

Allocation Policy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Contents

Introduction and Background	1
Nominations	1
Accessing the Housing Register	2
Criteria to be accepted onto the Housing Register	3
Nomination Ready	6
Suitability and Offers of Accommodation	7
Priorities for Allocating Housing	9
Review of the Waiting List	18
Request for Review	18
Appendix A:	19

Introduction and Background

The purpose of the Allocation Policy is to set out how Stafford Borough Council will allocate properties, it explains who is eligible and qualifies for social housing in Stafford, how people are prioritised and the process for nominating people to properties. The aim is to ensure that affordable housing is allocated in a fair and transparent way to those with greatest housing need, in accordance with legislative requirements.

Stafford Borough Council is the strategic housing authority for the Borough but does not own any housing stock. The local authority has duties in accordance with Part 6 and Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) to provide housing advice and assistance and to prevent and relieve homelessness. The local authority works closely with all Housing Associations who own social housing within Stafford in order to discharge these duties and to increase the supply of affordable housing through new developments. This includes affordable housing for rent and low cost home ownership, in particular shared ownership. The Council also works closely with private landlords to increase access to the private rented sector for people in housing need where appropriate.

The Allocation Policy can be viewed online www.staffordbc.gov.uk/housing. A copy of the full policy can be made available upon request. The Policy takes effect from 1 April 2026.

Nominations

In 2006, Stafford Borough Council transferred housing stock to Stafford and Rural Homes (a Housing Association), now called Homes Plus part of the Housing Plus Group. Despite not owning any housing stock, the Council retains its duty to provide housing advice and assistance and to prevent and relieve homelessness in accordance with Part 6 and 7 of the Housing Act (as amended).

In order to fulfil this duty, the Council works in close partnership with Homes Plus, and other Housing Associations who own and manage social housing in the Borough (see Appendix A for a list of social housing providers in Stafford).

Housing Associations have a duty to cooperate with the Council in offering accommodation to people in housing need under the Council's Allocation Policy. The Council have entered into nomination agreements with Homes Plus, and other local Housing Associations that mean that a percentage of properties will be made available to the Council to offer to applicants from our waiting list in accordance with this Allocation Policy.

When a social housing property becomes vacant in Stafford Borough, the Council will put forward (nominate) a suitable applicant in accordance with the rules set out in this Policy and our nomination agreement with the Housing Association. Stafford Borough Council does not have nomination agreements for all social housing properties in the Borough so there may be properties that become vacant that Stafford Borough Council is unable to nominate households for.

The Housing Association, who own and manage the property, will then consider the nomination made against their own allocation criteria and will then make the final decision as to whether that household will be offered the property they have been nominated to.

The Council, along with local Housing Associations, will work in close partnership to deliver the policy and maximise the potential rehousing options available for applicants.

Accessing the Housing Register

Households can access the housing register by contacting Stafford Borough Council for a housing needs assessment. The Council does not operate an open Housing Register therefore applicants must be assessed as eligible and qualify for a housing need, as outlined by this Allocation Policy before they are accepted onto a waiting list for social housing.

Households can approach the Council in a number of ways including telephone, in person, via email and also via our online self-assessment tool that provides a detailed and immediate housing options assessments. A Housing Options Officer will assess the application and explore suitable options for eligible applicants with a focus on enabling a household to remain at home where it is safe and reasonable to do so.

Depending on the household's circumstances, the Council may ask for additional information from the applicant in order to assess their housing need, taking into consideration all housing options including other tenures such as shared ownership or the private rented sector. The Council may take steps to discuss options with current Landlords to allow households to remain in their existing property (such as repayment agreements for rent arrears) or consider adaptations to properties or a Sanctuary Scheme where suitable. Depending on the household's circumstances, the Council may consider other tenures of housing including private sector and shared ownership (among others).

Households who are most vulnerable and would otherwise struggle to access social housing may be offered targeted support that can include

budgeting advice and assistance, signposting to training and employment opportunities, referral to relevant supporting agencies and practical help with activities such as setting up bank account.

If the applicant meets the eligibility and qualification rules they will be registered and will then receive a registration letter that contains details for the Band they have been placed into according to their housing need; the size of property they are eligible for, and their case reference.

All applicants will be required to sign a declaration, or to give informed consent, to:

- (a) Confirm that the information given is correct and that they will notify the Council of any change in their circumstances.
- (b) Give consent to allow enquiries to be made concerning their eligibility for housing and level of priority.
- (c) Give consent to allow information to be provided to another partner organisation in the scheme.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide the Council with all the information requested to assess their circumstances, and to provide any supporting information or documents that are required. Incomplete applications will not be made active until such time as the Council is satisfied that it has in its possession all of the information it requires to complete its assessment. All incomplete applications will be closed after a period of 28 days of inactivity from the applicant from the date information has been requested if it has not been provided. This cancellation does not prevent the applicant making a subsequent application at a later date, although all applicants should note that in such cases the effective date of registration would not be backdated to the earlier application date.

Criteria to be accepted onto the Housing Register

Applicants must meet the criteria outlined below in order to be accepted onto the housing register: (see the full Allocation Policy for more detail)

- Be eligible for social housing in light of their immigration status, age and/or capacity to be granted a tenancy;
- Have a local connection to Stafford Borough;
- Must be likely to be accepted by a Housing Association for a property, referred to as 'Nomination Ready' (see Section 5 below);
- Must have a housing need that falls within the criteria outlined within the Allocation Policy (see Section 7 below);

Applicants may be disqualified for the Housing Register if:

- Three offers of suitable accommodation have been refused (Note: applicants who are owed a statutory homeless duty will only be provided with one offer of suitable accommodation. If this offer is refused, the applicant will lose their homeless priority banding);
- Information has been withheld or false information has been provided;
- Applicants with a history of failed tenancies or serious unacceptable behaviour who do not acknowledge or address these issues.
- Applicants do not take reasonable steps outlined in their Personalised Housing Plan;
- The household has sufficient financial resources, or own property.

The Council retains the ability, in exceptional circumstances, to exercise its discretion when making decisions regarding the qualification and disqualification rules. Further details are outlined in the full Allocation Policy.

Local Connection

Only those applicants with a local connection to Stafford Borough, who also have an assessed housing need as defined by this policy, are eligible to be included on the Housing Register.

In order to demonstrate a local connection, one of the following must be satisfied:

- (a) Lived in the Borough for the last two years at the point of application;
- (b) Lived in the Borough for at least three out of the last five years;
- (c) Is currently subject to a Homeless Duty (in accordance with Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996) and have lived in the Borough for the last six out of 12 months.
- (d) Has been employed in the Borough for the last two years;
- (e) You are under 25 and have left care and meet the definition set out in the Allocation Policy;
- (f) If you are currently serving, or have ever served in the Regular Armed Forces and, or, come under the Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Armed Forces) (England) Regulations 2012 as amended;
- (g) Has a firm offer of permanent employment in the Borough, where failure to move into the Borough would result in that employment not being accepted. See Right to move criteria below in exemptions to the local connection rules for details of how a firm offer of employment will be assessed;

- (h) Receives support from close family members who have lived in the Borough for at least three years;
- (i) Has close family members in the Borough who they need to provide essential care for, or receive essential care from; or
- (j) Other specific circumstances that the local authority would wish to consider under a local connection criteria.

If you come under the armed forces regulations we will not apply the 2 year residency rule but the other qualification rules adopted will still be applied to your application such as the requirement to have a housing need, unacceptable behaviour or current or former rent arrears.

If you are a person who is or has been a victim of domestic abuse carried out by another person who needs to move for reasons connected with that abuse, the local connection rule will not apply.

Further detail on local connection is found in The Allocation Policy.

Households with previous failed tenancies or serious unacceptable behaviour

Stafford Borough Council does not operate a blanket exclusion policy for household's with a history of failed tenancies, for example, due to anti-social behaviour or rent arrears. Households can work with Stafford Borough Council to take steps to address previous failed tenancies with a view of enabling access to social housing.

Applicants may qualify for the Housing Register but may still be taking steps to resolve previous failed tenancies or unacceptable behaviour, for example, by demonstrating commitment to rent arrears repayment plans or by attending substance misuse programmes. Applicants who are taking steps to resolve previous unacceptable behaviour or outstanding rent arrears will be accepted onto the Housing Register and placed into a relevant band but will not be nominated for an offer of accommodation. Steps required to be considered for nomination will be agreed with the applicant and outlined in their Personalised Housing Plan. Applicants will continue to accrue waiting time on the Housing Register despite not being able to be considered for a nomination or an offer of housing.

Housing Associations with have their own letting criteria and Allocation Policy. Stafford Borough Council works closely with Housing Associations to enable applicants on our waiting list access to social housing within the Borough. Where an applicant is disqualified for previous failed tenancies or unacceptable behaviour they will be told in writing the reasons why and informed of the actions they may consider to take to enable access to the

Housing Register. Applicants have the right to ask for a review of the decision made to disqualify them. Full detail is contained within the Allocation Policy.

Nomination Ready

Qualifying households must supply the following information in order to be accepted onto the Housing Register:

- Identification must be provided for all members of the household (passport, driving licence, birth certificate) along with Right to Rent documentation for all household members aged 18 or over.
- Proof of residency for children included in the household (child benefit award, child tax credit, court order or residency order);
- Proof of income must be provided for all non-dependents in the household (Wages, Universal Credit Journal or Benefit Entitlement letter, self employed tax returns and bank statements);
- Bank statements must be provided for all non-dependents in the household for a minimum period of three months prior to application;
- Last five years address history;
- Completed Income and Expenditure;
- Information regarding unspent criminal convictions;
- Details of how rent in advance is going to be paid.

Once this is provided, the application will be assessed and the relevant banding awarded in line with this Allocation Policy. Households accepted onto the waiting list will only be put forward for a suitable property if they will satisfy the letting criteria for the relevant Housing Association.

This may include the following:

- A Landlord Reference from previous settled accommodation;
- Information regarding outstanding debts, including rent arrears and details of re-payment plans;
- Details of ongoing support or care plans from relevant agencies including substance misuse services, community mental health, probation or care leavers services amongst others.

Depending on an individual household's circumstances the criteria for being ready for a nomination may differ. For example those with a history of failed tenancies may be required to demonstrate that they are engaging with support services to address the underlying causes of homelessness. The Housing Options Service will make clear what is required to enable a household to be considered for a nomination by using an online

Personalised Housing Plan that will be published within seven days of initial contact with the service. Households who do not have access to the internet will be provided with a paper copy of the Personalised Housing Plan.

Stafford Borough Council does not operate a blanket exclusion policy for households with a history of failed tenancies, for example, due to anti-social behaviour or rent arrears. Households can work with Stafford Borough Council to take steps, in accordance with their Personalised Housing Plan, to address previous failed tenancies with a view of enabling access to social housing. Applicants will be placed on the Housing Register and accrue waiting time, whilst resolving issues relating to previous failed tenancies, but will not be nominated for a property until all steps outlined in the Personalised Housing Plan have been completed. Applicants who do not complete steps outlined in their Personalised Housing Plan within a reasonable period of time may be excluded from the Housing Register. Details are contained in the full Allocation Policy.

In exceptional circumstances, where households are vulnerable and unable to access key information (for example, individuals on nil income, fleeing domestic abuse or those with a history of entrenched rough sleeping), applicants may be nominated for a property whilst additional information is still being collected. Such nominations will be discussed with the relevant housing provider.

Although Stafford Borough Council may consider a household ready for a nomination, the Housing Association who manages the property will have the final decision in accordance with their own Allocations and Lettings Policy.

The Housing Register will be subject to a six monthly review. Applicants who are not taking steps outlined in their Personalised Housing Plan during this six month period may be disqualified and not considered for nomination.

Suitability and Offers of Accommodation

When nominating for a property, the Council will take into account:

- The number of bedrooms required;
- Any essential requirement concerning the type or location of housing, including requirements relating to the medical needs of the household relating to property type, essential facilities and number of bedrooms required;
- The housing band into which the applicant has been assessed;

- The Suitability of Accommodation Order 1996 (as amended) where the applicant has been accepted as homeless or threatened with homelessness in accordance with relevant legislation;
- Current permanent employment of the household and relevant transport links;
- Essential support links required by the household.

The number of bedrooms allocated will be dependent upon the number and age of the people living as part of the household, in order to make best use of housing stock.

The bedroom standard states that a separate bedroom shall be required for the following persons:

- Each adult couple;
- Any other adult age 18 and over
- Two adolescents of the same sex aged 10 – 18
- Two children regardless of sex under the age of 10.

When determining the size of the property for which applicants are eligible, the bedroom standard will usually apply. However there may be exceptions such as where there is medical evidence to support that an applicant requires an additional bedroom, or level access accommodation, on health grounds, or where the applicant requires the support of an overnight carer who cannot reasonably be expected to share a bedroom with another member of the household. Other examples include applicants who have been approved as foster carers/adopters and require larger accommodation that would normally be required.

Households who are currently undergoing gender reassignment or require specific bedroom allocation as a result of gender reassignment will be considered on a case by case basis. Decisions on bedroom allocation, and suitability of accommodation, will be made in conjunction with the applicant and the relevant housing provider (including supported accommodation and hostels) as to what would be suitable.

Specialist accommodation, such as sheltered or adapted accommodation will be let to households with specific needs taking into account age and disability.

An application including an additional room for an overnight carer will be assessed in conjunction with Staffordshire Council's Social Care and Health Services. In these circumstances, the applicant must provide supporting evidence that a carer is needed to provide overnight support,

for example, from other agencies such as social care or health professionals.

Further details on suitability of accommodation can be found in the full Allocation Policy.

Offers of Accommodation

Applicants will be offered accommodation in writing. Housing Associations often have strict turnaround criteria for letting properties and it is important that applicant's respond to the Housing Options Team and the Housing Associations in a timely manner otherwise the property may be offered to the next suitable applicant. Time frames will be specified at the point of offer.

An offer of accommodation can be made in any area of the Borough that the Council and if appropriate, partners (such as the police) has assessed is suitable and safe for the applicant to live in. A refusal of an offer of the correct size and type will normally be considered unreasonable.

If the Council considers that the applicant has unreasonably refused three offers of suitable accommodation the applicant will no longer qualify for the Housing Register. The applicant will not be entitled to apply again within 12 months of the date of disqualification. Offers of accommodation include those offered directly by a **relevant housing provider** and those that are arranged by way of a nomination to a registered provider. The Council reserves the right to place an application on behalf of a household (management applications) and, if successful, this would amount to an offer of accommodation.

Priorities for Allocating Housing

The Allocation Policy intends to make best use of housing stock by prioritising social housing for those in most need, in a fair and transparent way, recognising that demand for social housing exceeds supply. There are 4 housing need bands with each band reflecting the level of assessed housing need. Stafford Borough Council does not operate an 'open housing register'. If an applicant is not assessed as having a statutory housing need as defined by Housing Act 1996 Part 6 reasonable preference categories they will not be able to qualify for the Housing Register.

Band A - Very urgent need to move (reasonable preference and are granted additional preference): These are applicants that are owed a statutory award of *reasonable preference* but whom the Council believes

should also be awarded *additional preference* Band A based on their very urgent need to move.

Band B - Urgent) Need to move (reasonable preference): These are applicants that are owed a statutory award of *reasonable preference* under the policy and have been awarded Band B priority based on their urgent assessed housing need.

Band C - Housing Need to move (reasonable preference): These are applicants that are owed a statutory award of *reasonable preference* under the policy and have been awarded Band C priority based on their assessed housing need

Band D - Lower Housing Need to move (reasonable preference): These are applicants that are owed a statutory award of *reasonable preference* under the policy and have been awarded Band D priority based on a lower level of assessed housing need

For applicants that are not assessed as having a statutory housing need (Bands A-D) they can still approach the Council to receive advice on their housing options using the on-line housing advice portal on our website, www.staffordbc.gov.uk/housing.

The table setting out bands A-D and a description of the criteria used to award a Band

Band A - Very urgent need to move

Criteria	Description
Main Housing Duty, or likely to be owed the Main Housing Duty under Homeless Legislation	Applicants owed a main housing duty (section 193(2) duty) or the section 193C(4) 'reduced' section 193 duty ¹ who are priority need and not intentionally homeless. Applicants who are homeless and are owed the relief duty (section 189B duty) and would be owed, or be likely to be owed, the main housing duty (Section 193(2) duty) if the relief duty were to come to an unsuccessful end because they are, or would be likely to be found to be in priority need and unintentionally homeless.
Medical Emergency	Applicants who have nowhere to live, or have somewhere to live but it is unsuitable for their medical needs and

¹ Where the council has exercised its powers for homeless applicants who deliberately and unreasonably refuse to cooperate.

Criteria	Description
	cannot be made suitable through adaptations within a reasonable period of time and the living conditions has such a serious impact on the applicants health that it is life threatening and/or they are unable to carry out daily activities in their accommodation or access facilities such as bathroom, kitchen, inside or outside of their accommodation. See Appendix F for full details on how medical housing need will be assessed. Applicants who have urgent need to move due to them having medical problems or disabilities that are being worsened by their current housing situation which is having a life threatening impact on their health. This includes applicants: a) Whose life is at risk due to their current housing conditions or who are housebound, effectively housebound or cannot access the essential facilities in their home and there are critical concerns about their safety, for example through falls due to difficulties with access. b) Whose condition is terminal and rehousing is required to provide a basis for the provision of suitable care c) Whose condition is life threatening and their existing accommodation is a major contributory factor or whose health is so severely affected by the accommodation that it is likely to become life threatening. d) With disabilities, who have restricted mobility and are limited by their accommodation such that they are unable to carry out day-to-day activities or have difficulties accessing facilities inside and outside of their accommodation and require rehousing into accommodation suitable for their use. e) In overcrowded accommodation which puts the applicant at risk of infection, for example, where an applicant is suffering from late-stage or advanced HIV infection. Applicants ready to be discharged from hospital who: have somewhere to live but their accommodation is unsuitable due to their medical needs and cannot be made suitable through adaptations because of cost effectiveness or structural difficulties or the property cannot be adapted within a reasonable amount of time.

Criteria	Description
Harassment	Applicants where there is a threats to life of a member of a household or where the continued occupation of the household would pose a significant threat to the community and an approved risk assessment has been received by the police. For example: 1) Applicants who are suffering extreme violence or harassment where there is strong police evidence that an urgent move is required to protect the life of an applicant or a member of their household and can demonstrate to the satisfaction of Stafford Borough Council that it is not safe for the applicant (and or their household) to remain in their present home. 2) Applicants who need to move immediately due to extreme violence, extreme harassment, or other extreme circumstances deemed to significantly affect a household's welfare and wellbeing.
Domestic Abuse	Applicants where there is evidence of domestic abuse where the threat means it is imminently not safe for an individual to remain in their present home – verification is required by the police, or other agency or body such as MARAC, as necessary in conjunction with a Council approved risk assessment.
Armed Forces	Former, or serving, members of Her Majesty's Regular Armed Forces, or Reserves, who need to move because they are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partially) to their military service; Bereaved spouses or civil partners of members of Her Majesty's Regular Forces who have left or will be leaving services accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of their spouse or civil partner and whose death was attributable (wholly or partially) to their military service.
Disaster or Emergency	Applicants whose homes are damaged by fire, flood or other disaster and it is not possible to repair the existing home, or if any work to repair is to take such a long period of time that there will be serious disruption to family life.
Care Leavers	A young person, who has been looked after, fostered or accommodated and has a duty of care accepted under the Children's Act 1989 who has been assessed as

Criteria	Description
	suitable for independent living with an agreed package of support from relevant support services. Further details on suitability of independent living and packages of support are outlined in the full Allocation Policy.
Entrenched Rough Sleepers	Applicants who have a history of entrenched rough sleeping and are being considered for immediate accommodation and are engaging with intensive floating support as the only means of being able to access accommodation provision within the Borough.
Supported Accommodation Move On	Applicant is living in supported accommodation, including refuge and the Council has agreed a move on agreement with the housing provider. The applicant must demonstrate that they have the practical skills to sustain long-term independent accommodation and, where appropriate, have a support plan in place.

Band B - (Urgent) Need to move (reasonable preference)

Criteria	Description
Acute Overcrowding	Where an applicant household is severely overcrowded defined as being either statutory overcrowded or requiring 2 or more additional bedrooms to reach the bedroom standard.
Under Occupancy	Applicant is under-occupying a property by two or more bedrooms in accordance with statutory bedroom requirements.
Housing conditions including housing that poses a serious risk to health, safety or welfare	A property that has been assessed by a qualifying officer within the Council as having a serious health and safety hazard and the property is not suitable for occupation for more than a short period of time as a result, which has resulted in the Council taking enforcement action and the property condition, cannot reasonably be rectified by the owner within six months. This may include applicants who do not have access to essential bathing or cooking facilities or access to running hot water or electric or gas.
Demolition or Compulsory Purchase Order	Applicants whose property is subject to a demolition or Compulsory purchase Order for redevelopment.

Criteria	Description
Foster Carers	Applicants approved as foster or adoptive parents who need to move to facilitate the placement of a child/children.
Releasing an Adapted Property	Transfer applicants residing in social housing that are releasing a property with major adaptations where the adaptations are no longer required and there is an identified housing need for the property. This excludes adaptations that do not alter the physical fabric of the building, for example, stair lifts, temporary ramping, ceiling track, hoists etc.
Homeless Relief	Homeless applicants who are owed, or likely to be owed, the Section 189B Relief Duty for as long as that duty is owed to the applicant, and they would not be owed, or are unlikely to be owed, the main housing duty (Section 193(2) duty).
High Medical Need	Applicants whose current housing situation is having a serious detrimental, but not life threatening, impact on their health so that they require re-housing based on medical grounds. The housing condition must directly contribute to causing serious ill health and the condition of the property cannot be resolved within a reasonable period of time. The applicant's accommodation is directly contributing to the deterioration of the applicant's health. See the Allocation Policy for full detail on how medical need will be assessed. The examples of when this will be awarded include: a) The applicant's current accommodation to a significant extent directly exacerbates an existing medical condition, is the direct cause of a medical condition or impacts on the ease of use of the facilities within their home for a disabled person. b) Applicants who have mobility issues and it has been assessed need to move to ground floor or level access accommodation c) Applicants who have mobility issues and need to move to accommodation that has level access showering facilities Applicants who have a significant physical or mental health condition that is directly affected by their accommodation and where a move to alternative

Criteria	Description
	accommodation would help to ease or resolve their condition. Applicants who have a medical need for an additional bedroom (e.g. because they need an overnight carer or need to accommodate a substantial amount of medical equipment)
Domestic Abuse	Applicants who need to move due to threat of domestic abuse, violence or harassment but are not in immediate danger, as determined by an appropriate agency such as the police or MARAC.

Band C - Housing need to move

Criteria	Description
Overcrowding	Applicants who require one additional bedroom in accordance with statutory bedroom requirements.
Under Occupancy	Applicants who are under occupying their property by one bedroom in accordance with statutory bedroom requirements.
Homeless Prevention	Applicants who are owed a Section 195 Prevention Duty by Stafford Borough Council for as long as that duty is owed to the applicant.
Armed Forces	Members of the Armed Forces persons who are serving in the regular forces who will be discharged within three months and have served for five years preceding their application as long as this has not been a dishonorable discharge and were previously resident within the Borough for at least six months or have close family that have lived in Stafford for at least three years. This includes those who are leaving the Armed Forces having received their notice of discharge date; or have left in the last five years, having been medically discharged in the last five years; or served the required minimum level of service. This does not include Discharge As Of Right (DAOR).
Sharing Facilities	Applicants, who are sharing facilities, such as a kitchen or bathroom, following an offer of accommodation from the local authority and/ or where the applicant has medical,

Criteria	Description
	care or support need that would benefit from self-contained accommodation.
Planned Move from insecure accommodation	Applicants who are living with family and friends whilst looking for alternative accommodation and would otherwise be at threat of homelessness or would be likely to be excluded. Note: Family and friends must agree that it is likely that the applicant can remain at the property for a minimum period of six months whilst they look for alternative accommodation or are waiting to see if they will be able to be nominated to a social housing property under this Policy.
Care and Support	Applicants who need to move to give or receive care and support that is substantial and ongoing. There must be demonstrable evidence accepted by the Council that the household, or an individual/s in that household, provides or receives substantial and on-going support to or from relatives or friends, This will only be considered where there are significant medical or welfare issues including grounds relating to disability where moving would prevent significant physical or psychological hardship.
Affordability	Applicants whose current accommodation is not affordable for them to sustain. Applicants must engage with the Housing Options Team to complete a detailed budgeting exercise, including addressing priority debts, maximising income and reducing expenditure. Applicants housing cost must exceed one third of their net income and priority outgoings must exceed income following budgeting assistance. The Housing Options Team may refer to an external agency to provide budgeting advice before awarding priority under this banding.
Hardship	Applicants who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the housing authority where failure to do so would cause hardship as they would not be able to take up specialist employment. Further details can be found in the full Allocation Policy.

Criteria	Description
Right To Move	Existing social tenants of accommodation in England who wish to exercise their Right to Move (using the Government's Right to Move regulations) to a social tenancy in Stafford Borough. Further details can be found in the full Allocation Policy.
Sheltered Accommodation	Older or disabled applicants assessed as requiring retirement, extra care or sheltered housing.

Band D - want to move (no reasonable preference)

Criteria	Description
Non- Violent Relationship Breakdown	Applicants living separately with their ex-partner following a non-violent relationship breakdown.
Intentionally Homeless	Applicants who have been found intentionally homeless in accordance with Part 7 of the Housing Act (as amended) and not owed a full homeless duty and meet the eligibility and qualification criteria. This award will only be for the period that the Council is under a section 190(2) intentional homeless duty, which is usually no longer than one month. Further details can be found in the full Allocation Policy.

Allocations in Exceptional Circumstances

Priority within a Band will be determined by the length of time the application has been placed in that Band and most allocations will be made to applicants in the highest band, and then by the time they have waited within that Band. In some circumstances an offer will be made to an applicant outside of the priority band and 'time registered' procedure. This is where there is an urgent need for an individual household to be housed or where there is an operational or financial need to house certain categories of applicants.

Applicants who deliberately worsen their housing situation

Where there is evidence that a customer has deliberately made their housing situation worse in order to gain a higher priority on the register, the assessment of their needs will be based on the circumstances before their situation changed through their deliberate worsening of their circumstances. Applicants will be informed in writing of this decision.

Review of the Waiting List

Applicants will be reviewed after being on the waiting list for six months. Applicants will be contacted on the last known contact details via email, or their preferred method of contact and asked to update to the Council of their housing situation within a reasonable period of time. It is the applicant's responsibility to keep their contact details up to date. Applicants who do not respond to the review request, or whose circumstances have changed so that they are no longer have a preference under the Allocation Policy or are no longer eligible, will have their circumstances updated or be removed from the waiting list accordingly. Applicants will be informed in writing and have the opportunity to review this decision.

If upon the Council's reassessment a lesser priority banding is given, the applicant will retain the original assessment date from when they first qualified for the Housing Register. The Housing Option Service will inform Homes Plus Homes of any banding changes, or decisions on eligibility for the waiting list accordingly.

Request for Review

Applicants have the right to information about decisions and right to review certain decisions made in accordance with their housing application. Decisions on review are final and can only be challenged by way of judicial review. Further details on the right to review and general provisions can be found in the full Allocation Policy.

Appendix A:

A list of social housing providers in Stafford Borough

Aspire

Kingsley

The Brampton

Newcastle Under Lyne

ST5 0QW

Tel- 01782 635200

Bromford Housing Group

1 Venture Court

Broadlands

Wolverhampton

WV10 6TB

Tel- 0330 1234 034

Homes Plus Homes

The Rurals, 1 Parker Court

Dyson Way

Staffordshire Technology Park

Beaconside

Stafford

ST18 0WP

Tel- 0800 111 4554

Midland Heart

20 Bath Row

Park Central

Birmingham

B15 1LZ

Tel- 03456020540

Sanctuary Housing

164 Birmingham Road

West Bromwich

B70 6QG

Tel- 0800 1313348 or 0300 1233511

South Staffs Housing Association

Acton Court

Acton Gate

Stafford

ST18 9AP

Tel- 01785 312000

Staffordshire Housing Association

308 London Road

Stoke On Trent

ST4 5AB

Tel- 01782 744533

Fax- 01782 744931

Wrekin Housing Trust

Colliers Way

Old Park

Telford

TF3 4AW

Tel- 01952 217100

Walsall Housing Group

100 Hatherton Street

Walsall

WS1 1AB

Tel – 0300 555 6666

