<p><b>7</b></p>	<p>How is housing allocated?</p>	<p>Once a household has been included on the Council’s Housing Register, they will be able to express an interest in available homes advertised on the Council’s choice-based lettings system, Home Connections.</p> <p>When you log in to your account on Home Connections, you can look at previous homes you expressed an interest for, as well as any current expressions. You can see where you came on the list of households who also expressed an interest.</p> <p>This is an indication of where you will be on the priority list. Once the advert is closed the next stage in the process is called ‘verification’. This is because the Council has to verify that out of the households that have expressed an interest in the property, the shortlist includes those with the greatest assessed need and also to make sure that the final shortlist only includes households for whom the property is suitable.</p> <p>After an advert has closed, we look at all the expressions of interest. We only look at those where the resident has expressed an interest in a suitable home and has met the conditions set out in the advert. We then put the expressions of interest into <b>priority order</b> – the household with the highest number of points that also meets the suitability requirements for the property being at the top. For example, for accessible homes we look at the AHR category first, then points, then priority date to determine the priority order.</p> <p>We will select or ‘shortlist’ the households with the highest priority. Usually, we will shortlist four to six households, though we may shortlist fewer households for an accessible home.</p> <p>The shortlisted households will be invited to see the home. This means they will have the chance to look around the home before they are asked whether they are still interested in it. The invitation may come from the Council’s Allocations Team or directly from the landlord.</p>	<p><b>Relevant scheme sections or other sources</b></p> <p><b>S.28</b> How we let accessible homes</p> <p><b>S.29</b> How we let available homes</p>
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If you are shortlisted, we hope you will be able to make the appointment to see the home. If you cannot make the appointment, please let us or the landlord know as soon as possible.

The home will be offered to the household with the highest points. If that household does not want to accept the offer, the home will be offered to the household in second place. If that household does not want to accept the offer, the home will be offered to the household in third place, and so on.

General register applicants can refuse two offers with no penalty. Upon the third refusal any waiting points will be removed, and the priority date will be brought forward to the date of the last suitable refusal.

Homeless households in temporary accommodation will only receive one suitable offer. If this is refused we may remove you from the register, or demote you to general homelessness points if you still qualify for the register.

**8** How many homes become available each year?

We have no way of knowing exactly how many homes will become available in any given year. Our lettings last year may give you an idea of ballpark numbers though:

<b>Lettings 2021-22</b>	<b>Number of Bedrooms</b>					
<b>Property Owner</b>	<b>Studio</b>	<b>1 bed</b>	<b>2 bed</b>	<b>3 bed</b>	<b>4 bed</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Council</b>	64	68	72	27	6	237
<b>Housing Association</b>	23	91	43	12	3	172
<b>TOTAL</b>	87	159	115	39	9	409

**Rehousing by need totals 2021/22:**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Lettings</b>
<b>Homeless in TA</b>	168
<b>Exceptional Priority</b>	11
<b>Emergency Health</b>	5
<b>Risk of Harm</b>	17
<b>Wider Grenfell</b>	8
<b>Supporting Health</b>	38
<b>Under Occupying</b>	22
<b>Overcrowding</b>	21
<b>Move On Priority</b>	80
<b>Other</b>	39

We do know that the number of homes that we can offer has been fluctuating over the last few (admittedly atypical) years.

This is compared to the level of demand:

**Demand on the Housing Register  
as of December 2022:**

Priority (Current 2017 Scheme categories)	Number of Bedrooms								
	Studio	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	5 Bed	6 Bed	7 Bed	Grand total
Exceptional Priority	6	7	10	11	1	0	0	0	35
Emergency Healths and Independence	0	4	3	2	1	0	0	0	10
At Risk of Serious Harm	6	9	15	7	1	0	0	0	38
Wider Grenfell	8	11	12	25	13	2	0	0	72
Supporting Health and Independence	36	69	58	44	10	0	0	0	217
Redevelopment of Homes	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Mobility Transfer Scheme	1	2	4	3	1	0	0	0	11
Supporting Adoption and Fostering	0	0	3	1	1	0	0	0	5
TMO Tenants-Successions	0	14	6	0	0	0	0	0	20
Under Occupation	3	74	59	6	0	0	0	0	142
Under Occupation-Split Tenancy Points	13	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
Overcrowding	0	0	33	38	20	3	1	0	95
TMO Contractual Duties	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Duty Accepted Homeless	304	38	1023	501	100	14	8	2	1990
Move on Eligibility	60	7	2	0	0	0	0	0	69
Other Homeless	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Sheltered	170	31	2	0	0	0	0	0	203
Local Hardship	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Under Investigation	93	10	26	19	3	0	0	0	151
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>704</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>1257</b>	<b>657</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3082</b>

<p><b>9</b></p>	<p>What is the Council doing to increase the number of homes?</p>	<p>We are building brand new social rent homes in the borough as part of our New Build Programme, and our Housing Needs department is working closely with Planning to encourage the building of new, affordable family-sized homes. We have also explored other ways to make the best use of the housing stock in the area.</p> <p>There is already a pilot scheme to encourage under occupiers (people living in social housing that is too large for their current household) to move to smaller homes, with a dedicated officer assigned to facilitate these moves. Following the success of this pilot, we are looking to expand the work to include helping those in accessible properties that they do not need to move to more suitable accommodation too.</p> <p>These moves from larger or accessible homes will help us to start a chain of linked moves from under occupied family sized homes being allocated to overcrowded families, ultimately leading to a homeless family being rehoused. We want the ability to make this process part of standard practice and the changes in the Allocation Scheme with the inclusion of chain lettings as a concept will help us to do this.</p>	<p><b>Relevant scheme sections or other sources</b></p> <p><b>S.12</b> Under occupation downsizing</p> <p><b>S.13</b> Moving to free up a home for a disabled resident</p> <p><b>S.26</b> Chain lettings</p> <p><b>New Build Programme</b></p>
<p><b>10</b></p>	<p>Who can provide advice about applying to join the housing register?</p>	<p>The housing department's Housing Solutions Team – They can provide advice around all housing options and advise whether the housing register would be a viable one for your housing situation.</p> <p>You can also contact an independent voluntary agency like Shelter for advice if you prefer too.</p>	<p><b>HousingSolutions</b> <b>@rbkc.gov.uk</b></p> <p>020 7361 3272 or 020 7361 3008</p> <p><b>Shelter</b></p>



<p><b>11</b></p>	<p>What should you do if you are or think you may become homeless?</p>	<p>Contact the Housing Solutions Team as a matter of urgency for some advice. Email them <a href="mailto:Housingsolutions@rbkc.gov.uk">Housingsolutions@rbkc.gov.uk</a> or ring them on 0207 361 3008 and ask to speak to a Housing Solutions Duty Officer.</p> <p>An application to the Housing Register is not likely to provide you with a new home quickly enough if you are already out of, or about to lose your home.</p> <p>It is important that you talk to us as soon as possible – we may be able to help you to keep your current home, at least for a time whilst you look at your housing options. If you do become homeless we will attempt to relieve your homelessness by finding you a new home. You may have to move into temporary accommodation whilst we locate a suitable home for you. Most temporary accommodation is situated outside the borough, and you may have to live in another area for a very long time until you are made an offer of longer-term housing. A housing offer may be either social housing or an offer of accommodation in the private rented sector here or in another area.</p> <p>Remember – you may be able to choose to move into a private rented home instead of temporary accommodation and be given more points for rehousing to a Council or housing association home.</p>	<p><b>Relevant scheme sections or other sources</b></p> <p><b>HousingSolutions@rbkc.gov.uk</b></p> <p>020 7361 3272 or 020 7361 3008</p> <p><b>Shelter</b></p> <p><b>S.19</b> Homelessness</p>
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<p><b>12</b></p>	<p>Are there other ways to find a home?</p>	<p>Please ask us our Housing Solution Team for more information on your options and choices. We can give you detailed advice and support or put you in touch with other organisations who will be happy to help you. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renting a home in the private rented sector</li> <li>• Below-market rent (sometimes called intermediate rent), especially if you are a key worker</li> <li>• Low-cost home ownership, such as shared ownership</li> <li>• Moving to areas of the country where local council and housing association homes are more available – there are a number of schemes that can help you</li> <li>• Making changes or improvements to your current home – for example, if a family member is struggling because of their health conditions, you may be given equipment or adaptations that will help them – please speak to our colleagues in <b>Adult Social Care</b></li> <li>• If you are a council or housing association tenant, completing a mutual exchange, or swapping your home, with another council or housing association tenant.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Relevant scheme sections or other sources</b></p> <p>Housing solutions team:  <b>HousingSolutions</b>  <b>@rbkc.gov.uk</b> or  020 7361 3272</p> <p><b>S.4</b>  Housing options – other than our housing register</p> <p><b>Key worker and intermediate housing policy</b></p> <p><b>Intermediate housing</b></p>
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			<b>Relevant scheme sections or other sources</b>
		<p><b>Other rehousing schemes:</b></p> <p>Kensington and Chelsea residents, including households on our Housing Register, can look for a new home using rehousing schemes run by other organisations. Examples of other rehousing options and schemes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisations that help households move into available homes anywhere in the UK, owned and managed by local councils or housing associations</li> <li>• Organisations that help households move into private rented sector homes anywhere in the UK</li> <li>• Organisations that help vulnerable households move into a suitable home, often with a special rehousing pathway and support</li> <li>• Rehousing arrangements that support Home Office resettlement schemes.</li> </ul>	
<b>13</b>	<p>Are there other ways to find a home?</p>	<p>If you need to make changes to your current application, you should contact the Housing Solutions Team.</p> <p>If your issue is about Home Connections, a nomination, an expression of interest, or a shortlist you will need to contact the Housing Allocations Team.</p>	<p>Housing solutions:  <b>HousingSolutions</b>  <b>@rbkc.gov.uk</b> or  020 7361 3272</p> <p>Housing allocations:  <b>Housing</b>  <b>Nominations</b>  <b>@rbkc.gov.uk</b> or  020 7361 3008</p>

<p><b>14</b></p>	<p>What can you do if you do not agree with a decision made about your application to the housing register?</p>	<p>If you are not happy with a decision we have made, ask us for advice first – we might be able to solve the issue very quickly. For example, perhaps you or the Council have not understood an important bit of information or missed a change in circumstances. We might be able to put a problem right very easily.</p> <p>However, if you are still unhappy with a decision we have made, you will be able to:</p> <p><b>a) Seek a review or challenge a decision we have made.</b></p> <p>You will have the legal right to seek a review, or challenge, some of the decisions that we make. You will need to do this within 21 days of you receiving the decision. You will then need to give us as much information as possible to support your case. We will aim to make the original decision within 56 days.</p> <p><b>b) Make a complaint.</b></p> <p><b>When can you ask for a review of a decision?</b></p> <p>You can seek a review, or challenge, the following kinds of decision about your rehousing application. You may want to first read <b>section 2 – Who can join our Housing Register</b>, and <b>section 29 – How we let available homes</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You have been told that you are not eligible to join our Housing Register – this means you cannot join because of your immigration status</li> <li>• You have been told that you do not qualify to join our Housing Register – for example, because you have not lived in Kensington and Chelsea for three years without a break, or because we have decided not to award points for your reason for wanting to move to a new home</li> </ul>	<p><b>Relevant scheme sections or other sources</b></p> <p><b>S.31</b> Reviews – disagreeing with a decision we have made</p> <p><b>S.32</b> How to complain about our service?</p> <p><b>S.2</b> Who can apply to our housing register?</p> <p><b>S.29</b> How we let available homes?</p> <p><b>S.31</b> Reviews – disagreeing with a decision we have made</p>
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- You disagree with the way we have assessed your application for rehousing, or any decision about the facts of your application which is likely to be, or has been taken into account in considering whether to allocate housing accommodation to you – for example, the number of points we have given you or the number of bedrooms we think you and your family need
- You are unhappy that we have suspended or frozen your Housing Register application – for example because we do not think you are ready to live independently

There is only one stage to reviews on these kinds of decisions.

### **How to seek a review of a decision?**

If you want to seek a review or challenge a decision you are unhappy with you will need to tell us within 21 days of you receiving that decision. You will then need to give us as much information as possible to support your case.

We will aim to complete the review of the original decision within 56 days.

If you think you will find it difficult to ask for the review within 21 days, or the 21 days have passed and you could not ask for a review in time, please let us know why. We might be able to extend these timescales.

You might want to get advice and support to help you with your case – for example from a community advice centre or a solicitor. Please ask us for a list of advice centres or organisations that can help you.

### **Who to contact if you want to seek a review?**

You should contact our Housing Reviews and Scrutiny Team.

**Email:** [housingreviews@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:housingreviews@rbkc.gov.uk)

#### **In writing:**

Housing Review and Scrutiny  
Housing Needs Department  
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea  
The Town Hall  
Hornton Street  
London W8 7NX

**Telephone:** 020 7361 3008

### **Complaints**

Often, matters can be quickly resolved by contacting the relevant officer or service directly. You can do this face-to-face, by telephone, or email. You might find the following contact details useful if you do not know the relevant officer.

**Email:** [housing@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:housing@rbkc.gov.uk)

**Telephone:** 020 7361 3008

You can also use the Council's online contact form (complaints, comments and compliments) which you can find here:

[www.rbkc.gov.uk/contact-us/how-contact-us/complaints-comments-and-compliments](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/contact-us/how-contact-us/complaints-comments-and-compliments)

If you want to make a formal complaint you can do so in the following ways.

**By email:** [complaints@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@rbkc.gov.uk)

**Telephone:** **020 7361 2060**

Phone lines are open Monday to Friday from 9am to 4pm.

You can also use the Council's online contact form (complaints, comments and compliments) which you can find here:

[www.rbkc.gov.uk/contact-us/how-contact-us/complaints-comments-and-compliments](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/contact-us/how-contact-us/complaints-comments-and-compliments)

If we receive your complaint after 3pm, we will acknowledge it on the next working day and will aim to reply within ten working days.

We would be grateful if you could provide us with a phone number and your address in case we need to clarify the details of your complaint. We will still send our response by email or letter.

You can find more information about the way we investigate and aim to resolve complaints, and a copy of the Corporate Complaints and Compensation Policy, using the website links provided above.

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Glossary  
– words,  
terms, and  
terms  
explained

**Accessible Housing Register (AHR):** This is guidance produced by the Mayor of London. This complex piece of guidance can be found on the Mayor’s london.gov.uk website here: **The London Accessible Housing Register**. It sets out different categories of home based on how accessible the home is. Using this guidance, the Council is able to decide which category fits an available Council or housing association home. The guidance also helps us decide what kind of accessible home is needed by a resident with disabilities, mobility difficulties or other health issues.

**Direct Offer:** is a way of allocating housing where the Council approaches those on the Housing Register having chosen a suitable property on their behalf. This is different to choice-based lettings where you express an interest (bid) for a home yourself.

**Eligible Household:** This is about your immigration status in the UK, and the status of members of your family. Usually you are eligible, or have the right, to join our Housing Register and be rehoused to social housing if:

- you are a British or Irish citizen
- you have indefinite leave to remain
- you have settled status under the EU settlement scheme
- you have the ‘right of abode’ as a Commonwealth citizen
- you have refugee status or humanitarian protection
- you have a visa that allows you recourse to public funds

There are exceptions to this and the rules on being eligible to join a Housing Register can be very complicated, so you should ask for advice from the Council or from one of our community advice agency partners if you are not sure.



**Full housing duty accepted:** If the council accepts a full housing duty, that means you asked the council for help because of your housing difficulties and the council has been unable to prevent or relieve your homelessness (for example, keep you in your original home, or find you a new one) and so now still has to help you secure longer term accommodation. The council can only end this housing duty in a set number of ways, including by finding you a suitable home in the private rented sector, or by offering you a social tenancy.

**Housing Health and Disability Assessment Team:** This team consists of healthcare professionals who are very experienced in housing issues. The Team performs to the very highest standards, set by professional medical and healthcare bodies. Though the Council may seek and value information from medical professionals, the assessment decision remains with the Council and not your health professional. Where it is demonstrated that an applicant must move on health grounds, and where it is demonstrated that a certain type and/or location of property should be recommended, the Team will award the appropriate priority and recommendation irrespective of the limited supply of suitable social housing.

**Homeless Reduction Act (HRA) 2017 and preventing homelessness:** The HRA 2017 is a legal act implemented by the government in 2017. The act pays particular attention to preventing people from becoming homeless, this includes helping people stay in their current accommodation and offering alternative options to prevent homelessness.

In order to prevent homelessness you can opt to move into suitable private rented sector accommodation and the council will assist you in finding accommodation, offer tenancy support and help with deposits where necessary. This gives applicants more options in where they move, as opposed to being allocated temporary accommodation without much choice.

**Housing Occupational Therapists:** are specialists in Adaptations and Housing Accessibility. They assess the impact of a person's health conditions (diagnoses, prognosis) on their functional ability within their home, to carry out their ADLs (Activities of Daily Living). They also work out what type of housing will enable the person to be as independent as possible in ADLs. Specialists in Adaptations and Housing Accessibility.

**Housing Officer:** A RBKC Housing Needs officer or advisor who works with residents, assisting them in finding suitable housing. Housing officers in this context are normally located in the Housing Solutions Team or Allocations Team.

**Housing Solutions Team:** able to assist at all stages of a housing issue and the first port of call for advice and assistance around general housing advice, housing options, access to funding to secure a home, tenancy relations matters like harassment or illegal evictions, or joining the Housing Register.

**Independent living:** is when a resident is ready to move out of supported housing or leave another form of support to live independently. Most residents in supported housing will be able to move into their own home in the private rented sector and will receive help to do so.

**Priority Date:** is usually the date that a household joined the Housing Register. Your waiting points are worked out from the date you joined the Register. Waiting points will be awarded on the anniversary of the day you joined our Housing Register.

		<p><b>Private Rented Sector:</b> is a type of housing you can rent. It means a property owned by a landlord and leased to a tenant. The landlord, in this case, could be an individual, a property company or an institutional investor, not a social landlord. The tenants would either deal directly with an individual landlord, or alternatively with a management company or estate agency caring for the property on behalf of the landlord.</p> <p><b>Temporary Accommodation:</b> if a person or family becomes homeless and urgently needs a home, the Council may provide a place to stay on a temporary basis while helping them to find longer-term housing. This is called temporary accommodation because it is a temporary solution.</p>
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<b>CONSULTATION SPECIFIC FAQs</b>		
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	<p>What was the outcome of the first consultation?</p>	<p>The consultation on the key themes to be included in the new Allocation Scheme draft resulted in 137 responses from a wide range of interested parties, including many residents. The full report of the first consultation on the themes for the potential allocation scheme can be found on the Council's website:</p> <p><a href="https://consult.rbkc.gov.uk/housing/housing-allocations-scheme/results/housingallocations-consultationreport_pdf_aa.pdf">https://consult.rbkc.gov.uk/housing/housing-allocations-scheme/results/housingallocations-consultationreport_pdf_aa.pdf</a></p>	<p><b>Relevant scheme sections or other sources</b></p>
			<p><b>1st Allocation consultation report</b></p>

	<p>What is happening to worker points?</p>	<p>We are suggesting that we will no longer award additional points because you or a family member is working.</p> <p>However, we are also suggesting that if you already have paid work points, you will keep them under the new Allocation Scheme.</p> <p>We are suggesting that we keep the same level of priority for paid work points.</p> <p><b>What have residents told us so far?</b></p> <p>Resident feedback was split on the issue of paid work points. Some residents wanted us to keep them, while others wanted us to end them.</p> <p>We are suggesting that we no longer award paid work points, except that households who already have them can keep them while a member of their household continues working.</p> <p>Analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on paid work showed that some parts of our community were more affected by others. Members of our community who are Black, Asian or Minority or Multiple Ethnic were more likely to have lost employment and/or pay, especially if they were female. We are also aware that some members of our community face more barriers to getting paid work – for example, residents with disabilities or autism, or parents who cannot find affordable childcare. Because some members of our communities will find it more difficult to find or to keep paid work, we do not think it is fair to use it to give a higher priority for rehousing over the long-term. However, because a large number of households already have paid work points, we feel it is fair that they keep them under the new Allocation Scheme.</p>	<p><b>Relevant scheme sections or other sources</b></p> <p><b>S.25</b> Additional points if you are working</p>
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Why are some of the most popular changes mentioned in the first consultation responses not represented in the draft?

During the first consultation on the key themes for the new Allocation Scheme residents told us that they wanted to see:

- an increase in the points given for overcrowding
- a relatively higher priority for overcrowded households with children
- help to reduce overcrowding by rehousing adult family members into their own separate homes
- a lowering of the age at which brothers or sisters of the same sex are expected to share a bedroom – under the old Allocation Scheme we expected siblings of the same sex to share until the eldest reaches the age of 21
- family members aged 21 and over counted as part of the family.

Residents told us that the need to lack two bedrooms or more to qualify for the Housing Register, and not counting family members aged 21 or over, meant that the real levels of overcrowding in the Borough was not recognised on the Housing Register. We accept that this is true.

Residents also told us that not allowing families lacking one bedroom to join the Housing Register, due to overcrowding, left such families feeling forgotten – they felt that the Council did not care about them.

We understand why families lacking one bedroom may feel like this. Unfortunately, there are simply not enough family-sized homes to help all families that need a larger home. All overcrowded families experience problems due to the lack of space. However, we take the view that the most overcrowded families – those lacking two or more bedrooms – experience greater problems. Therefore, we should focus on letting the limited supply of family-sized homes to those families in greatest need.

If we did allow families lacking one bedroom to join the Housing Register, we would have a more accurate picture of the level of overcrowding in Kensington and Chelsea. However, families lacking one bedroom would never be rehoused to a larger home through the Housing Register, so joining the Register would not improve their situation.

We looked at proposals to give a higher priority to overcrowded families with children compared to overcrowded households only with adult family members. This is an important issue, because overcrowding usually has a bigger impact upon families with children. We decided not to go ahead with this proposal as residents and advocates have told us they do not want a complicated Housing Allocation Scheme. Having many different levels of priority for similar circumstances can make a rehousing policy more difficult to understand and trust.

The gap between the demand and supply for larger homes is bigger than the gap for studio and one-bedroom homes. However, the demand for smaller homes is still far greater than the supply. Studio and one-bedroom homes are extremely important for rehousing Care Leavers, vulnerable homeless households in temporary or supported accommodation (single people and couples), and of course, tenants with spare bedrooms who free up family-sized homes.

This is why we think it is not possible, at this point in time, to look at ways of rehousing adult family members, living in overcrowded conditions, into their own homes.

Lastly, we are suggesting that the age at which siblings of the same sex can share should remain at 21. We know that Universal Credit and Housing Benefit rules allow family members (who are not spouses or partners) to have their own room at 16. Sometimes, landlords will allow family members to have their own room at 18. However, we are worried about steps that put even greater pressure on larger family-sized homes.

We are also following the Government's bedroom standard by expecting brothers or sisters to share a bedroom between the ages of 10 and 20. This can be found in the Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities in England (June 2012). You can find this guidance at this link –

**[Allocation of accommodation guidance.](#)**

			<b>Relevant scheme sections or other sources</b>
	<p>What will happen after the consultation?</p>	<p>The typical sequence of events would be as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) A consultation report will be produced, with the results added to the Council’s consultation page of the RBKC website.</li> <li>b) The draft scheme would be amended as needed, considering the consultation results and business needs.</li> <li>c) A possible further consultation may be needed if radical changes are required to the draft.</li> <li>d) The draft will be sent through the Council’s Governance process.</li> <li>e) Further amendments are made if necessary.</li> <li>f) A final draft is taken to a full Council Leadership Meeting.</li> <li>g) If agreed, the Allocation Scheme is considered adopted, and this final version is published on the Council’s website.</li> </ul>	<p>n/a</p>
	<p>How long will it take for any new Allocation Scheme to be implemented?</p>	<p>Once a new scheme is adopted the current Housing Register will be recalibrated so that it reflects any changes that are now agreed. People already on the register will be notified of their new points and any change of priority group. The reference numbers for most people will remain the same.</p> <p>New applicants will be assessed under the terms of the new scheme.</p> <p>It may take a few months before the new scheme is fully embedded. The timing will depend on things like staff training and IT amendments.</p>	<p>n/a</p>

