

Addendum to The Housing Allocation Policy - June 2016

Due to the withdrawal of funding for Supporting People, and the subsequent ending of floating sheltered housing support, it is prudent to review the definition of “Sheltered Accommodation”, as used by the Council.

Currently, Sheltered Accommodation is defined as a “Block or scheme of accommodation that consists of self-contained bungalows or flats, with a warden who lives on or near the premises and/or an emergency alarm system.”

The Council no longer has any Sheltered Housing stock and therefore we need to redefine stock that was originally classed as Sheltered Housing for elderly persons. Amending the policy would enable the Housing Options team to allocate the accommodation to those who have a medical need for this type of home and make the best use of the Council’s housing stock to ensure that younger applicants with a medical need are not unfairly disadvantaged.

It is proposed that the Council will classify the accommodation as accessible accommodation for the elderly or for those with a medical need and will take into account its location, size, design and other characteristics such as level entry showers, ground floor kitchen and bathroom extensions. It is proposed that the following two sections in the policy are amended to take account of the proposed changes. (Please note that the savings levels correspond with those set by Devon Home Choice and that this will be raised for discussion with other partners in coming months due to the fact that some elderly people might be able to resolve their own housing need in the private sector if they had assets or savings of up to £120,000).

The existing policy states the following at section 5.1.5:

- 5.1.5 Applicant’s assets and/or household income levels where it is assessed that the private housing market can provide for their housing needs. Households with a gross household income more than six times higher than the relevant Local Housing Allowance level prevailing in Devon at the time will normally be considered to be able to meet their housing need, through either renting privately or owner occupation. Such households will be classed as No housing need band and removed from the Devon Home Choice register. (See income/saving levels)

Income Levels (LHA as of April 2015)		
Property Size	Max Income Levels	Assets/Savings
1 Bedroom	£33,372	£16,000
2 Bedroom	£41,796	£16,000
3 Bedroom	£49,464	£16,000
4 Bedroom	£64,620	£16,000
Sheltered Accommodation		
1 Bedroom	£33,372	£120,000
2 Bedroom	£41,796	£130,000

It is proposed that the section 5.1.6 is amended as follows:

5.1.6 Applicant's assets and/or household income levels where it is assessed that the private housing market can provide for their housing needs. Households with a gross household income more than six times higher than the relevant Local Housing Allowance level prevailing in Devon at the time will normally be considered to be able to meet their housing need, through either renting privately or owner occupation. Such households will be classed as No housing need band and removed from the Devon Home Choice register. (See income/saving levels)

Income Levels (LHA as of April 2015)		
Property Size	Max Income Levels	Assets/Savings
1 Bedroom	£33,372	£16,000
2 Bedroom	£41,796	£16,000
3 Bedroom	£49,464	£16,000
4 Bedroom	£64,620	£16,000
Accessible Accommodation (Bungalows)		
1 Bedroom	£33,372	£120,000
2+ Bedroom	£41,796	£130,000

The existing policy states the following at section 19:

19 Over 55s and Sheltered Accommodation

19.1 Sheltered properties have an age criteria set by the landlord who owns the scheme. Some properties are specifically developed for persons aged over 45 or 55 and will be prioritised to applicants over this age. In exceptional circumstances a younger person with particular support needs which are not able to be met elsewhere may be allocated such accommodation. This will be achieved via a direct let.

It is proposed to change section 19 to read as follows:

19 Accessible Accommodation (Bungalows)

The Council has a number of bungalows which were specifically developed for elderly people. They are especially suitable for this group of tenants due to location, size, design, heating system and/ or other features. MDCC will also give consideration to applicants, who may not be classified as elderly persons, with a medical need for this type of property, when allocating these properties, in order to make best use of stock. This is to ensure that younger applicants with a medical need giving them high priority for a move to alternative accommodation are not unfairly disadvantaged.

Some of these properties have been adapted and may contain one or more of the following; level entry shower, wet room, ramps, stair lift, lowered kitchen, ground floor kitchen and bathroom extensions. These homes will be labelled to show that the property has been identified as having adaptations suitable for someone who would benefit from them. Preference will be given to those with a need for that type of accommodation