



BURY MBC

ALLOCATION POLICY 2006

FOREWORD

This policy document sets out the rules by which council homes in Bury will be allocated and let.

Every employee of Bury MBC or Six Town Housing carrying out any part of the local authority's allocations and lettings functions must follow this policy. The policy and its implementation may be changed or modified as follows:

- **Policy Change**
On the authority of a decision of Bury MBC's Executive
- **Administrative or Procedural Change**
On the authority of the Head of the Strategic Housing Unit
- **Exceptional Decision on an Individual Case**
On the authority of the appropriate officer as specified in Appendix 2

Where legislation or regulations necessitate that the policy must be changed or amended in order that Bury MBC continues to meet its statutory obligations, this will be carried out in accordance with the Bury MBC Officer Delegation Scheme for Decisions.

This policy replaces all previous allocations and lettings policy documents. The policy was developed in partnership with Six Town Housing and in consultation with stakeholders, including all relevant statutory and non-statutory services; service providers; tenants and other service users. Examples of good practice were sought from other local authorities. The draft policy will be submitted to Executive members for approval in March 2006. Further information about the consultation process is included in Appendix 3.

The final document will be published in the following formats: CD, large print, Braille and audio. It is also available to download from Bury MBC's website: www.bury.gov.uk and the Six Town Housing website: www.sixtownhousing.org. Translations will be available in the following languages: French, Polish, Arabic, Urdu, Cantonese and Farsi. Translations in any other languages are available on request. A Plain English Summary will be published specifically for service users and members of the public. Any member of the public may inspect this document free of charge together with a Plain English Summary by contacting the Access and Assessment Team on 0161 253 5251 or e mail Access-to-housing@bury.gov.uk and from Six Town Housing on 0161 686 8000.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aims and Objectives

1.1.1 Bury MBC Strategic Housing Unit’s vision for housing is:

“Providing excellent housing services for Bury”

1.1.2 The overall aim of the Allocations Policy is to contribute to this vision by offering applicants real housing choice, while continuing to give reasonable preference to those in the most urgent housing need.

1.1.3 The policy’s key objectives are to:

- Continue to meet housing need and prevent homelessness
- Provide a modern and robust policy that is clear and understandable by all
- Extend choice and enable customer involvement
- Balance housing needs against customer aspirations
- Make best use of council homes
- Continue to support our most vulnerable customers through partnership working
- Promote a wider range of housing options including low cost ownership and shared equity
- Ensure a quality lettings service that embraces equality and diversity

1.2 Choosing Choice in Bury

1.2.4 Bury MBC, in partnership with Six Town Housing, is committed to promoting choice through its Allocations Policy in a way that best meets both community and individual housing needs.

1.2.5 In order to facilitate real choice to those waiting for council homes, as well as reduce waiting times and time spent in unsuitable accommodation, this policy sets out the phased implementation of a new pilot Choice Based Lettings scheme, based on housing need, for 50% of all Bury MBC properties.

1.2.6 This scheme will run in conjunction with the existing traditional Selection Process. Bury MBC has an ambition to move to 100% Choice based Lettings by April 2007ⁱ.

1.2.7 The pilot scheme will be monitored and reviewed throughout the pilot period.

ⁱ Ref Section 10.1, Facilitating Choice

2.0 TYPES OF LETTINGS

- 2.0.1 The Allocations Policy covers the following types of lettings:
- Introductory tenancies let through Six Town Housing
 - Secure tenancies let through Six Town Housing
 - Assured tenancies let through Housing Associations where the letting is made via the Nomination Agreement with Bury MBC
- 2.0.2 Pursuant to Section 160 Housing Act 1996 the provisions of this Scheme will not apply where a secure tenancy:
- a) vests under S89 Housing Act 1985 (succession to tenancy on death of tenant).
 - b) remains a secure tenancy by virtue of S90 Housing Act 1985 on death of tenant.
 - c) is assigned under S92 Housing Act 1985 by way of exchange.
 - d) is assigned to a person who would be qualified to succeed the secure tenant if the secure tenant died immediately before the assignment.
 - e) vests or is disposed of in pursuance of a Court Order made under Matrimonial Causes Act 1973; Matrimonial and Family Proceedings Act 1984 or Children Act 1989.
- The provisions of the Scheme do not apply where an Introductory Tenancy:
- a) Becomes secure on ceasing to be introductory;
 - b) Vests under S133(2) Housing Act 1996 (succession to introductory tenancy on death of introductory tenant);
 - c) Is assigned to a person who would be qualified to succeed the introductory tenant if the introductory tenant died immediately before the assignment
 - d) Vests or is disposed of in pursuance of a Court Order made under Matrimonial Causes Act 1973; Matrimonial and Family Proceedings Act 1984 or Children Act 1989
- 2.0.3 Properties which are let in order to meet the local authority’s wider objectives are not let on introductory or secure tenancies and are therefore not covered by the provisions of this Scheme. These include:
- Asylum Seeker properties
 - Care Leavers Scheme
 - Properties used to temporarily accommodate homeless people
 - Properties leased from and managed on behalf of the local authority by Registered Social Landlords or other partners in order to meet specialised housing support needs
- 2.0.4 Where changes are proposed either to the categories of lettings, or the numbers or types of properties designated for these categories, these must first be approved in accordance with Bury MBC’s Officer Delegation Scheme for Decisions.

3.0 ACCESS TO SOCIAL HOUSING COVERED BY THE ALLOCATIONS POLICY

3.1 Bury MBC Housing Register

- 3.1.1 Bury MBC administer the waiting list for council properties in the form of the Housing Register. This is a single register for both new customers who want to move into a Bury MBC home and those who are existing tenants seeking to transfer. The Register is the allocation tool for the Allocations Policy.
- 3.1.2 The Register is divided into Six Bands, according to housing need; with Band 1 awarded the highest priority and Band 6 the lowest. Applicants are prioritised within the bands according to their waiting timeⁱⁱ.

3.2 The Application Process

- 3.2.1 To join the register, applicants must complete a re-housing application form. These forms can be obtained from any of Bury MBC’s designated information points across the Borough or at Six Town Housing offices. Forms can also be downloaded from the Internet.
- 3.2.2 All printed information is available in Braille and audio and translations are available on request. Additional support is available to those who need special help and to vulnerable people through:
- The availability of interpreters, including British Sign Language
 - Face to face office interviews to offer housing advice and/or help and support with completing forms
 - Home visiting service for people who are unable to come into offices
- 3.2.3 The registration process involves:
- Checking if the applicant is eligible
 - Assessing if the household is in housing need and subsequently awarding one of the six priority bands
 - Sending out a request for two references, one of these must be a current or most recent landlord, if the applicant lives in rented accommodation. NB. If an applicant has not had a previous landlord, references from a responsible member of the community e.g. such as an Employer or teacher , including advocates from agencies involved with the applicant, will be accepted
 - Requesting information about current or former tenant arrears and history of payment
 - Requesting information about any current or previous anti social activity

ⁱⁱ Ref Section 5.0, Housing Need and Priority.

3.3 Eligibility For Inclusion on the Housing Register

- 3.3.1 The following are the main categories of Applicants to whom a Housing Authority may allocate accommodation taking account of Nationality and Immigration Status:
- Existing tenants;
 - British Nationals;
 - European Economic Area Nationals;
 - Persons subject to Immigration Control who have been granted either refugee status or leave to remain, or Nationals of a country that has ratified the ECSMA or the ESC.
 - People who have come from abroad and who are excluded from entitlement to Housing Benefit by s115 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- 3.3.2 This restriction does not apply to existing introductory or secure tenants, nor does it prevent other members of a household from applying where they are not themselves subject to the restriction.
- 3.3.3 All of the above are subject to residence conditions.
- 3.3.4 Where it is decided that an applicant is ineligible, they will be informed of the decision in writing, along with the reasons for this decision. They will also be informed of their right to request a review of that decision.

3.4 Serious Unacceptable Behaviour

- 3.4.1 Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 as amended by Homelessness Act 2002 (Section 160A(7)) allows the local authority to treat a person as ineligible where:
- “The applicant, or any member of his household, has been guilty of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make him/her unsuitable to be a tenant”ⁱⁱⁱ*
- “And at the time of the application, the applicant is still unsuitable to be a tenant because of that behaviour”^{iv}*

iii Ref to document
iv Ref to document

- 3.4.2 Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1985 sets out the types of unacceptable behaviour which may lead to an applicant or a member of the moving group being considered ineligible. These are:
- Non payment of rent or breach of tenancy (to be assessed on a case by case basis. Usually rent arrears will be at least £400)
 - Causing nuisance and annoyance to residents or persons visiting or engaging in a lawful activity in the locality.
 - Being convicted for using dwelling house for illegal or immoral purposes; for example, prostitution or drug dealing
 - Being convicted of an arrestable offence committed in or in the locality of the dwelling house.
 - Being violent towards a partner or family member who has left the dwelling house.
 - Allowing the condition of a dwelling house to deteriorate through waste, neglect or default.
 - Allowing furniture provided by the Landlord or landlord’s agent to deteriorate through ill treatment.
 - Obtaining a tenancy by use of a false statement by the tenant or someone at the tenant’s instigation
 - Being housed in accommodation which is part of a building not generally used for housing purposes and being guilty of conduct such the having regard to the purpose for which the building is used it would not be right to continue occupation.
- 3.4.2 In deciding whether an applicant is ineligible, the local authority can only consider behaviour of a tenant or a member of his household (if he/she was residing with the tenant) that:
- Would have entitled the local authority to a possession order under part 1 of Schedule 2 to the Housing Act 1985 (other than ground 8) against the tenant and that behaviour must have been serious enough that the local authority would have gained an outright order for possession. NB. It does not matter whether the applicant was in fact a secure tenant or not, this is a notional test
 - In deciding whether a possession order would have been granted the Housing Authority must take into account whether they have the grounds to obtain an Order and whether the Court would think it reasonable to grant an order having regard to the interests of the parties and the public as a whole.
 - Having concluded entitlement to an order on the basis of the grounds and reasonableness the Local Authority then need to be satisfied that the behaviour was serious enough to make the person unsuitable to be a tenant in the circumstances at the time the application is considered
- 3.4.3 The decision that an applicant is ineligible will be made by the Team Leader of the Access and Assessment Team or a member of the Strategic Housing Unit’s management team, as appropriate. Each case will be considered on its individual merits. A “Right of Review” or appeal is in place: please see section 12.

- 3.4.4 The applicant will be advised of the decision and grounds for the decision. They will be told of their right to request review and the procedure for undertaking the review. The review procedure will ensure that the Applicant will be advised of the review decision and the grounds for that decision.

3.5 Housing Association Homes

- 3.5.1 Each Housing Association has its own policy for letting their properties. Bury MBC however has the right to nominate applicants from the Housing Register for a set proportion of Housing Association properties under a Nomination Agreement with the Council..
- 3.5.2 In addition, people who apply for a council home who are also interested in looking directly for a Housing Association Home are given information about applying to the different Housing Associations.

3.6 The Sub-Regional Agenda

- 3.6.1 National Policy sets out the government’s key intention to develop a nationwide system of choice in housing. Choice Based Lettings Schemes, which offer social rented homes as well as a range of other housing options, are therefore proactively encouraged and supported by government. These schemes are to be delivered on a regional and sub-regional basis.
- 3.6.2 In summer 2005, housing authorities were invited to bid for grant monies to fund Choice Based Lettings Schemes. Nine of the ten Greater Manchester Authorities have submitted a proposal for the development of a pilot Choice Based Lettings Scheme across the area. Bury MBC was included in these partners and has agreed in principle to participate in the Scheme should the bid be successful, subject to approval by the Executive. This bid has subsequently been positively received and accordingly in November 2005 a grant level of £100,000 was obtained.
- 3.6.3 The proposed scheme will comprise of a web-based service providing a directory of available and affordable housing options throughout Greater Manchester.
- 3.6.4 The main aims of the scheme are to:
- Increase customers’ choice of and access to a range of housing across Greater Manchester
 - Enable mobility by removing artificial barriers imposed by local authority boundaries
 - Have an integrated system for social rented homes across the sub-region for transfers, exchanges and home swaps
 - Bring together a larger pool of available affordable housing and therefore prevent homelessness by reducing the numbers of people using homelessness as their main route into social housing
- 3.6.5 The timescale for the implementation of the pilot is March 2008.

4.0 PREFERENCE

4.1 Reasonable Preference

- 4.1.1 This policy is set out and decided by the Local Authority, according to the vision of Bury MBC Strategic Housing Unit and the housing need within the Borough. The policy is also determined by the legal and statutory requirements set out by National Government.
- 4.1.2 Under the Housing Act 1996, s167,(as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 s16 and Housing Act 2004) Local Authorities must give reasonable preference within the Allocations Policy to the following needs groups:
- People who are Homeless, as defined by Section 175 Part VII of the 1996 Housing Act
 - People that have been found in priority need for accommodation by the local authority under Section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) of the Housing Act 1996 or under S65(2) or S68(2) Housing Act 1985
 - People that are occupying a property secured by local authority under Section 192(3) of the Housing Act 1996 [persons not in priority need who are not intentionally homeless]
 - People living in insanitary or overcrowded housing, or in unsatisfactory housing conditions
 - People who need to move for medical or welfare reasons including grounds relating to a disability
 - People who need to move to a particular locality within the Borough where failure to meet that need would cause hardship to themselves or to others

4.2 Additional Preference

- 4.2.1 The law gives local authorities the discretion to frame their allocation schemes to give additional preference to certain people falling into the above reasonable preference categories who have urgent housing needs.
- 4.2.2 Through analysis of the current waiting list, housing demand in the Borough and local circumstances, certain needs groups have been identified as in urgent housing need. This policy awards additional preference to these groups by placing them in Band 1 of the Housing Register^v.

4.3 Reduced Preference

- 4.3.1. In certain circumstances, the law allows local authorities to take certain other factors into account when determining priorities between applicants. This can result in the applicant being awarded a lower priority than they would otherwise receive according to their housing needs alone.

^v Ref Section 5.1, The Banding System (Table 1: Housing Register Bands)

- 4.3.2 Under the terms of this policy and in line with legislation, reduced preference may apply when the applicant, or member of the household, has been guilty of unacceptable behaviour which was not serious enough to justify a decision to treat the applicant as ineligible, but which can be taken into account in assessing applicants level of priority. Examples include minor rent arrears.
- 4.3.3 Applicants who are given reduced preference will be placed in Band 5 of the Housing Register.
- 4.3.4 Each case will be considered on its own merits.

Factors which may be taken into account when determining relative priorities for allocation (Homelessness Act 2002 Section 16)

In determining relative priorities for housing the authority may take into account any **local connection** which exists between a person and the borough.

4.4 Bury Connection

- 4.4.1 Bury MBC undertakes to award some level of reasonable preference to applicants from outside the Borough; however, due to the high levels of demand for council homes in Bury, applicants without a Bury connection will not be given the additional preference.
- 4.4.2 For the purposes of the Allocation Policy, a Bury connection is defined as when the applicant or member of the moving group has one or more of the following:
- Residence in the borough and that residence is of his/her own choice
 - Employment in the borough
 - Immediate family associations there
- Any other special circumstances (e.g the need to be near any medical/support services only available in the borough, or having full time study in Bury).
- 4.4.3 These definitions also apply where an applicant is applying from outside the Borough to move to a home where they will care for children who currently live within the Borough, or to provide care to someone who currently lives in the Borough.
- 4.4.4 For Homeless Applicants, different rules relating to local connection apply^{vi}.

^{vi} Ref Section 7.0, Homeless Applicants (7.0.7 – 7.0.9)

5.0 HOUSING NEED AND PRIORITY

- 5.0.1 Bury is a high demand area for housing. This means that the demand for local authority homes in the Borough exceeds the number of properties becoming available.
- 5.0.2 In order to provide a fair system, the Allocations Policy prioritises applicants on the Housing Register according to their housing needs. This is facilitated by splitting the Register into six priority Bands.
- 5.0.3 Applicants to the Housing Register are assessed and placed in the appropriate band according to their circumstances and housing need.

5.1 The Banding System

- 5.1.1 The Bands are groupings of applicants with broadly similar levels of need. The Bands primarily reflect the statutory reasonable preference categories set out by the Housing Act 1996.
- 5.1.2 The Bands also include consideration of some other issues that are in line with the local housing need and sustainable communities agenda; for example, existing tenants who would be willing to give up a larger property and take a smaller one (which is still of sufficient size for their household needs). These applicants will be given a higher banding than their needs alone would merit.
- 5.1.3 Within the individual bands, priority is given to applicants with the longest waiting time. Those who have been in the band the longest have the highest priority.
- 5.1.4 In line with national legislation, greatest priority is awarded to those people who are assessed as having the greatest housing need. Therefore, those people who are assessed as being in urgent housing need are given greatest priority and placed in Band 1. Those people who have applied for council homes and who are assessed as having no housing need, i.e. they are adequately housed at present, are placed in Band 6. The Needs Categories within each band are shown in the table below.

Table 1: Housing Register Bands

Needs Category	Definition
Band 1 (Additional Preference) <i>People with the most urgent and immediate need to move to permanent housing and for whom temporary accommodation is particularly unsuitable</i>	
People being discharged from hospital	Where an applicant (or member of the moving group) suffers a severe chronic illness or disability and is unable to move out of hospital due to lack of suitable accommodation. Such applicants must normally have a Bury connection
People losing their home as a result of urban redevelopment initiatives	Where an applicant (or member of the moving group) is living in accommodation which is required to be compulsorily purchased or reconfigured by Bury MBC to assist regeneration (urban renewal initiatives) and where they were living in that accommodation at the date the clearance area was declared or the CPO was made. The award will be made once the move is imminent and backdated to the date the applicant, or the applicant’s landlord, agreed to the sale.

<p>Statutorily Homeless People with dependent children (including pregnant women) in emergency accommodation or who are in exceptional circumstances</p>	<p>Where an applicant (or member of the moving group) is owed a full housing duty by the local authority under the homelessness provisions (Housing Act 1996 Part VII as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and Housing Act 2004) and has been resident in Bury MBC’s temporary accommodation for homeless people or a Women’s Refuge for a minimum of 2 weeks. Residents of Bury Women’s Refuge who are pregnant or have dependent children would qualify for this award without having to register as homeless.</p> <p>In exceptional circumstances other Statutorily Homeless people will be awarded this higher preference. This will be assessed on a case by case basis by a Team Leader from Homelessness or member of the Strategic Housing Unit management team, as appropriate^{vii}</p>
<p>Band 2 (Very High Preference) <i>People with a very high need to move but who do not fall into Band 1</i></p>	
<p>Statutorily Homeless people who are in priority need</p>	<p>Where homeless applicants have been assessed as unintentionally homeless and in priority need under the provisions of Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and Housing Act 2004^{viii}</p>
<p>Households needing re housing on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability, where that need is assessed as high</p>	<p>Where the applicant (or member of the moving group) is at significant risk on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability, if not adequately re-housed, either through risk of injury or where there is a risk to the applicant’s health</p>
<p>People in rented accommodation who are being displaced as a result of urban development whose landlord has not yet agreed a sale</p>	<p>Where an individual or household is living in rented accommodation which is required to be compulsory purchased or reconfigured by the local authority to assist regeneration (urban renewal initiatives) and where they were living in that accommodation at the date the clearance area was declared but the landlord has not yet agreed to a sale</p>
<p>Households in supported housing who are ready to move on</p>	<p>Where an individual or household who has been living in supported accommodation has been assessed as ready to move on to independent living. This includes young Care Leavers and Statutorily Homeless applicants under 18. Written confirmation that the applicant has developed the necessary independent living skills will be required from support staff.</p> <p>The award will be backdated to the date the individual or household entered the supported accommodation</p>

^{vii} Ref Section 12.2, Right to Review
^{viii} Ref Section 7.0, Homeless Applicants (7.0.1 – 7.0.10)

<p>Households living in insanitary or statutorily overcrowded accommodation</p>	<p>Where either 2 adults of the opposite sex who are not living as a couple or 2 children of the opposite sex over 10 years old have to share a bedroom or sleeping area. For these purposes, a living room is counted as a sleeping area. For the full definition of statutory overcrowding please see Appendix 4</p>
<p>Existing Bury MBC tenants who need alternative accommodation owing to fear of violence or severe harassment, including racial harassment</p>	<p>Bury MBC tenants who are in fear of violence and who wish to transfer after considering all options available to them. Where possible, applicants will be encouraged to work with the police and other agencies to take action against the perpetrator. If appropriate, supporting evidence from the police or other agencies may be requested.</p> <p>This award is subject to a six monthly review by Six Town Housing Officers.</p> <p>NB. Tenants experiencing or at risk of domestic violence will be assessed by the Council’s homelessness team</p>
<p>Band 3 (High Preference) <i>High Housing Need Cases: Where there is a considerable gap between people’s housing needs and their current housing circumstances</i></p>	
<p>People who are unintentionally homeless but are not in priority need</p>	<p>Where applicants are assessed as unintentionally homeless but not in priority need^{ix}</p>
<p>Households needing re housing on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability, and who have been assessed as medium priority</p>	<p>Where the applicant has a chronic medical condition or disability and their current housing is significantly affecting their ability to undertake daily tasks or where undertaking such tasks leads to considerable discomfort and/or deterioration in their medical condition or disability</p>
<p>People living in bed and breakfast accommodation</p>	<p>Where applicants are living in Bed and Breakfast Accommodation and who are either not in priority need or whose additional preference has been removed following refusal of a suitable offer^x</p>
<p>People sleeping rough</p>	<p>Where applicants are sleeping rough and who are either not in priority need or whose additional preference has been removed following refusal of a suitable offer^{xi}</p>
<p>Households living in severely overcrowded circumstances</p>	<p>Where the household are found to be at least 2 bedrooms less than required, based on Bury MBC guidelines^{xii}</p>

ix Ref Section 7.0, Homeless Applicants (7.0.1 – 7.0.10)

x Ref Section 7.0, Homeless Applicants (7.0.1 – 7.1.5)

xi Ref Section 7.0, Homeless Applicants (7.0.1 – 7.1.5)

xii Ref Section 10.2, Matching People with Properties (Table 3: Allocation of property types to applicants)

<p>People living in accommodation within the Borough who are being asked to leave and who have little or no security of tenure</p>	<p>Where the Council is satisfied that an applicant is occupying their current accommodation on insecure terms. For example, an Assured Shorthold tenant; a non secure tenancy or a licence; or where the nature of occupancy excludes them from the Protection of Eviction Act 1977.^{xiii} Where the applicant is entitled to protection, they must have a valid notice to quit.</p>
<p>Current Bury MBC tenants under occupying their present home and requesting a 1 bed property</p>	<p>Where a current Bury MBC tenant is under occupying their home and requires a 1 bedroom property</p>
<p>Adopters or households who are approved foster carers who need larger accommodation in order for them to be able to adopt or foster</p>	<p>Where a household needs larger accommodation either to adopt or foster a child. Priority will be awarded on receipt of a supporting letter from Social Services confirming that a child cannot be placed with the family until larger accommodation is secured and that Social Services wish to make such a placement.</p> <p>Should the request for larger accommodation be considered preferable but not essential by Social Services, priority will be awarded according to normal overcrowding criteria</p>
<p>Key Workers who want to move to Bury because they work in the Borough, or to take up an offer of employment</p>	<p>Where the applicant is employed as a Key Worker in the Borough and is currently living outside the local authority area.</p> <p>Key Workers are people who, through their employment, meet the needs of the local community, such as health workers, social workers, care workers in residential homes, teachers and youth workers</p>
<p>Band 4 (Medium Preference) <i>Medium Housing Need: where current housing does not fully meet peoples needs. This Band will also include some people who are homeless but only those who have lost their settled accommodation due to their own actions</i></p>	
<p>Intentionally homeless households in priority need</p>	<p>Where an applicant has been assessed as being in priority need under the provisions of Part VII of the Housing Act 1996, but has been assessed as intentionally homeless</p>
<p>Households living in overcrowded circumstances</p>	<p>Where applicants are assessed as having 1 bedroom less than required^{xiv}</p>

^{xiii} Ref Appendix 4, Legislative Guidance

^{xiv} Ref Section 10.2, Matching People with Properties (Table 3: Allocation of property types to applicants)

Carers needing to move to provide support	Where a carer needs to move to be able to provide support to a friend or relative who has a chronic medical condition and/or serious disability and is in need of regular practical/emotional support or personal care
Households sharing amenities with another household - non family	Where an applicant has one or more child/ren and is living with another household who are not relatives ^{xv}
Applicants who have been through HOMES/Move UK scheme and have a specified area	Where applicants have applied to live in Bury through the HOMES or Move UK schemes
Current Bury MBC tenants who are under occupying their homes and requesting 2 or 3 bedrooms	Where a current Bury MBC tenant is found to be under occupying their home and requires to move to a 2 or 3 bedroom property
Band 5 (Low preference) <i>Lower Housing Need – Some Housing Need. This Band will include people without a Bury connection</i>	
Applicants from outside the Borough	Where the applicant does not have a connection to Bury but has some form of housing need within the terms of this policy
Households sharing amenities with another household – Family	Where the applicant has one or more child/ren and is living with relatives and sharing amenities.
Households needing re housing on medical or welfare grounds including grounds relating to a disability assessed as low priority under Bury MBC’s 2002 Lettings policy	Where applicants are inappropriately housed, but there is no risk either of injury or to the individual’s health or disability NB. This award has been discontinued following rationalisation of the preference categories under the new Scheme. People in this group still waiting for re-housing however will remain in Band 5 until they are offered and accept a council home
Applicants with housing need but who are given reduced preference owing to their behaviour	Where applicants are assessed as having housing need, but their behaviour in a current or previous tenancies has led to a reduced preference
Band 6 (No Preference) <i>People who want re-housing but have no defined housing need and do not otherwise fall into any of the other bands</i>	

5.2 Recognising Multiple Needs

5.2.1 To ensure that the Allocations Policy recognises multiple needs, applicants qualifying for more than one reasonable preference criteria within the same Band will be awarded an extra six months waiting time.

^{xv} Ref Appendix 4, Legislative Guidance

6.0 ASSESSING MEDICAL AND SOCIAL NEEDS AND NEEDS RELATING TO A DISABILITY

6.1 Medical Assessments

- 6.1.1 There is an agreement that health services assists in the assessments for re-housing due to medical needs and/or a disability. This service is provided by Bury PCT who employ a health professional on a part-time basis to act as Bury MBC’s Medical Officer.
- 6.1.2 People who apply for a local authority home due to their medical needs are offered either a home visit or an office interview by the Bury MBC Access and Assessment Team. A detailed medical form will be completed and, if appropriate, additional information may be obtained from the applicant’s GP or other involved health worker.
- 6.1.3 The medical assessment will consider the impact of current housing circumstances on the applicant’s health and may award either Band 2 (Very High Preference) or Band 3 (High Preference).
- 6.1.4 Complex cases, and those which may be potential Band 1 or 2 cases, will be referred for assessment to the Medical Officer.
- 6.1.5 Applications from people with mental health needs will be referred to a sub-group of the Health and Social Needs panel for assessment. This group will include a Mental Health professional.
- 6.1.6 Carers needing to move to provide support to someone with medical needs will be assessed in the same way as outlined in paragraph 6.1.2 – 6.1.4. Following assessment, these applicants may be placed in Band 4 if appropriate.

6.2 Properties Adapted for People with Disabilities

- 6.2.1 Bury MBC has developed improved systems for the storage and retrieval of information about people with disabilities applying for a council home and about adapted council properties becoming available.
- 6.2.2 A database detailing adaptations is now available and this, together with applicant information collected on our re-housing system, facilitates better matching of people to adapted properties which meet their needs.
- 6.2.3 Bury MBC will advertise all properties that have had significant adaptations through the Choice Based Lettings system.
- 6.2.4 Applicants who express an interest in a particular property will only be considered if they require the type of adaptations fitted to that property.
- 6.2.5 In addition, the Housing Register will be checked to identify people who require such adaptations. Suitable applicants who have not already expressed an interest will be contacted by the Access & Assessment Team to see if they wish to be considered for a certain property, but only if they appear to have a higher priority than the applicants who have expressed interest.

- 6.2.6 The Access and Assessment Team will ensure that agencies and/or advocates of vulnerable people with medical needs or a disability offer support to enable them to bid for suitable properties.
- 6.2.7 Properties will be let on the basis of need.
- 6.2.8 Through these improved systems in letting adapted properties, Bury MBC aims to ensure that properties are let within a reasonable period of time. Where substantial adaptations have been undertaken however, properties may be kept void for a longer period if necessary, in order to achieve an appropriate let.
- 6.2.9 Delays may also occur when there is a need to discuss the suitability of particular properties with medical professionals. The appropriate length of time will be dependent on individual circumstances and will be monitored by the Team Leader Access and Assessment.

6.3 Ground Floor Accommodation

- 6.3.1 Ground floor flats will be let as general needs stock to all age groups, but with consideration given to the ages of other tenants living in the same block. Therefore, if all tenants in a block are of a similar age, a similar tenant will be selected for the vacant property, where possible.
- 6.3.2 Priority for ground floor flats will be given to those applicants where there is a need for ground floor accommodation only.

6.4 Health & Social Needs Panel

- 6.4.1 The Health and Social Needs Panel is a multi-agency body and comprises representatives from Housing, Health, and Adult and Children’s Care Services. It was set up in 1994 as a result of increased awareness that Bury MBC’s Housing Allocations Policy did not have a formal mechanism for taking into account applicants’ social and medical circumstances when assessing their housing needs.
- 6.4.2 The purpose of the Panel is:
- To provide a mechanism for assessing applicants’ need for re-housing on social and medical grounds
 - To provide a mechanism for integrated housing and social care through facilitating the structured sharing of information between services. This should result in more appropriate offers of accommodation. Key workers and care packages will be known to housing workers and information about risk to staff and the public will be shared
- 6.4.3 The Panel is jointly chaired by the Team Leader Access & Assessment and Team Leader Support Needs.
- 6.4.4 The Panel will accept referrals from organisations on behalf of individuals to whom they are providing ongoing support.

7.0 HOMELESS APPLICANTS

- 7.0.1 This section applies to applicants who are considered to be homeless under Part VII of the 1996 Housing Act. For a detailed explanation of homelessness law, please see Appendix 4.
- 7.0.2 Under the legislation set out in the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Housing Act 2004, the local authority has a legal duty to secure permanent accommodation for some individuals and households who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
- 7.0.3 The definition of homelessness applies to those people who:
- Have no accommodation available for occupation in the UK or elsewhere which they are entitled to occupy by virtue of an interest in it, a Court Order, a licence or occupational rights.
 - Cannot secure entry to their accommodation or
 - Have moveable accommodation which they are not entitled or permitted to place or reside in
- 7.0.4 A person shall not be treated as having accommodation unless it is reasonable for them to continue to occupy it. A person is deemed to be threatened with homelessness if it is likely he/she will become homeless within 28 days
- 7.0.5 Homeless people are classed as being in priority need if they:
- Are pregnant (or a person with whom they reside or might reasonably be expected to reside)
 - Have dependent children with whom they reside or might reasonably be expected to reside
 - Are homeless due to an emergency e.g. flood, fire or similar disaster
 - Care Leavers up to age of 21 years
 - Are 16 -17 years old and are not being looked after by the Local Authority
 - Are vulnerable as a result of moving because of old age, mental/physical illness or disability or some other reason. This may include people , being discharged from hospital
 - Are victims subject to or at risk of violence or harassment who are vulnerable and have left their accommodation as a result of the violence or threat of violence
 - Are vulnerable as a result of having been in military service
 - Are vulnerable as a result of having been in custody
- 7.0.6 If the applicant (or member of their household) is assessed as in priority need, the council has a legal duty to provide them with temporary accommodation, if they need, whilst their case is being assessed. All homeless people, whether or not they have a priority need are entitled to advice and help from the council.

- 7.0.7 Bury MBC Homeless Team will assess each case to decide if the applicant is entitled to be re-housed by the Council. The team will also decide if the applicant has become homeless through their own actions, and are therefore classed as intentionally homeless.
- 7.0.8 In order to qualify for the full legal Homelessness Duty, the applicant (or member of their household) must be assessed as being unintentionally homeless and have a local connection to Bury.
- 7.0.9 For the purposes of Homelessness Applications: Section 199 (1) of the Housing Act 1996 Part VII provides that a person has a local connection with the local housing authority if he/she has one or more of the following:-
- Normally resident there (e.g six of the last twelve months, or three out of the last five years) and the residence was of his/her own choice
 - Employed there
 - Family associations there
 - Any special circumstances (e.g. need to be near special medical or support services only available in that borough)
- 7.0.10 If the applicant has no safe local connection (i.e. any of the above) to any other Borough and applies as homeless in Bury, then Bury MBC will owe them the full Homelessness Duty.
- 7.0.11 Homeless people who are owed the full legal Homelessness Duty are known as Statutorily Homeless. Where the full Homelessness Duty applies, Bury MBC has a legal duty to secure the applicant a permanent home.
- 7.0.12 Bury MBC Housing Allocations Policy awards preference to the different legal categories of homeless people as follows:
- | | |
|--------|--|
| Band 1 | Statutorily homeless people with dependant children and pregnant women in Bury MBC temporary accommodation |
| | Women with dependant children and pregnant women who are resident at Bury Women’s Refuge |
| Band 2 | All other Statutorily Homeless people |
| Band 3 | Unintentionally homeless people with no priority need |
| Band 4 | Intentionally homeless people |

7.1 Reconciling need and choice for Statutorily Homeless people

- 7.1.1 Bury MBC, in partnership with Six Town Housing, always aims to meet customers’ housing aspirations in terms of property type and location. At the same time however, choices must be balanced against homeless people’s urgent need to move and the high priority awarded in recognition of this, as well as the pressures caused by demand on the local housing stock. Some areas and types of home in Bury are in extremely high demand and waiting times can be very lengthy. Therefore, it may not always be possible to re-house people according to their preferred options.
- 7.1.2 In order to reduce waiting times and to facilitate choice, Statutorily Homeless people will retain their homelessness priority until they receive one suitable offer of accommodation from the council.
- 7.1.3 If an applicant refuses a suitable offer, the Local Authority has no further legal duty to re-house them. This means that they would lose the Band 1 or 2 preference awarded because of their homelessness and be reassessed and placed in a lower Band according to their needs. They will still however, be able to receive offers in the same way as all other applicants on the housing register.
- 7.1.4 Applicants have a “Right to Review” of this decision.^{xvi}
- 7.1.5 Offers made to Homeless applicants by Housing Associations under the Nominations Agreement will not be included in the One Offer Policy.^{xvii}

7.2 Suitability of Offers

- 7.2.1 A suitable offer means that the property should satisfy the following conditions in relation to the Applicant and any person who might reasonably be expected to live with him/her:
- Fit to live in
 - Providing security of tenure
 - Reasonably close to place of work, children’s schools and place of worship (forty five minutes by public transport)
 - Suitable in relation to their financial means
 - Suitable for any specific needs relating to medical conditions or disability
 - Of an adequate size so the he/she and his/her family can live in it without causing it to be overcrowded^{xviii}
 - Free from fear of violence

^{xvi} Ref Section 12.3, Homelessness Applicants

^{xvii} Ref Section 7.1, One Offer Policy

^{xviii} Ref Section 10.2, Matching People with Properties (Table 3: Allocation of property types to applicants)

7.2.2 Under Section 8 of the Homelessness Act 2002 the homelessness duty in S193 of the Housing Act 1996 cannot be brought to an end in reliance upon an offer of Part 6 or 7 accommodation unless the Applicant has been informed of his or her right to request a review of the suitability of the accommodation offered. The Applicant can accept the offer and still request a review of the offer on suitability grounds.

7.3 Location of Offers for Homeless People

7.3.1 Where possible, offers will be made according to their preferred option of both property type and location.

7.3.2 The six townships in Bury are divided into two areas as follows:

- **Bury North**
 - Ramsbottom
 - Tottington
 - Bury
- **Bury South**
 - Whitefield
 - Prestwich
 - Radcliffe

7.3.3 This means that, where this it not possible to re-house an applicant in their preferred township, they will be offered a property within the appropriate area, close to their preferred choice.

7.3.4 In all cases, the Community Housing Officer will fully explain the reasons for the offer, and give appropriate local information such as transport and distance to local amenities (schools, GP, shops etc).

7.3.5 If there are exceptional reasons why someone could not live in an area (for example risk of violence), offers would not be made for that location.

7.4 Choice for Homeless People

7.4.1 The Choice Based Lettings element of Bury MBC’s Allocation and Lettings Scheme is primarily needs based. Statutorily Homeless people are therefore well placed to achieve a positive housing solution through Choice Based Lettings.

7.4.2 To enable all homeless and other vulnerable people to take part in this scheme, a range of interventions is planned, including:

7.4.3 To enable all homeless and other vulnerable people to take part in this scheme, a range of interventions is planned, including:

- Internet access available in homeless temporary accommodation properties
- Weekly mail shots of all available properties to all agencies working with homeless people
- Proxy bids from support workers/advocates will be accepted, if appropriate

- 7.4.4 Bury MBC encourages all homeless people to make full use of the flexibility offered through choice for finding a home. However, the local authority also has to balance choice to customers against a requirement to reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation.
- 7.4.5 Where a homeless individual or household resident in temporary accommodation fails to bid for suitable properties that become available, Bury MBC reserves the right to discharge its legal duty by making a bid on behalf of that individual or household.
- 7.4.6 If the offer is subsequently refused without reasonable grounds for refusal, Band 1 or 2 preference will be removed and the applicant will be treated in accordance with the One Offer Policy and will thereby lose the right to remain in temporary accommodation.
- 7.4.7 Under the terms of this policy, a successful bid made through the Choice Based Lettings system will be counted as One Suitable Offer in normal circumstances.

7.5 Non Statutorily Homeless People

- 7.5.1 Applicants who have been assessed as having no priority need or who are intentionally homeless are not awarded Band 1 or 2 preference, and are therefore not subject to the One Offer Policy.
- 7.5.2 These applicants will be eligible for properties under the normal terms of this policy.

8.0 RECOGNISING NON HOUSING NEED FACTORS

8.1 Key Workers

- 8.1.1 In order to promote choice, ensure sustainable tenancies and make best use of housing stock in the Borough, Bury MBC Allocations Policy awards preference to Key Workers wishing to move into the Borough.
- 8.1.2 Key Workers are defined as people who, through their employment, meet the needs of the local community; such as health workers, social workers, care workers in residential homes, teachers and youth workers.
- 8.1.3 To qualify for this award, applicants must be employed in the Borough and currently living outside the local authority boundaries.
- 8.1.4 Applicants in this group without other housing needs will be given some preference within the banding systems and placed in Band 3.^{xix}

8.2 Transfer Applicants with a Positive Tenancy History

- 8.2.1 In order to ensure that the Allocations Policy contributes to the Sustainable Communities agenda and values individual tenants, up to 10% of all available properties each year will be advertised to Bury MBC tenants who have a positive tenancy history. These properties will be available through the Choice Based Lettings (advertised) Scheme, and only tenants with a positive tenancy history will be considered.
- 8.2.2 Under the terms of this policy, in order to qualify for a Positive Tenancy History award, **ALL** of the following must apply:
- The applicant, or member of the moving group, has been a Bury MBC tenant for a minimum of 5 years continuously at the same address (unless required to make a statutory move)
 - The tenancy has been conducted in a satisfactory manner at all times. No substantiated reports of ASB against the tenancy
 - The applicant has a clear rent account and has no outstanding tenants debt or re charges
 - The property is in sound repair (no rechargeable repairs will be needed) and good decorative order throughout. This does not cover properties that may be in need of repair due to fair wear and tear
 - The applicant does not owe money from any former tenant arrears
 - The applicant does not have any outstanding recharges
- 8.2.3 Assessment of positive tenancy history will be carried out by Six Town Housing staff best placed to access tenancy records.

^{xix} Ref Section 5.0, Housing Need and Priority (Table 1: Housing Register Bands)

- 8.2.4 This initiative allows the policy to meet tenants’ aspirations without compromising the needs of preference groups as:
- A transfer results in an extra let
 - The low quota is insufficient to impact negatively on Bury MBC’s overall commitment to applicants in greatest housing need
- 8.2.5 In order to ensure that there are no negative impacts on housing need and/or for Bury MBC tenants, rigorous monitoring of this scheme will be undertaken and reports produced on a quarterly and annual basis.

9.0 COMMUNITY (OR LOCAL) LETTINGS SCHEMES

- 9.0.1 Section 167(2E) of the Housing Act 1996 enables housing authorities to allocate their accommodation to people that fall outside the statutory preference categories. Therefore, providing the allocation scheme overall continues to give priority to people entitled to reasonable preference, local lettings schemes can sit alongside the mainstream allocation policy.
- 9.0.2 The aim of this provision is to promote schemes which allow flexibility to operate new lettings approaches to meet local community needs whilst continuing to operate within the statutory framework.
- 9.0.3 Community lettings are defined as:
- “Social Housing allocation policies which operate alongside or in place of a consideration of housing need and take into account the potential tenant’s contribution to that community in which the vacancy occurred”^{xx}*
- 9.0.4 The key benefits of Community Lettings Schemes are:
- They enable landlords to some extent to influence the social balance in a particular area by restricting or extending lettings to certain households as appropriate, and can contribute to community stability
 - When used as part of a package of wider measures, they can increase lettability in less popular areas
 - Problems such as vandalism and neighbour nuisance can be reduced by excluding people with a history of unacceptable behaviour from specific estates
 - Re-housing people where they prefer to live is more likely to result in a positive sustained tenancy
- 9.0.5 Practical examples of the Community Lettings Schemes include:
- Reserving estates, or parts of estates, for people of a particular age group or household type
 - Relaxing criteria for size entitlement to larger properties in lower demand areas
 - Prioritising economically active applicants for specific areas or estates
- 9.0.6 Local Lettings schemes vary widely. In order to ensure that initiatives best respond to particular needs in the Borough, only the following categories will apply:
- Those introduced as part of a package of measures designed to improve lettability on less popular estates
 - Schemes introduced for small blocks or estates to address sustainability issues (e.g. High levels of crime, serious anti social behaviour)

^{xx} Ref to doc *Community Lettings: Local Allocations Policies in Practice* by Griffiths et al published 1996 by York Publishing Services for Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

9.0.7 In both cases:

- Schemes will be subject to mandatory evaluation and review, at least every 12 months
- Only a small proportion of the stock will be affected and the majority of council homes will continue to be let through the mainstream allocation scheme

9.0.8 Adapted properties will not be included in local lettings initiatives as these properties must only be allocated to meet individual need and to make best use of stock.

9.0.9 In the majority of cases Six Town Housing will be the major player in introducing a local lettings scheme, although tenants will be able to request such a scheme and contribute to its design and development.

9.1 Process for Developing Local Lettings Schemes

9.1.1 A multi agency forum comprising of all stakeholders must first be convened to draw up a scheme proposal.

9.1.2 The proposal as a minimum should set out the following:

- The current profile of tenants (e.g. household type, ethnicity, gender, age etc)
- Tenancy turnover rates and void levels
- Geographical area and stock profile
- Proposed timescale for the initiative
- Clear definition and evidence of the problems the scheme intends to address
- The methods which are being used to combat these problems and how varying the lettings policy would help
- Some assessment of possible adverse impacts of a local lettings scheme
- How the scheme fits in with Bury MBC’s wider objectives
- Details of consultation undertaken when developing the proposal
- Ways in which the scheme will be monitored
- Proposals for reporting and reviewing the scheme

9.2 Equal Opportunities

9.2.1 It is essential that equalities implications are considered at the earliest stage of a proposed scheme development to ensure that the proposed scheme does not discriminate directly or indirectly on racial grounds. Schemes will be modelled **before** they are introduced, to identify expected and intended outcomes. Only when the outcomes are acceptable and measures have been put in place to address any potential for discrimination, will the proposal be able to be considered. The Housing Authority will comply with statutory requirements relating to equal opportunities and relevant codes of practice including the Commission for Racial Equality’s Code of Practice in Rented Housing.

9.3 Process for Seeking Approval

- 9.3.1 All proposals will subsequently be submitted to the Strategic Housing Unit’s Access and Advice Working Group and Six Town Housing Governance Group to enable representatives and all stakeholders from both statutory and non-statutory services and the wider community to be consulted and informed.
- 9.3.2 Subsequently, the proposal must be taken forward by a Chief Officer from Bury MBC in accordance with the Bury MBC Officer Delegation Scheme for Decisions.

10.0 THE LETTINGS PROCESS AND MATCHING PEOPLE TO PROPERTIES

10.0.1 As outlined in the Introduction to this policy, as at 1st May 2006, there are two ways in which Six Town Housing homes are let:

- **Through the traditional Selection Process**

Where a Six Town Housing Officer selects and offers a vacant or soon to be vacant home to a registered applicant

- **Through Choice Based Lettings**

Where a property is advertised and applicants bid for the property

10.0.2 In order to be considered for properties, applicants must be registered on the Bury MBC Housing Register. Properties will be allocated according to the procedures and conditions set out in this policy.

10.1 Facilitating Choice

10.1.1 In order to further promote choice to tenants in the Borough and in line with the national agenda, Bury MBC will move to letting 50% of properties through Choice Based Lettings (CBL). This includes up to 10% for applicants with Positive Tenancy History and all Adapted Properties.

10.1.2 This pilot scheme will be achieved through a phased implementation over a 6 month period from May - October 2006.

10.1.3 Bury MBC, in partnership with Six Town Housing, has an ambition to deliver a 100% Choice Based Lettings system from April 2007.

10.2 Matching People with Properties

10.2.1 In both the Selection Process and Pilot Choice Based Lettings Scheme, applicants will only be considered for certain types of properties, as outlined in the table below.

Table 3: Allocation of property types to applicants

Size of Accommodation	<p>Single people/Couples One bedroom will be allocated unless one of the following circumstances apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for an additional room for a carer is evidenced to either the Council’s Medical Officer or Visiting Officer • The applicant cares for children who live with them for part of the week (minority of the time) and wishes to be re-housed in an area where we have the discretion to under occupy • The applicant or household is currently living in a property with more than 1 bedroom and has been displaced by clearance initiatives. In these cases, entitlement would be for a 2 bedroom home. <p>Families Size of accommodation required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One room for applicant/s • One bedroom for children of the same sex (maximum of two per room) • One bedroom for children of different sex up to the age of 5 years old (maximum of two per room).
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	<p>Where the applicant has two or more children over 5 years old, a three-bedroom property would be allocated if the applicant were short-listed. However, such families will not be classed as overcrowded until the children are 10 years old.</p> <p>Estates/properties which are low demand can be under occupied by one bedroom – see size of accommodation guidelines</p>
Adapted Properties	<p>All properties that have had significant adaptations are advertised through Choice Based Lettings. The properties are then allocated on the basis of need . Assessed in accordance with Section 6 of this policy.</p>
Ground floor Flats	<p>Ground floor flats will be let as general needs stock to all age groups, but with consideration given to the ages of other tenants living in the same block.</p> <p>Priority will be given for ground floor flats to those applicants where there is a need for ground floor accommodation only. Assessed in accordance with Section 6 of this policy.</p>
Bungalows	<p>Bungalows will only be allocated to applicants who are either aged 60 or over or who have a proven medical need for ground floor accommodation. A Medical Assessment must be carried out to establish the need for ground floor only accommodation.</p>
Sheltered accommodation	<p>Sheltered Accommodation will only be allocated to applicants who are aged 60 or over.</p>

10.2.2 In some cases there may be restrictions on pets that may cause a nuisance to other tenants, such as in flats with communal entrances. These restrictions will be clearly explained when an offer is made through the traditional Selection Process, or indicated on adverts for properties let through the Choice Based Lettings system.

10.3 Sensitive Lets

10.3.1 In exceptional cases the Team Leader may decide that sensitivity is required when letting a particular property.

10.3.2 In such cases the property will be let through the Choice Based Lettings system and any restrictions on applications will be clearly advertised.

10.3.3 A record will be kept of all such cases together with the reasons for overlooking the applicant/s.^{xxi}

^{xxi} Ref Section 12.2 Right to Review

10.4 Furnished Tenancy Scheme

- 10.4.1 The Furnished Tenancy Scheme went ‘live’ in May 2005.
- 10.4.2 The scheme offers new or transferring tenants the chance to have their tenancy furnished with carpets, curtains, cooker and a fridge. A surcharge is then added to the property rent for payment of the furniture.
- 10.4.3 The scheme is aimed at those on low income who would otherwise struggle to afford such items, but is open to anyone wishing to rent a furnished property (subject to satisfactory references/ previous tenancy history).
- 10.4.4 When a furnished tenancy becomes void it will be advertised as a furnished property via the Choice Based Lettings system. This way we expect that only people wishing to have a furnished tenancy will express an interest.
- 10.4.5 Further details about furnished properties can be requested via e-mail: FTS@bury.gov.uk and through the Six Town Housing website: www.sixtownhousing.org

11.0 OFFERS AND AREA PREFERENCES THROUGH THE SELECTION PROCESS

- 11.0.1 Under the Selection Process there are normally no limits to the number of offers that can be made to an applicant and there are no penalties for refusal of offers. There is however a One Offer Policy that applies to statutorily homeless people.^{xxii}
- 11.0.2 If an applicant does not reply to an offer letter at all, a further attempt will be made to contact them within 10 working days to ask if they want to remain on the Housing Register. If there is still no response, the applicant will be removed from the waiting list. This is to prevent people being made offers they do not want and to keep the register up to date. By reducing wasted offers, waiting times will also be reduced for those people who do still need and want a council home.
- 11.0.3 Where there are reasonable reasons for non contact from an applicant, or where there may be new information, an applicant can request to be reinstated on the Housing Register. Upon reinstatement to the register their original banding and appropriate waiting time will be awarded.
- 11.0.4 Requests to be reinstated on the Housing Register must be made within 12 months of removal.

11.1 Area Choices

- 11.1.1 Everyone who applies to the Council for housing can specify on their application form which areas they want to live in. With the exception of those applicants covered by the One Offer Policy, people are able to continue to restrict the areas in which they are offered properties for as long as they wish.
- 11.1.2 Applicants subject to the One Offer Policy may restrict their areas to either the North or South of the Borough if they choose to do so.^{xxiii}
- 11.2.3 As Bury MBC faces high demand pressures on most council housing stock, all applicants who apply for a Bury MBC home are advised that the more areas they choose, the greater their chance of re housing.
- 11.2.4 The Access and Assessment Team will provide detailed re-housing prospects information to applicants to ensure that:
- People are applying for areas that do have the type of home they need
 - All applicants have a realistic idea of waiting times and availability of properties
 - Customers are enabled to maximise their housing options through information on other types of homes such as housing association properties, affordable housing and privately rented homes
- 11.2.5 The Access and Assessment team will work with all customers to find the best solution to their housing needs and aspirations.

^{xxii} Ref Section 7.1, One Offer Policy

^{xxiii} Ref Section 7.3, Location of Offers for Homeless People

12.0 RIGHTS FOR HOUSING APPLICANTS

12.1 Legal Rights for Housing Applicants

12.1.1 Bury MBC is committed to ensuring that all applicants for council housing have equal access to services and that their legal rights are upheld. Applicants for council housing are entitled to:

- Free advice and information about making a housing application
- Help with applying, if needed
- Have an application kept confidential
- Information to assist them in understanding their re-housing prospects and making appropriate choices

12.1.2 Applicants also have the right to be informed in writing, with clear reasons, of:

- Any decision not to give preference or not to be considered for housing due to unacceptable behaviour
- Any decision about the facts of their case which has been, or is likely to be, taken into account in considering whether to make an allocation
- The right on request to a review of a decision mentioned in either point above

12.1.3 The applicant must also be informed of the decision on Review and the reasons for that decision.

12.2 Right to Review

12.2.1 Under the terms of this policy, an applicant has the right to request a review of their case if they are not satisfied with Bury MBC’s decision.

12.2.2 Right of Review will be granted under the following circumstances:

- If the applicant has been assessed as ineligible, and therefore not included on the Housing Register
- If the applicant has been assessed as ineligible or not given “reasonable preference” due to any of the reasons listed under “unacceptable behaviour”
- If the applicant has been given reduced preference, i.e. been placed in a lower band.
- If the applicant believes that Bury MBC have got the facts of their case wrong

12.2.3 In order to request a review, the applicant, or an advocate, must put forward their request to the local authority within 21 days of the date beginning with the day on which he is notified of the Authority’s decision and reasons. Applicants are strongly encouraged to put any request in writing; however a verbal request in person or by telephone will be accepted.

- 12.2.4 The applicant is sent further information about the review process and given the name of the officer who will conduct the review. They will also be given information on how to submit any further information that the applicant may want the reviewing officer to consider.
- 12.2.5 The review will be carried out by a Bury MBC Officer who was not involved in the original decision and who is more senior than the officer who made that original decision.
- 12.2.6 The review is a reconsideration of the case afresh and is not limited to the conduct of the original decision. The review decision will be made on the basis of all the relevant information available at the time of the review. In addition to any information provided by the applicant, the Reviewing Officer will ask for further information if this is needed to make a decision. The merits of each case will be considered on an individual basis.
- 12.2.7 Bury MBC aim to complete all reviews within 20 working days of all written information being received by the reviewing officer, and in any case within 56 days (8 weeks) of the request for the review, unless a longer period has been agreed in writing with the applicant.
- 12.2.8 The applicant will be informed of the outcome of the review, in writing, by the Reviewing Officer. If the original decision is upheld, the applicant will be fully informed of the reasons for this decision.
- 12.2.9 In addition to the right of Review, both Bury MBC and Six Town Housing have robust complaints procedures. See Appendix 6 for further details of these procedures.

12.3 Homeless Applicants requesting review of the suitability of an offer

- 12.3.1 Homeless applicants may request a review of the suitability of an offer. They may request such a review whether or not they accept the offer and have the right to live in the property pending this review.
- 12.3.2 Review of suitability will follow the same procedure as the general right to review outlined in section 12.2 above (Right to Review), except that the review will be completed within 56 days (8 weeks) of the request for the review. In addition, homeless applicants requesting a review will be offered an opportunity to attend a meeting with the reviewing officer. Applicants may bring a friend or advocate with them to the Review meeting.
- 12.3.3 Homeless applicants also have right to request a review of decisions taken on their case under the homeless provisions, Part VII Housing Act 1996. These are separate provisions and do not form part of this allocation policy.

13.0 DISCRETION

13.1 Awarding Bands

- 13.1.1 This policy sets out as many circumstances as possible within the Bands; however there may be occasions when an application is received which does not appear to fit into any of the categories listed. In such circumstances the Access and Assessment Team Leader or member of the Strategic Housing Unit management team, as appropriate, will be given the authority to award Banding.
- 13.1.2 Information about such assessments will be collated and reported to the Housing Choices Manager to inform the future ongoing review of the scheme.

13.2 Making Offers

- 13.2.1 When making offers, the banding will determine who should be offered the property. In certain circumstances however, there needs to be some discretion to overlook an applicant.
- 13.2.2 Such discretion must only be applied in the most exceptional circumstances, which can be broadly defined as follows.

- **To facilitate a positive let**

Where a Community Housing Officer (CHO) has good reason to believe that the highest placed applicant will refuse an offer of a particular property; for example where someone has specifically said they want only a particular area or do not want a specific street, etc. The decision to overlook in these cases will be taken by a CHO and recorded to highlight any trends. If such discretion is needed frequently it may be that applicants need better information on realistic re-housing prospects. Particular care must also be taken to make sure individual applicants are not being continually overlooked. This type of discretion will no longer be necessary when the choice based system for all lettings is fully implemented.

13.3 Blanket Designations

- 13.3.1 Where a property has been designated for a particular group, for example age based, this information must be made available and a list of such properties be kept up to date. In particular the Access and Assessment Team will be provided with updated copies.

13.4 Monitoring Discretion

- 13.4.1 Exceptional decisions on individual cases will be documented and monitored. It is neither necessary nor appropriate for the Authority to check or enquire in to each use of discretion. Please see Appendix 2 for detailed procedures relating to monitoring of discretion.
- 13.4.2 Consideration of the statistical record will identify the extent of the use of discretion. Where the extent or pattern of discretion raises questions as to consistency or to whether it is being used beyond exceptional cases, the Authority will make more detailed requests so as to discuss and improve practice.

14.0 MONITORING, REVIEWING AND CONTINUALLY IMPROVING

- 14.0.1 Rigorous and robust monitoring of the Allocations Policy is essential to ensure that, in practice, the scheme:
- Meets the stated aims and objectives
 - Demonstrates trends that are legally compliant relating to the preference given to applicants, i.e. ensuring that applicants with one or more reasonable preference qualification are awarded the priority the law entitles them to
 - Adheres to Equality and Diversity standards
 - Complies with allocation and related legislation
 - Meets need and delivers choice in the light of any changes in both Bury MBC’s strategic objectives and the local housing market
- 14.0.2 Monitoring will also enable Bury MBC to:
- Measure levels of customer choice and satisfaction
 - Track any trends
 - Provide information for performance management and any future Scheme review
- 14.0.3 Reports will be provided on a quarterly basis to the Bury MBC Housing Choices Manager and Six Town Housing Tenants Service Manager. In addition reports will be submitted to quarterly performance meetings internally with the Strategic Housing Unit and also in partnership with Six Town Housing. Quarterly monitoring reports will also be considered by the Access and Advice Working Group.
- 14.0.4 Annual reports will be produced and provided to the Head of the Strategic Housing Unit and the Tenants’ Annual Conference.
- 14.0.5 Monitoring methods and processes have been systemised. Appendix 5 of this Policy details all monitoring requirements and arrangements.

Appendix 1 – Action Plan

Work Area	Particulars	Timescale
Key issues to be decided	List issues to be decided	Aug – Sept 05
	Discuss and decide options on each of the key issues	Sept – Dec 05
	Consider resourcing issues	Sept – Dec 05
Study and Analysis of 2002/03 Policy	Main text	Aug 05
	Additional related documents – list and analyse	Aug – Sept 05
	Write summaries of procedures not currently documented	Aug – Sept 05
	Review whether all stated objectives have been achieved	Oct – Nov 05
	Review which, if any, stated objectives have not been achieved	Oct – Nov 05
	Review what planned monitoring is in place	Oct – Nov 05
	Review what planned monitoring is not in place	Oct – Nov 05
	Describe the process of approval	Oct – Nov 05
Good Practice sources	List and obtain copies of ODPM publications	Sept 05
	List and obtain copies of policies from other local authorities	Sept 05
	Review and evaluate good practice examples	Sept – Nov 05
Monitoring and Statistical Analysis	Review what monitoring is needed for the review of the policy	Aug – Sept 05
	Analyse statistical information to assist in review	Sept – Oct 05
	Document existing monitoring	Sept – Oct 05
	Identify additional monitoring needed	Nov 05 – Jan 06
Amend/Revise Procedures	Develop procedure for proof of access	Mar – Apr 06
	Develop procedure for Statutory Overcrowding	Mar – Apr 06
	Develop procedure for caring responsibility	Mar – Apr 06
	Develop procedure for key workers	Mar – Apr 06
	Develop procedure for Bury Connection	Mar – Apr 06
	Develop procedure for CBL update	Mar – Apr 06
	Develop procedure for library’s and STH	Mar – Apr 06
	Develop procedure for non-housing positive tenancy history	Mar – Apr 06
	Produce written guidelines for staff	Mar – Apr 06
Consultation	Identify who to consult and methods to be used	Aug – Sept 05
	Inform key individuals and agencies of review	Aug – Sept 05
	Decide timetable for consultation	Sept 05

	Consultation	Sept 05 – Feb 06
	Monthly circular	Sept 05 – Feb 06
	Write to all existing applicants re. new banding	Apr 06
Writing Up	Reasons for this review	Sept 05
	Describe current system	Sept 05
	Research and Monitoring results	Sept – Nov 05
	Legislative framework	Oct 05
	Describe methods and work done	Oct 05
	Show conclusions and reasons	Nov 05
	Policy and practice changes	Nov – Dec 05
	Write new draft policy	Nov 05 –Jan 06
	Write implementation plan	Nov 05 – Feb 06
	Final text	March 06
Marketing the service	Develop new application form & expressions of interest form	Feb – Mar 06
	Create Policy Summary	Mar 06
	Obtain Plain English and Translated application form, policy summary and application pack	Mar – Apr 06
	Design new CBL newsletter	Feb – Apr 06
	Design re-style new adverts	Mar – Apr 06
	Update/redesign web pages and website	Mar – Apr 06
Housing Register Maintenance	Map current bands with new bands	Nov 05 – Feb 06
	Make amendments to database (SIMDELL) as required	Mar 06
	Update existing applicants to match new policy	Mar – Apr 06
Health and Social Needs Panel	Develop new procedures and guidelines	Mar – May 06
Staff awareness/ training	Develop awareness training materials	Apr 06
	Deliver sessions to STH & Council staff	Apr – May 06
Performance Monitoring	Devise monitoring plan	Feb – Mar 06
	Develop/write procedures for monitoring	Feb – Mar 06
	Raise awareness of procedures	Apr – May 06
Political process	Management Board	6 th March 06
	Economy Environment and Transport Scrutiny	14 th March 06
	Executive Board	22 nd March 06
Implementation	Implementation of new policy	1 st May 2006

Appendix 2 - Discretion

Exceptional Decisions on Individual Cases

The Council’s re-housing policy is to be implemented by the Council’s officers and its partner Six Town Housing. In almost all cases (95%+) the policy will be complied with “as is”.

However, to be comprehensible and not over-lengthy, the written policy cannot envisage **every** possible circumstance of every applicant. The following procedure sets out how officers should proceed if, in the course of their duties, they encounter a case where a literal application of the written policy would lead to one or more of:

- Oppressive or callous treatment of the applicant
- Gross unfairness to the applicant
- Failure to respond appropriately to the applicant’s needs where there is an over-riding case for making an appropriate response
- A risk of exposing the Council to criticism

In the text below “officer A” is the person who normally deals with the matter in question and “officer B” is officer A’s immediate superior.

1. If A sees a case where A thinks an exception should be made he/she should complete a “Special Re-housing Authorisation Form” and submit it to B for approval. The case file and any other relevant papers should accompany the form.
2. B should consider the case made and either:
 - Agree and confirm the recommendation
 - Disagree and refuse the recommendation
 - Direct some other course of action.
3. B should complete and sign the SRA form, taking care to give reasons for the decision.
4. On getting back the completed and signed SRA form A should then progress the case as directed.
5. In considering cases B will need to have intelligent regard to the weight of the matter and may wish to refer upwards to her/his superior.
6. Copies of the completed SRA form should go on to:
 - The case file
 - An SRA monitoring file, kept for the purpose
7. At quarterly intervals the forms in the SRA monitoring file will be extracted for analysis and report.

Appendix 3 – Consultation Process

Group/Organisation	Method of Consultation	Date/Timescale
Homeless Service User Forum	Interactive Banding exercise	7 th Sept 05
General Public	Interactive Banding exercise drop-in event	17 th Nov 05
Tenants & leaseholders	Tenants’ Annual Conference <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Display stands ○ Satisfaction questionnaire 	29 th Nov 05
General Public	Bury Housing Forum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Display stands ○ Presentations ○ Discussion workshops 	26 th Jan 06
Homeview	Consultation on draft summary	Jan – Feb 06
	CBL Satisfaction Questionnaire	Jan – Feb 06
All RSLs and Housing Associations	Consultation draft	Jan – Mar 06
Tenant & Resident Association Consultative Committee		24 th Nov 05
		26 th Jan 06
Access & Advice Working Group		31 st July 06
Member’s Briefing		8 th Feb 06
Tenants and Residents Associations:		
○ Dumers		7 th Feb 06
○ Milton Road		13 th Feb 06
○ Bolton Road		13 th Feb 06
○ Chesham Fold		22 nd Feb 06
○ Hazelhurst		22 nd Feb 06
○ Victoria		2 nd Mar 06
○ Abbey Close		6 th Mar 06
○ Spring TMO		7 th Mar 06
○ Peel Brow		9 th Mar 06

Area Board Meetings:	
	7 th Mar 06
	13 th Mar 06
	16 th Mar 06
Homelessness Forum	Nov 05
	Feb 06
Jinnah Community Centre	13 th Feb 06
ADAB	14 th Feb 06
Mother & Baby unit - Connexions	13 th Feb 06
Teenage Pregnancy Unit	14 th Feb 06
International Mother language Day	21 st Feb 06
Great Shiva Night (Hindu)	26 th Feb 06
Disability Services	28 th Feb 06
Housing Concern	Feb 06
Local Schools	Mar 06

Appendix 4 – Legislative Guidance

Overcrowding

The following definitions are taken from the Housing Act 1985, s324.

s.324 Definition of overcrowding

A dwelling is overcrowded for the purposes of this Part when the number of persons sleeping in the dwelling is such as to contravene—

- (a) the standard specified in [section 325](#) (the room standard), or
- (b) the standard specified in [section 326](#) (the space standard).

s.325 The room standard

(1) the room standard is contravened when the number of persons sleeping in a dwelling and the number of rooms available as sleeping accommodation is such that two persons of opposite sexes who are not living together as husband and wife must sleep in the same room.

(2) For this purpose—

- (a) children under the age of ten shall be left out of account, and
- (b) a room is available as sleeping accommodation if it is of a type normally used in the locality either as a bedroom or as a living room.

s.326 The space standard

(1) the space standard is contravened when the number of persons sleeping in a dwelling is in excess of the permitted number, having regard to the number and floor area of the rooms of the dwelling available as sleeping accommodation.

(2) For this purpose—

- (a) no account shall be taken of a child under the age of one and a child aged one or over but under ten shall be reckoned as one-half of a unit, and
- (b) a room is available as sleeping accommodation if it is of a type normally used in the locality either as a living room or as a bedroom.

(3) The permitted number of persons in relation to a dwelling is whichever is the less of—

- (a) the number specified in Table I in relation to the number of rooms in the dwelling available as sleeping accommodation, and
- (b) the aggregate for all such rooms in the dwelling of the numbers specified in column 2 of Table II in relation to each room of the floor area specified in column 1.

No account shall be taken for the purposes of either Table of a room having a floor area of less than 50 square feet.

Table I - Table I Number of rooms	Number of persons
1	2
2	3
3	5
4	7½
5 or more	2 for each room

Table II - Table II Floor area of room	Number of persons
110 sq. ft. or more	2
90 sq. ft. or more but less than 110 sq. ft.	1½
70 sq. ft. or more by less than 90 sq. ft.	1
50 sq. ft. or more but less than 70 sq. ft.	½

- (4) The Secretary of State may by regulations prescribe the manner in which the floor area of a room is to be ascertained for the purposes of this section; and the regulations may provide for the exclusion from computation, or the bringing into computation at a reduced figure, of floor space in a part of the room which is of less than a specified height not exceeding eight feet.
- (5) Regulations under subsection (4) shall be made by **statutory** instrument which shall be subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House of Parliament.
- (6) A certificate of the local housing authority stating the number and floor areas of the rooms in a dwelling, and that the floor areas have been ascertained in the prescribed manner, is prima facie evidence for the purposes of legal proceedings of the facts stated in it.

Appendix 5 – Monitoring

In order to ensure the objectives of the policy are being achieved and to ensure equal access for all to Housing in Bury, the policy and Pilot Choice Based Lettings Scheme will be rigorously monitored.

Monitoring of the pilot scheme will:

- Enable the local authority and its partners to develop detailed customer information on the likely outcomes of bids and thereby effectively manage customer expectations
- Identify barriers to access to the scheme for those from vulnerable disadvantaged groups and, through effective partnership working by Bury MBC, Six Town Housing, Health, Social Care and the voluntary sector, put effective processes in place to overcome these barriers
- Allow time for the introduction of a range of positive steps to meet the needs of homeless and other households in unsettled accommodation who would otherwise be disadvantaged by the advertising system
- Determine to what extent Choice Based Letting may be exacerbating spatial segregation and consult with excluded groups to address this issue
- Allow extensive and ongoing consultation with partners, stakeholders and service users to further monitor the affects of the scheme
- Monitor the numbers of new lets from different needs groups and bands in order to ensure the scheme allows fair opportunity to all
- Determine what, if any, quotas may need to be implemented if the Choice Based Lettings scheme is applied to 100% of properties covered by this policy

To enable effective monitoring of the seven strands of equality and diversity, the Housing Register Application form will be reviewed and amended to ensure that sufficient information is gathered from all applicants to the register. This monitoring data will be requested from existing applicants once the policy is implemented and subsequently be collated prior to the first quarter monitoring report.

Monitoring queries will be run from the Housing database system (SIMDELL) on a quarterly basis. Reports based on these queries will be produced on an annual basis. Monitoring queries will be reported in the first instance to the Allocations Policy Steering Group. Timescales for these queries and reports are as follows:

Quarter 1	1 st July 2006
Quarter 2	1 st October 2006
Quarter 3	1 st January 2007
Quarter 4	1 st April 2007
End of year report	1 st April 2007

A comprehensive list of quarterly reports is given overleaf.

Monitoring Tables

Part A: Lettings Information

- A1 Total Lets
- A2 CBL Lets by Area and Property Type
- A3 Lets by Applicant Type
- A5 Properties Let by Bed Size & Who they were Let to: By Applicant Type

Part B: Bidding Information

- B1 Lets & Bids by Area & Property Type
- B2 Lets & Bids by Applicant Type

Part C: Waiting Times

- C1 Length of Time Registered before Re-housed: By Applicant Type and Area
- C2 Length of Time Registered before Re-housed: By Applicant Type and Property Type

Part D: How Properties were Advertised & the Results

- D1 Properties Advertised “Positive Tenancy History”: A Breakdown of Properties Let by Area, Property Type and Applicant Type
- D2 Properties Advertised “Adapted Property”: A Breakdown of Properties Let by Area, Property Type and Applicant Type
- D1 Properties Advertised “Sensitive Let”: A Breakdown of Properties Let by Area, Property Type and Applicant Type

Part E: Equality and Diversity Monitoring

- E1 Bids & Lets by Ethnicity and Area
- E2 Bids & Lets by Age and Area
- E3 Bids & Lets by Gender and Area
- E4 Bids & Lets by additional need and Area
- E5 Bids & Lets by Religion and Area
- E6 Bids & Lets by Sexual Orientation and Area [from 2007]

Part F: Offers

- F1 Lets and Offers: By Area and Property Type
- F2 Lets and Offers: By Applicant Type

Part G: Refusals

- G1 Number and Type of Offer Refusals: By Area and Property Type and Bed Size
- G2 Number and Type of Offer Refusals: By Applicant Type

Part H: Performance Monitoring

- H1 Number of Applicants by Priority Band and Applicant Type
- H2 Number of Days from Applications Received to Being Processed

Appendix 6 – Complaints Procedures

Bury MBC Complaints procedure.

How Can I complain?

Step 1 – Resolving your complaint quickly

Where to go first

- The first step is to speak to the member of staff responsible for providing the service you wish to complain about
- If you do not wish to do this, or if you are unhappy with the response you have received, ask to speak to that person's manager.

We hope you can resolve most complaints in this way. At this stage of the process your comments will be recorded and we will take actions to make sure that this problem does not happen again.

Step 2 - The formal process

What to do next

If we have not resolved the complaint to your satisfaction you can start to go through the formal procedure by taking the following steps.

- Put the complaint in writing by filling in our complaints form. You can add a letter or additional sheets if you wish.
- When the form is completed, hand it in or send it to the customer care officer who deals with that service or department
- Once we have received your complaint, the complaints officer will record your complaint and then ask a senior member of staff to investigate it. We will send a letter of acknowledgement within five working days.
- the letter will include the name of the person who is dealing with your complaint. Within 20 working days we will send another letter explaining the results of the investigation
- If we have not finished our investigation within 20 working days we will give reasons for this and let you know when we hope to complete it.

Step 3 - If we have been unable to resolve your problem

Impartial opinion

If you are not happy with the results of the investigation you can take the complaint further. You can do this by:

- contacting the Chief Executive of the council who is the head of all staff
- contacting your local councillors
- contacting the Local Government Ombudsman

Six Town Housing Complaints procedure

The complaints process

We will aim to resolve any problems or complaints as they arise and learn from them as an organisation. Therefore the initial stage is for you to resolve it with front line staff.

Stage 1

If you have not been able to resolve your complaint with our front line staff informally, you are encouraged to make a formal complaint.

We will aim to sort out complaints effectively and within the target time highlighted below:

- We will acknowledge all formal complaints in writing within five working days, explaining what is happening and who is dealing with your complaint
- We will provide a detailed response within 10 working days letting you know the outcome (within the 20 days identified in Bury Council’s Complaints Procedure framework)

If it is going to take us longer we will let you know when we will be able to respond.

Stage 2

If you are still unhappy with our response after we have investigated your complaint you can take the complaint a stage further.

You can do this by writing to:

Mrs Susan Jordan
Six Town Housing
Point Blue
Moor Street
Bury
BL9 5AQ

The Chief executive will take a fresh look at your complaint. She will write to you about the reinvestigation within 10 working days.

Stage 3

If you are still not satisfied with the action we have taken, you have the right to complain to the Independent Housing Ombudsman. This is an independent person appointed by the Government to look into incidents of bad practice.

The address is:

Beverley House
17 Shipton Road
York
YO30 5FZ

Please note: The Independent Housing Ombudsman will usually want to know if your complaint can be settled locally, so please try the above steps first.

Appendix 7 – Contact details

Access and Assessment Team

Bury MBC
Environment & Development Services (Strategic Housing Unit)
Room 24
Town Hall
Knowsley Street
Bury
BL9 0AF

Direct Line: 0161 253 5251

Fax: 0161 253 5879

Email: access-to-housing@bury.gov.uk

Website: www.bury.gov.uk

Six Town Housing

Freepost RLUY-BXZX-UZGT
Six Town Housing
Point Blue
Moor Street
Bury
BL9 5AQ

Direct Line 0161 686 8000

Fax: 0161 764 5078

Email: enquiries@sixtownhousing.org

Website: www.sixtownhousing.org