

Affordable Housing Allocations Criteria

Affordable housing will be allocated to eligible people based on their level of housing need and local connection, in accordance with MHN/6 in the Supplementary Planning Document: Meeting Housing Needs. This annex is revised whenever necessary to take account of changes made by the Council's Housing Service to the eligibility criteria.

The cascade approach below categorises different levels of housing need into Bands A-E, ranging from 'emergency housing need' (Band A) to 'no housing need' (Band E). More information about the bands, how to bid for affordable housing and how homes are allocated may be found on the Devon Home Choice website at www.devonhomechoice.com.

1. Local Need/Connection Qualification Criteria

- 1.1. In determining the allocation of affordable housing to local people on rural exception housing sites the District Council will utilise the following cascade criteria to determine the suitability of potential occupants. Priority will be given to eligible persons with a local connection to the Parish (defined in section 3) coupled with a housing need, using the cascade in the following paragraphs
- 1.2. Applicants will be prioritised using the criteria, ranked in order of importance:
 - 1.2.1. The intended household has been continuously resident in the Parish of (XXXX) for at least five years in Bands A-D.
 - 1.2.2. The intended household is permanently employed in the parish of (XXXX) in Bands A – D and whose work is primarily based in this parish. For the purposes of this criterion, 'permanently employed' means having held a permanent employment contract for a minimum of 16 hours per week for at least the preceding 6 months.
 - 1.2.3. The intended household is living in private rented accommodation and has a local connection to the parish of (XXXXX) according to clauses 1 and 2 in order of preference, in Band E where the household income is insufficient to enable it to afford to or to sustain to rent or purchase a property suitable for its needs at a full open market value or price in the parish of XXXX
 - 1.2.4. Former residents who previously lived in the parish of (XXXX) for a period of at least three years within the last 10 years in Bands A – D who wish to return to the parish. Those in the Armed Forces (defined in Section 4) will be considered above those former residents who wish to return to the parish;
 - 1.2.5. The intended household is in the A – D Band and has a close living relation resident in the parish of (XXXX). This means immediate family members (parents, siblings, dependent and non-dependent children) who themselves live in the Parish of (XXXX) and have done so for at least the preceding five years; Exceptional circumstances will be taken into consideration.

- 1.2.6. Former residents (who have previously lived in the parish of (XXXX) for a period of at least three years within the last 10 years) who wish to return to the parish of (XXXX) in Band E and who are currently Council or Housing Association tenants.
- 1.2.7. The intended household have been continuously resident in the parish for six months or more in Bands A – D).
- 1.2.8. Those residents of neighbouring parish in Bands A – D using the above criteria in the following order of priority:
 - a. Xxxx
 - b. Xxxx
 - c. xxxx (as listed)
- 1.2.9. Those residents with a local connection to Mid Devon District in Bands A – D. For the purposes of determining “local connection” the criteria above will be used, substituting Mid Devon District for references to XXXX.
- 1.2.10. Those residents with a local connection to Mid Devon District or those with a local connection to the parish specified above, in Band E. For the purposes of determining “local connection” the criteria above will be used, substituting Mid Devon District or the relevant parish (as appropriate) for references to XXX.
- 1.2.11. All other Devon Home Choice applicants.

2. Shared Ownership Properties

2.1. For the shared ownership properties, the following groups would be eligible:

- First time buyers who cannot afford to buy on the open market in the locality
- Those who jointly owned a home but the relationship has broken down and cannot afford to buy on the open market in the locality.
- Existing shared owners who have outgrown their home but cannot afford to buy outright/rent on the open market in the locality

2.2. Shared ownership applicants would be prioritised on the following basis:

- 2.2.1. Has been continuously resident in the parish of (XXXX) for at least five years
- 2.2.2. Is permanently employed in the parish of (XXXX) and whose work is primarily based in this parish. For the purposes of this criterion, ‘permanently employed’ means having held a permanent employment contract for a minimum of 16 hours per week for at least the preceding 6 months.
- 2.2.3. Has previously lived in the parish of (XXXX) for a period of at least three years within the last 10 years wish to return to the parish.

- 2.2.4. Has a close living relation resident in the parish of (XXXX). This means immediate family members (parents, siblings, dependent and nondependent children) who themselves live in the parish of (XXXX) and have done so for at least the preceding five years; Exceptional circumstances will be taken into consideration.
- 2.2.5. Has been continuously resident in the parish for six months or more.
- 2.2.6. Residents of neighbouring parish using the above criteria in the following order of priority:
- a. Xxx
 - b. Xxx
 - c. xxxx (as listed)
- 2.2.7. Has a local connection to Mid Devon District. For the purposes of determining "local connection" the criteria above will be used, substituting Mid Devon District or the relevant parish (as appropriate) for references to XXX.
- 2.2.8. Those residents with a local connection to Mid Devon District or those with a local connection to the parish specified above. For the purposes of determining "local connection" the criteria above will be used, substituting Mid Devon District or the relevant parish (as appropriate) for references to XXX.
- 2.2.9. All other shared ownership applicants.
- 2.3. First priority will be given to those who are eligible in accordance with the above criteria and who are existing Council and housing association tenants or Ministry of Defence personnel.
- 2.4. The size and type of the shared ownership home offered will be based on three main factors:
- Affordability
 - Household size
 - The applicant's preference
- 2.5. As a guide, offers will be made on the following basis:
- Single applicants – one or two beds
 - Joints applicants – one, two or three beds
 - Couples/single parent families with one child – two or three beds
 - Couples/single parent families with two children – three or four beds

3. Devon Home Choice Local Connection Definition

- 3.1. An applicant fulfilling the local preference criteria will be the same as the one used in the current Devon Home Choice (DHC) guidance.

3.2. To demonstrate a local connection (defined in Part VII of the Housing Act 1996) with Devon, applicants will:

- Normally be resident in the parish or neighbouring parish. Local Government Association (LGA) guidelines define this as having resided in the area for six out of the last twelve months, or three out of the last 5 years, where residence has been out of choice. In line with the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, service personnel who have been based and living in that parish or a neighbouring parish will be considered to have a local connection.
- Work in the parish or neighbouring parish. The LGA guidelines define this as employment other than that of a casual nature. For the purposes of this policy this will be defined as having permanent work with a minimum of a 16 hour contract per week for the previous 6 months, and without a break in the period of employment for more than three months.
- Have a family connection in the parish or neighbouring parish. The LGA guidelines define this as immediate family members (parents, siblings and non-dependent children) who have themselves lived in the area for five years.

NB - Applicants will be required to provide proof of their local connection to Devon before their banding is assessed.

4. Armed Forces Personnel

4.1. Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Armed Forces) (England) Regulations 2012

- Those who are currently serving in the regular forces or who were serving in the regular forces at any time in the five years preceding their application for an allocation of social housing
- Bereaved spouses¹ or civil partners¹ of those serving in the armed forces where (i) the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their service spouse or civil partner, and (ii) the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service.

(¹ should bereaved spouses or civil partners secure housing after leaving Ministry of Defence then this will no longer apply)

- Current or former members of the reserved forces, who are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service