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INTRODUCTION

This information booklet is a summary of the Shepway Housing Allocation Policy and describes the criteria and procedure that the Council uses to prioritise applications registered on the Shepway Housing List for affordable accommodation and should be considered in conjunction with the Choice Based Lettings Scheme (CBL) known as Kent Homechoice.

How your application is assessed

The Shepway Housing List is assessed on a banding system based on your current housing situation, any medical/health issues or special needs, and any other relevant circumstances that are affected by your housing and placed into priority order.

There are five bands with Band A being the highest priority and Band E being the lowest. Within each Band, the applicant with the greatest priority is the applicant who has spent the longest time in that band - please see section ‘Effective date’.

Registration and Application date

All applicants will be asked to register their application using online registration.

Help will be available at various sources for those who need assistance to apply online. There will also be the facility for those with significant health problems who are unable to access online registration either themselves or by a support worker to have a home visit and this will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Each year on the anniversary of your application you will be sent a letter or email asking you to reregister on line to confirm you still wish to be on the list and if this is not done your application will be removed. Your application may be reinstated within 6 months if you can show good reason why you did not respond to the review.

You will need to provide ID and supporting documents with your application – please see section ‘Supporting Evidence’.

Once your application has been submitted it will be verified by a Shepway Officer and following this you will be sent a letter to confirm your registration, to advise you how to access an on-line Housing List Information Booklet and telling you:-

- Your Kent Homechoice application number
- The Band that you are in and the date this applies from
- The size of the home that you are eligible for

Changes in Circumstances

You must keep your Housing Application updated with regard to any changes in your circumstances and this can be done online. Failure to do this could result in you missing out on offers of accommodation or your application being cancelled. Changes to your circumstances could include:-

- Adding or removing people from your application
- Moving to a different address
- Pregnancy
- The health of any family member getting significantly better or worse
Any changes in the applicant(s) income, assets, savings or employment status

**Medical Assessment**

Applicants with a medical issue or disability affected by their current housing conditions should complete the medical assessment section of the online application form and provide any supporting information that they can from a medical professional.

Shepway District Council will not contact health professionals directly or pay any fee for information and therefore only information gathered by the applicant will be considered. The medical information will be assessed by the Council’s medical panel which is made up of two senior officers and they will decide what medical award and therefore the band they will fall into and the applicant will be notified of this in writing.

Definition of the banding awarded for medical or welfare needs:

- **Acute** - for example, a worsening or terminal illness, severe chronic illness, severe physical or mental disability
- **Serious** - for example, a serious medical or degenerative illness, physical or mental disability
- **Significant** - for example, a medical condition, physical or mental disability significantly worsened by current housing condition
- **Low** - for example, any other medical condition, physical or mental disability where current housing conditions have a less significant effect

Once the medical has been assessed and the applicant has been advised what type of property is suitable for them; for example a home without stairs, the applicant will only be considered for this type of accommodation and any bids placed on accommodation that does not match this will not be taken into account. If applicants continue to bid on unsuitable accommodation, their medical may be reassessed and their priority on medical grounds removed.

If an applicant’s medical situation improves or worsens they must notify the council and their medical award will be reassessed and may change.

Where more than one applicant in the household has medical issues, the medical award will be given based on the applicant with the highest need.

Applicants who have a homeless duty accepted to them will not be eligible for medical priority and if their temporary accommodation is unsuitable the Council’s first action will be to look for alternative accommodation.

**Kent Agency Assessment**

The Kent Agency Assessment is an easy referral process for Health, Social Services (or their Agents) or other statutory sector agencies where their service user requires re-housing due to health/support needs that cannot be met, or are being made worse by their current accommodation. The referral provides all the information required to assess an applicant’s housing need which should be accompanied by supporting documents where necessary.
**Effective Date**

Priority within a band will be based on the effective date which is usually the date the application is received, except:

- Where an applicant is moved to a higher band their new date will be the date their circumstances changed
- Where an applicant receives additional priority of medical or welfare grounds their effective date will be the date they applied for the award
- Where an applicant is accepted as having a homeless duty their effective date will be the date they applied as homeless unless they were already in that or a higher band and in this case the earlier date will apply
- If an applicant moves down a band their effective date will be the original application date

**Supporting Evidence**

All supporting evidence **must** be provided to the Council within 28 days of the online application being completed, failure to do so will result in the application being cancelled. You must include your Kent Homechoice reference number on all supporting evidence.

**ADULTS**

All applicants and joint applicants must provide a current photo e.g. passport size

**Identity**

Must provide 1 form of identity for each adult (over 18)

- Photo Identification – Passport, Driving Licence
- Birth Certificate – Either British or non-British (non-British must be accompanied by a copy of settlement/immigration document), or
- Worker Registration documents / If self employed must provide Inland Revenue tax return details Residence Permit Current Passport and Immigration Documents Non-EU passports must show immigration visa stamp
- If none of these documents are available a recent DWP letter may be accepted

**Residence**

Provide 2 different proofs from the following list of current address for each adult (over 18).

- Full driving licence
- Pension Details
- Confirmation of benefits from DWP
- Confirmation from employer
- Tenancy Agreement
- Recent Bank Statement
- Recent bill for telephone/mobile/Council Tax/Electoral Register Entry
- Recent bill for Gas/Electricity/Water Supply
- Payslip showing name and current address
- College /University details showing name and current address

**CHILDREN**

**Identity**

For each child under 18 years, provide either
• Birth certificate for each child, and  
• Proof of receipt of child benefit or child tax credits  
• Non-British birth certificate must be accompanied by a copy of settlement/immigration document and Child Benefit details – giving child/children name(s), Child Tax Credit – details giving child/children name(s)

**Pregnancy**  
Provide one of the following showing Expected Due Date (EDD)  
• Ultrasound/obstetrician’s report  
• Certificate of Confinement/MATBI

We may ask for more information depending on a person’s circumstances and may need to contact third parties to verify the information. By completing the online application applicants give us consent to do this.

**Cancelling applications**

Applications will be cancelled if:-

• The applicant has written and asked for it to be cancelled  
• Not responded to the annual review  
• Accepted an offer of accommodation  
• Completed a mutual exchange within the previous 12 months  
• Not responded to letters or phone calls from us; requesting information or to try and discuss application  
• Ceased to be eligible  
• Made false or deliberately misleading statements in connection with their application  
• Not providing supporting documents requested for application within 28 days of completing the on-line application

**Eligibility**

The following people are not eligible to join the Shepway Housing List:-

• People subject to immigration control (except where prescribed as eligible by the Secretary of State)  
• People not habitually resident in the Common Travel Area (UK, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and Irish Republic)

Applicants found not to be eligible will not have their application registered and will be notified in writing of the reasons for the decision.

**Local Connection**

Applicants with no local connection will be placed in Band E unless the Council has an accepted homelessness duty to them.

To have a local connection you must:-

• Have lived in the district of Shepway for the last 2 years continuously immediately prior to application
- Have been resident in the district of Shepway for 3 out of the last 5 years, even when they currently live outside of the district, for example people in hospital, HMP, temporary lodgings, or in refuges
- Have a close relative over 18 (mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister), living in the district of Shepway and who has lived here for at least 5 years immediately prior to the date of application.
- Special circumstances to be considered on a case by case basis. Examples include those needing to move to the district for urgent social reasons such as to receive/give support or to escape violence
- Those who have proof of 16 hours or more per week permanent employment for at least 6 months or more within the district of Shepway

Exceptions will be made for those who are or have served in the armed forces in the 5 years prior to their allocation of accommodation or the spouse or civil partner of a person whose death was attributable to their service in the armed forces.

**Supported accommodation**

Those living in supported accommodation in the district that are ready to move on into independent accommodation will be placed in Band B. Their application must be supported by a Kent Agency Assessment referral and accompanied by relevant care and risk assessment information.

**Applicants with a history of unacceptable behaviour**

Shepway District Council can decide to treat persons as ineligible for an allocation of accommodation if they or a member of their household have been guilty of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make them unsuitable to be a tenant on the following grounds:-

- Rent arrears
- Breach of tenancy agreement
- Nuisance or annoyance to neighbours
- Conviction for using home for immoral or illegal purposes
- Damage or neglect of home
- Conviction for a serious arrestable offence in the locality of their home
- Domestic abuse causing another household member to leave the home
- Making false statements to get a tenancy
- Tenants have Mutually exchanged without Landlord’s written consent or have paid a premium for assignment of a tenancy
- Losing tied accommodation due to dismissal from job for misconduct

When considering this the Council can look at either social or private tenancies and will consider all relevant factors surrounding the situation.

The decision will be made by the Housing Options Manager and the decision is open to review.

Where an applicant has previously been excluded but believes their behaviour has improved and should no longer be held against them they may make a fresh application but the Council will require evidence of them having held a tenancy and a good tenancy reference is received or have documentation proof of the change in order to accept the application.
**Owner Occupiers**

Owner-occupiers or applicants who own other residential property either in this country or abroad will be placed in band E. Applicants who previously owned a property and have sold it within the last 5 years will be asked to provide evidence of sale and any proceeds received (as assessed by the Help to Buy Scheme).

Owner-occupiers generally will not be able to move to another band or be awarded medical priority. This includes former owner-occupiers who have gifted or assigned their property to another person during their lifetime without receiving any money and who are still living in the property.

Property owners over 60 may be moved to another band if they are awarded medical priority and have exceptional circumstances.

**Applicants with sufficient income**

All applicants will be asked to provide evidence of income, equity, and savings to show that they do not have the means to solve their housing need themselves. If they are deemed to have the financial means to do this then they will be placed in Band E.

What is considered sufficient?

- Single or joint income which would enable them to access a Help to Buy scheme – below £60,000. [www.helptobuyese.org.uk](http://www.helptobuyese.org.uk) (taking into account the ability to get a mortgage and the type of property required)
- Sufficient income to be able to afford a standard monthly private rental within the district
- Savings which would be enough to pay for private rented accommodation for 2 years (where a property has been sold in the last 5 years proof of sale and proceeds will be required and will be taken into account using Local Housing Allowance figures and the property size needed for their family
- Enough equity in their current home to enable them to repurchase a suitable home

Lump sums received by a member of the Armed Forces as compensation for injury or disability sustained in service will be disregarded.

**Tied accommodation**

Applicants are considered to be in tied accommodation if their home has being provided as a part of their employment.

Applicants in tied accommodation will be placed in band E. They will be moved to band C if:-

- They are 6 months away from retirement or
- They have received a legally binding notice asking them to leave their accommodation

**Voluntarily worsening your circumstances**

If the Council believes that an applicant has deliberately made their housing circumstances worse without good reason, their application will be placed in band D for 12 months. This includes homeless applicants who are found intentionally homeless. Examples of worsening their housing circumstances are :-
- Moving to a home less suitable for their housing needs
- Deliberately damaging their home
- Asking a Landlord to serve them with a notice to quit
- Giving up secure accommodation

**Applicants in prison**

Prison leavers will not be awarded a band until the day they are released and when confirmation of their living circumstances has been provided to Shepway District Council. If the applicant will be homeless when they are released the prison should follow the agreed homeless protocol prior to release.

**Children living between parents**

Children living between two parents at separate addresses will only be considered as needing one main home unless in exceptional circumstances. Court Orders given access or shared residence does not mean that the Council must consider the child as a part of the applicant’s household for the purposes of a housing list application if that child has a home with the other parent.

**Overcrowding**

Those suffering from overcrowding:-

- Of one or more bedrooms and living in Council or Housing Association homes within Shepway will be placed in band B
- In private rented accommodation or living with relatives or friends will be placed in band C
- In Council or Housing Association homes outside of Shepway but who have a local connection to Shepway will be placed in band C
- In private rented or social housing but with no local connection to Shepway will be placed in band E

Homeless applicants are not considered in this category as they have a separate priority assessment.

Rooms that do not meet standards for living accommodation (as in Housing Act 1985 part X) will not be counted.

Applicants needing additional rooms on medical grounds will not be considered here but under medical priority.

Overcrowding priority will not be given if someone moved into the applicant’s household making them overcrowded. This will be considered on welfare grounds.

Single applicants without children will not be awarded overcrowding priority unless their accommodation is too small.

Pregnant applicants will receive overcrowding priority at 3 months pregnant following confirmation of pregnancy by relevant supporting documentation.
Children sharing bedrooms

Children of the same sex are expected to share a bedroom until one of them reaches the age of 16.

Children of the opposite sex will be expected to share until one of the children reaches the age of 10.

In these situations overcrowding priority will be awarded.

Extra bedrooms on medical grounds

Shepway District can consider the need for an extra bedroom in cases of severe disability. However, Housing Benefit is restricted and may be reduced by 14% for having one spare bedroom and 25% for two or more. In this instance it is the tenant’s responsibility to pay this rent top up.

Any person requesting an extra bedroom on medical grounds would need supporting medical evidence of this from a health professional and would be responsible to check with Housing Benefits if they would be liable for the rent top up in this situation.

Disrepair, poor design and lacking facilities

Any disrepair issues in Council or Housing Association properties must be reported to their Landlords repairs service.

Applicants with disrepair issues in private rented accommodation should first take this up with their Landlord. If their Landlord does not rectify the problem they will be referred to the Council’s Private Sector Housing Team. The applicant will need to complete a form and when received Private Sector Housing will notify the applicant’s Landlord that they will inspect the property. The Landlord will be notified of any defects and give them reasonable time to rectify them. If the Landlord fails to carry out the works then enforcement action may be taken and after this the applicants housing priority will be reassessed with a possible higher priority award based on the report provided by Private Sector Housing.

If the applicant refuses the Landlord access to carry out the works any priority awarded due to the condition of the property will be removed.

Once the works have been carried out and confirmed as satisfactory by Private Sector Housing any priority awarded due to the condition of the property will be removed.

Any applicant lacking facilities such as cooking, washing, toilet or adequate heating will be placed in Band B.

Sharing facilities

Applicants sharing a living room, kitchen, bathroom or toilet with either people they are not related to or with family if they are wishing to live separately from them will be placed in band C.

Single applicants under the age of 35 who are sharing will not be placed in Band C and will be considered as adequately housed and placed in Band E. Consideration will be given to people in special circumstances.
**Homelessness**

For applicants where a homeless duty has been accepted under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 the Council will first look to discharge its homelessness duty into the private rented sector by finding an affordable and suitable offer of a private rented tenancy for a minimum of 12 months.

Applicants with a duty accepted placed into temporary accommodation will be placed into Band C and if they are in severe need due to medical priority affected by the temporary accommodation they will be placed in Band A.

If after 8 weeks from the date of the applicant’s S184 decision letter they have not been offered a suitable private rented property or have been unsuccessful in bidding on CBL, the Council will make them one final offer of suitable accommodation either social or private tenure. If this offer is refused, the Council’s homelessness duty to provide accommodation will come to an end.

Homeless applicants will be expected to actively bid on Kent Homechoice. If the applicant does not bid for properties suitable for their household size within the first 8 weeks then the Council will bid on their behalf.

People who are homeless but not in priority need will be placed in Band C regardless of whether they have made a formal homeless application or not.

**Homeless households in severe need**

Homeless households with a duty accepted to them under homeless legislation and who:-

- Are elderly and vulnerable due to frailty or
- Have a terminal or long-term illness or
- Have severe mental health problems, have been unable to cope in temporary accommodation, and have been ‘sectioned’ or are likely to be admitted under the Mental Health Act or
- Are permanent wheelchair users or
- Are council or Housing Association tenants in Shepway who have an urgent need to transfer as they are suffering from violence or threats of violence and are considered to be at significant risk or
- The council is unable to provide any suitable temporary accommodation for.

may be recommended for assessment to fall into one of these categories by their caseworker. If they are accepted as meeting one of the above criteria their application will be placed in Band A.

**Members of the Council, staff members and their relatives**

Any application from members or employees of the Council or any relations or associated people must be disclosed on the application form. These will be assessed in the same way as all other applications but will be signed off, audited and have all offers of accommodation approved by the council’s Monitoring Officer.
The Bands explained

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<th>BAND PLACEMENT</th>
<th>ASSESSED HOUSING NEED IN BAND</th>
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| Band A – urgent housing needs | 1. Applicants with acute medical or welfare needs (Kent Agency Assessment High Priority)  
2. Applicants in need of a management transfer  
3. Accepted homeless households in severe need:  
  - The council has accepted a duty under the Homelessness legislation **and**  
  - Are elderly and vulnerable due to frailty **or**  
  - Have a terminal or long-term illness **or**  
  - Have severe mental health problems, have been unable to cope in temporary accommodation, and have been ‘sectioned’ or are likely to be admitted under the Mental Health Act **or**  
  - Are permanent wheelchair users **or**  
  - Are council or Housing Associations tenants in Shepway who have an urgent need to transfer as they are suffering from violence or threats of violence and are considered to be at significant risk **or**  
  - The council is unable to provide any suitable temporary accommodation for. |
| Band B – serious housing needs | 1. Applicants with serious medical or welfare needs (Kent Agency Assessment Medium Priority)  
2. Applicants occupying very overcrowded housing or otherwise living in very unsatisfactory housing conditions **(Category 1 hazard)**  
3. Council or Housing Association Tenants in Shepway who are under-occupying or overcrowded by one bedroom or more  
4. Council or Housing Association Tenants in Shepway occupying an adapted property that is no longer required  
5. Former and current members of the Armed Forces  
  - Persons who are serving in the armed forces or have done so in the five years preceding their application for an allocation of housing accommodation (excluding those that have been dishonourably discharged).  
  - Bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the armed forces where their spouse or partner’s death is attributable (wholly or partly) to their service and the bereaved spouse or civil partner’s entitlement to reside in Ministry of Defence
accommodation then ceases.

6. Applicants needing to move on from supported accommodation within the Shepway district to live independently.

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<th>Band C – reasonable preference</th>
<th>1. Applicants with significant medical and welfare need</th>
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<td>2. Applicants who are homeless</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Applicants who are occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions (Category 2 hazard).</td>
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<td>4. Applicants who need to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability</td>
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<td>5. Applicants sharing with another household if they share</td>
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<td>- Living room</td>
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<td>- Kitchen</td>
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<td>- Bathroom or toilet</td>
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<td>With either people they are not related to or their family if they are wishing to live separately from them.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>NB. Single applicants under the age of 35 who are sharing will generally be considered as adequately housed and placed in band E.</td>
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<td>6. People who need to move to a particular locality within the district to avoid hardship (to themselves or to others)</td>
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<td>7. Applicants who are in permanent paid employment of 16 hours per week or more and working in Shepway for a current duration of at least 6 months or more</td>
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<th>Band D – general housing needs</th>
<th>1. Applicants with low medical or welfare need</th>
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<td>2. Applicants who are intentionally homeless, or who have deliberately worsened their housing circumstances</td>
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<td>3. Applicants who are homeless by another local authority</td>
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<th>1. Applicants who are adequately housed.</th>
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<td>2. Applicants with no local connection with the District, and/or</td>
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<td>3. Applicants that meet or exceed the financial threshold for Help to Buy</td>
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**Offers**

Before making an offer of accommodation Shepway District Council will check the applicant’s circumstances to make sure their details are still correct. If the checks are satisfactory the applicant’s details will be put forward to East Kent Housing or the Housing Association managing the property they have bid on.

If the checks find that the applicant is not eligible for the offer, no offer can be made.

**Photo ID or a current photograph will be required on application and again at sign up for the property offered and if an applicant refuses to provide this, the offer will be withdrawn.**

Applicants will only be made one offer at a time and while they are ‘under offer’ for one property they will not receive any further offers even if they have continued to bid.

**Debts – Rent arrears and former tenant arrears**

All Applicants will:-

- Have their current or most recent rent account checked, which must be clear
- Provide details of all accommodation for the past 3 years immediately prior to their application including the Landlord(s) and their contact details
- Certain exceptions may be made for tenants who are under-occupying their homes at the discretion of their landlord.
- In cases of extreme hardship the Head of Service will give consideration for an offer of accommodation to be made

**Former Tenancy Account**

- If you have any Former Tenancy arrears you must have a proven track record of regular payments over the past 6 months

**If Court Action is being taken seeking outright possession or a Bailiff’s Warrant for eviction, no offers of housing should be made without the agreement of the Housing Options Manager.**

**Tenancy Types**

The type of tenancy applicants are offered will be dependent on the tenancy policy of the Landlord managing the property.

Generally, applicants offered tenancies with East Kent Housing will be offered an Introductory Tenancy followed by a 3 year flexible/fixed term tenancy.

In some circumstances, where a housing applicant has a previous track record of anti-social behaviour, the council may wish to allocate 2 year tenancies.

Applicants with a serious long term support need, including any accommodation based support needs, will continue to be offered a long term tenancy (usually 10 years). This provision applies to applicants with serious support needs who are applying for general needs accommodation and specialist long-term supported accommodation (including sheltered housing provision).

This will vary amongst Housing Associations and possibly for different types of properties.
**Gardens**

Applicants with children aged 15 years or under at the date of offer will have priority for properties with gardens over applicants in the same band without children in that age range.

**Pets**

Some Council or Housing associations may not allow pets in their properties – this should be indicated on the property advert. Applicants will be asked on their application if they have pets and if they do would they be prepared to make other arrangements for their pets in order to increase their choice of properties. If an applicant has indicated that they would not be prepared to make other arrangements for their pets and the property they bid on does not allow pets, they will not be considered for that property.

**Adaptations**

If an applicant has been identified as needing special adaptations i.e. a stair lift and an Occupational Therapist has confirmed this they will be given preference for such properties over people that do not need them. Specially disabled adapted or accessible properties will be advertised as this in Kent Homechoice so that people needing them can see this.

Bungalows and level access properties will usually be offered to people needing this type of accommodation due to their health.

Tenants in properties with significant adaptations that they no longer need may be awarded a higher priority on the Housing List to enable them to move more quickly.

Adaptations already in East Kent Housing properties will not be removed even if the current or new tenant does not require them.

Properties with a very high level of adaptations may not be advertised in Kent Homechoice and may be let direct to an applicant requiring such a property.

**Sheltered Housing**

An assessment of an applicant’s suitability and need for sheltered accommodation will be carried out by a Sheltered Housing Officer before any offers can be made. If an applicant is found to be unsuitable, they will be advised on other suitable types of accommodation.

Applicants must be over 50 years old or registered disabled. All household members should be over 45 years old.

**Extra Care housing**

Is for older people where additional support and social care services are provided in accordance with assessed need. Extra care housing will be advertised through Kent Homechoice but a dedicated allocation panel for the scheme/schemes, consisting of representatives from the Council and Social Services, will make the allocation.
Designation of Property type

To make best use of housing stock properties are designated as being for:

- General needs use.
- Older persons.
- People with disabilities

Older person’s properties, such as bungalows, will normally be allocated to the following categories of person:-

- Those aged 50 or over.
- Those under 50 with Band B medical assessment for mobility who require this type of accommodation. In these circumstances applicants will only be considered for 1 bedroom properties if they are a single person or couples and will not be able to express interest in general needs properties.

In areas of lower demand some properties designated for older people may be advertised without an age restriction, however, in the first instance preference will still be given to applicants over 50 expressing interest.

General needs properties such as houses or flats will be allocated to persons under 50 unless there are special circumstances which indicate that a particular general needs property is suitable for an older person.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Size</th>
<th>Number of Rooms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Adult</td>
<td>Studio Flat/ 1 bedroom flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Adults living together as a couple</td>
<td>1 Bedroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Adults aged 16 years+ (not married/not cohabitating)</td>
<td>2 Bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Adult (or 2 Adults living together as a couple) expecting baby and the pregnancy is within 3 months of confirmation of pregnancy</td>
<td>2 Bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Adult (or 2 adults living together as a couple) with 2 children of different sexes where neither child is over 10 years of age</td>
<td>2 Bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Adult (or 2 adults living together as a couple) with 2 children of the same sex under 16 years</td>
<td>2 Bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Adult (or 2 adults living together as a couple) with either:</td>
<td>3 Bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 3 children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 2 children of different sexes where the oldest child is over 10 years of age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 2 children of the same sex where the eldest child is 16 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Adult (or 2 adults living together as a couple) with 4 children</td>
<td>3 Bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Adult (or 2 adults living together as a couple) with 4 or more children where 1 child is 16 years</td>
<td>4+ Bedrooms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Local Lettings Plans**

Where a local lettings plan applies, it will be stated in the property details when advertised through Kent Homechoice.

Some local lettings plans may ask for an applicant to have a local connection to a specific parish or village.

**False or misleading information**

It is an offence to make a false statement and/or knowingly withhold information. The maximum fine for this is £5,000. Anyone who gives false information may be excluded from the Shepway Housing List.

Tenants are at risk of losing the property if they do not comply with their tenancy agreement and criminal prosecution if they illegally sublet the property.

**Reviews**

If an applicant considers they have been unfairly or unreasonably treated having regard to the provisions of the Allocation Policy they have the right to request a review of their case.

In the first instance, they must appeal in writing to the Housing Options Manager and they will receive a written response within 20 working days.

If, having received this response they wish to make a further appeal they will have to write to the Head of Service who will then appoint another officer who has not been directly involved with their case.

**Personal Data**

All the information given to us is treated confidentially under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998 and will be kept on file all the time they are an applicant or become a tenant with the council. Any additional information an applicant gives us will be treated in the same way. We will share the information with East Kent Housing and any of our partner Registered Provider Landlords (who are listed in the Kent Homechoice Scheme User Guide) in the interests of an applicant’s housing need. We have an information-sharing protocol with the Police and the NHS under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 that is strictly controlled under our statutory obligations.

**National Fraud Initiative**

From January 2007 the council is obliged to participate in the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) data matching exercise under Section 6 of the Audit Commission Act 1998. Data held by the Authority in respect of a tenancy or housing application will be used for cross-system and cross-authority
comparison purposes for the prevention and detection of fraud. This does not affect the declaration and authorisation clauses on the application form.

**Complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman**

The Local Government Ombudsman investigates complaints of injustice and unfairness resulting from maladministration by local authorities and other organisations. They can be asked to investigate complaints about most council matters, including housing.

The Local Government Ombudsman can be contacted at:

PO Box 4771
Coventry
CV4 0EH

Telephone 0300 061 0614 or 0845 602 1983
Email: advice@lgo.org.uk

You can also text ‘call back’ to 0762 480 4299

The Ombudsman will normally only investigate a case where the complaints procedure has been followed first and will not become involved where an applicant disagrees with a decision that has been correctly made.