

Assessing and prioritising applications for housing

The Law

The law requires all local authorities to have an Allocations Scheme for determining priorities and a procedure to be followed in allocating social rented housing in their districts.

Reasonable preference

Under Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996¹ (as amended) Enfield's Allocations Scheme is framed to ensure 'reasonable preference' (also known as a head start) to some applicants. They are summarised below:

- People who are homeless
- People occupying insanitary, overcrowded or otherwise unsatisfactory housing
- People who need to move for medical or welfare reasons, and
- People who need to move to a particular location, for example to be nearer to special medical facilities.

Enfield Council also has some groups of applicants which it will give a local reasonable preference. These are:

- Enfield's Council tenants who need to move because, due to changes in welfare benefit entitlement, they can no longer afford to occupy their current homes and need to move to a smaller home
- Enfield's Council tenants who need to move because their home is part of an estate regeneration scheme
- Enfield's Council and housing association tenants who are severely overcrowded because they lack 2 or more bedrooms

Appendix 3 defines the housing circumstances which Enfield will have regard to when awarding an applicant reasonable preference.

Who is ineligible for Housing?

By law, social rented housing can be allocated to eligible people.

The following groups of people are defined in law² as ineligible for an allocation of housing and are therefore cannot join the Housing Register:

¹ S166A(3) Housing Act 1996, as amended by S147 of the Localism Act 2011

² S160ZA, Housing Act 1996, as amended by S146 of the Localism Act 2011