

Bridgend County Borough Council

Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr

www.bridgend.gov.uk



Bridgend Social Housing Allocation Policy



2025

The Council's contact details are:

Housing & Community Regeneration

Civic Offices

Angel Street

Bridgend

CF314WB

E-mail: housing@bridgend.gov.uk

Telephone: 01656 643643

Put 18001 before any of our telephone numbers for the text relay service SMS
Messaging (for deaf/hard of hearing applicants): 07581 157014

Fax: 01656 668126

This Policy is available in other formats e.g. in large print or in Welsh.

Bridgend Social Housing Allocation Policy

1.0 General Principles

- 1.1. This Allocation Policy sets out how Bridgend County Borough Council (the Council) and its Housing Association Partners allocate the majority of social housing within the county Borough. The Housing Associations that operate within the Bridgend County Borough are Beacon, Hafod, Linc-Cymru, Trivallis, United Welsh, Valleys to Coast (V2C), Wales & West.
- 1.2. These organisations, together with the Council are referred to collectively as the 'Partners' throughout this document.
- 1.3. The table below shows the percentage of vacancies of social rented housing allocated through this Policy:

Housing Association	% of Vacancies
Beacon	100
Hafod	100
Linc-Cymru	100
Trivallis	100
United Welsh	100
Valleys to Coast	75*
Wales & West	100

**Valleys to Coast may allocate up to 25% of their vacancies through their own allocation policy.*

- 1.4. This Policy sets out how Partners manage applications from existing tenants wishing to transfer to other social housing providers. It does not cover mutual exchanges or internal transfers made for management purposes.
- 1.5. The Partners are committed to the principles of equality and non-discrimination. All applicants will be treated fairly and in accordance with equal opportunities legislation and good practice.
- 1.6. This Policy recognises the significant shortage of available social housing relative to the growing level of demand. The limited availability of social housing necessitates prioritising housing for applicants who demonstrate the greatest housing need. Consequently, this policy is specifically designed to ensure fairness and transparency in the allocation process, ensuring that social housing resources are effectively targeted towards supporting those most in need.
- 1.7. The aim of the Policy is to balance prioritising those in greatest need and ensuring that there are opportunities for re-housing for those who require it. It is designed to reflect a range of need factors and enable applicants to clearly understand their prospects for re-housing given their needs, circumstances and preferences.
- 1.8. This Policy has been written to comply with the legal requirements of the Housing Act 1996, Housing (Wales) Act 2014, and the Welsh Government's Code of Guidance for Local Authorities on Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness. It

also makes reference to the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016.

- 1.9.** The Council appreciates the importance of offering applicants as much choice as possible regarding their housing options. This supports the development of sustainable communities and enables individuals to express personal preferences. However, given current pressures on stock, the ability of the Council and its Partners to accommodate these preferences may be significantly constrained.
- 1.10.** Where the Council owes a statutory homelessness duty under section 66, 73 and 75 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, or an applicant is in supported accommodation, including a care leaver applying directly from a care placement it may make an offer of suitable accommodation in any area within the Council's Borough.
- 1.11.** Applicants will be placed in Bands that reflect their level of housing need. Banding determines their priority for re-housing.
- 1.12.** This Policy is based on the following legal and ethical principles:
 - A recognition to give reasonable preference to certain groups of people as set out in legislation;
 - The principle that social housing properties should be let on the basis of an applicant's housing needs;
 - A commitment to transparency by providing clear information to applicants about their rights and the operation of the Policy
- 1.13.** In accordance with Section 167(2) of the Housing Act 1996, reasonable preference for housing must be given to:
 - all categories of homeless people (within the meaning of Part 2 of the 2014 Act);
 - people who are owed a duty under section 66, 73 or 75 of the 2014 Act;
 - people occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing, or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing condition;
 - people who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (including disability-related reasons);
 - 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)
- 1.14.** In addition, the Council will give additional preference to those applicants in urgent or exceptional circumstances, including (but not limited to):
 - i. Those owed a homelessness duty as a result of violence or threats of violence likely to be carried out and who as a result require urgent rehousing, including:
 - Victims of domestic or other abuse;
 - Victims of hate incidents;
 - Witnesses of crime or victims of crime who would be at risk of intimidation amounting to violence or threats of violence if they remained in their current homes;
 - ii. Those who need to move because of urgent medical reasons;
 - iii. Applicants who suddenly lose their existing home as a result of a disaster e.g. fire or flood (and consequently owed a homeless duty under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014);
 - iv. Applicants who need to move to suitable adapted accommodation because of a

- serious injury, medical condition or disability which they, or a member of their household, have sustained as a result of service in the Armed Forces;
- v. People who need accommodation as a result of leaving the Armed Forces and the loss of military accommodation (and consequently owed a homeless duty under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014):
 - vi. People under-occupying or over-occupying social housing and wanting to transfer to a property of a more appropriate size
- 1.15.** Discretion may be applied in exceptional circumstances where strict application of this Policy would result in undue hardship or unfairness. Any discretionary decisions will be made by a Housing Manager on its merits as regards the urgency of the need for re-housing and recorded in accordance with internal procedures.
- 1.16.** In compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (UK GDPR) no information will be disclosed about an applicant either without their express consent or where disclosure without consent is provided for by the legislation. An applicant is entitled to examine information which is held about them whether the information is held on paper or on a computer database. This may exclude information provided by a third party which may not be disclosed. A single disclosure consent form will be provided to applicants as part of the housing application process and will provide authorisation for information to be shared between the Partners.
- 1.17.** This Policy will be subject to periodic review to ensure it remains legally compliant, fair and responsive to housing needs within the borough.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1.** Everyone can apply to be considered for housing under this Policy. While anyone may apply, not all applicants will be eligible to join the Housing Register. Eligibility is determined by both legal criteria and local policy, as outlined in this document.
- 2.2.** The Council maintains a Housing Register of housing applicants for itself as well as for its Partners who have chosen to adopt this Policy.
- 2.3.** Due to the significant discrepancy between demand and supply of social housing, the Housing Register will prioritise applicants who meet the definition of the reasonable preference categories in the Priority Band, Band A and Band B. (see section 4). It should be noted that due to the demands on social housing applicants may face lengthy waiting times, particularly those placed in Bands C and D.
- 2.4.** All applications for housing will be assessed in line with the procedures set out in this Policy. In considering applications, however, the Council must ascertain if an applicant is eligible for accommodation.
- 2.5.** For further details about eligibility and exclusion please refer to Section 3 of this Policy. It should be noted that the law in relation to eligibility is complex and subject to change. The Council and its Partners will provide up to date information on eligibility and exclusions and advice to applicants as part of the application process.
- 2.6.** Applicants are responsible for ensuring that all information provided in relation to their housing application is accurate and kept up to date. Applicants must notify the Council of any change in their circumstances that may affect their housing application. Failure to do so may result in:

- incorrect banding;
- delay or cancellation of an offer;
- removal from the Housing Register.

3.0 Eligibility, Exclusions and Reduced Priority

Eligibility

- 3.1.** The Council and its Partners may allocate housing only to applicants who are eligible under UK law. Eligibility is determined primarily by immigration status, but may also affect British citizens. There are two categories of ineligible people.
- 3.2.** The first category of people who are ineligible for an allocation are persons subject to immigration control unless they fall within one of the classes prescribed at Regulation 3 Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (Wales) Regulations SI 2014/2603. We set out the classes of persons subject to immigration control who are eligible for an allocation at Appendix Two. Those classes can change if the Regulations are amended and reference should always be made to the up to date text of Regulation 3. The most common classes of persons who are subject to immigration control who are eligible under Regulation 3 are refugees (Class A) and people who are habitually resident and whose leave to enter or remain does not contain any No Recourse to Public Funds condition (Class C).
- 3.3.** The second category of people who are ineligible are people who are not habitually resident in the Common Travel Area (England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Isle of Man and the Channel Islands). This will apply to British nationals and also to some EEA nationals and their family members. There are some exemptions to the habitual residence requirement, set out at Regulation 4(2) Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (Wales) Regulations SI 2014/2603. We reproduce the categories of people who are exempt from the habitual residence requirement at Appendix Three. Those categories can change if the Regulations are amended and reference should always be made to the up to date text of Regulation 4(2).
- 3.4.** UK law also requires that the Council and its Partners cannot allocate housing to a person whose only right to reside in the UK arises under European Union law based on their status as a jobseeker, or an initial three months' right of residence or a derivative right of residence based on being the principal carer for a British citizen.
- 3.5.** The Council is not allowed to allocate housing to an ineligible person by granting them a joint occupation contract with another, eligible person. Where there are two applicants, and one is eligible and the other ineligible, the Council will grant a sole occupation contract to the eligible applicant.
- 3.6.** These rules do not apply to a person who is already a contract holder of the any council or registered social landlord, if the contract was granted as a result of an allocation.

Exclusions

- 3.7.** The Council has the discretion to treat applicants as ineligible for an allocation of housing on the basis of unacceptable behaviour. The Council will only treat behaviour

as being unacceptable if it meets the definition of 'Prohibited Conduct' as defined in Section 55 Renting Homes Act 2014 (see Appendix One). The Council's use of this sanction will be kept to a minimum. The Council will wherever possible use support mechanisms to maximise opportunities for people to secure social housing.

- 3.8.** In determining whether an applicant is ineligible due to unacceptable behaviour, the Council will apply the following three-part legal test:
- i. Where there is evidence of unacceptable behaviour was it serious enough to have entitled a landlord to obtain a possession order?
 - ii. Was the behaviour serious enough to render the applicant or a household member unsuitable to be a tenant?
 - iii. Is the behaviour unacceptable at the time of application?
- 3.9.** Where all three conditions are met, the Council will consider exercising its discretion to decide if the applicant is to be treated as ineligible for an allocation. In reaching its decision, the Council will consider each application on its own merits. Having regard for each applicant's personal circumstances (and the personal circumstances of the applicant's household), including their health and medical needs, dependants and any other factors relevant to the application. A decision to treat an applicant as ineligible must be underpinned by compliance with the law and the Code of Guidance.
- 3.10.** If an applicant who has, in the past, been deemed by the Council and its Partners to be ineligible, now considers their unacceptable behaviour should no longer be held against them as a result of changed circumstances, they can make a fresh application. Unless there has been a considerable lapse of time it will be for the applicant to show that their circumstances or behaviour has changed. What constitutes a considerable lapse of time will depend upon the individual circumstances of the case and in particular the nature of the unacceptable behaviour.

Reduced Priority

Arrears

3.12. Where the Council has reason to believe the applicant has rent arrears/former tenant debt that is equivalent to or more than 8 weeks' rent arrears they will be given reduced priority as reflected in their banding (section 4), and expected to:

- enter into and maintain a repayment plan; and
- make sustained payments for a minimum of 12 consecutive weeks

Once the debt is reduced to below 8 weeks' rent or the repayment plan has been adhered to, at this point, applicants can be reassessed. If the debt still remains, they will need to continue making repayments.

3.13. Applicants who have met the requirements of their repayment plan or have lowered their debt to less than 8 weeks will need to contact the Council to request a reassessment.

3.14. Where an applicant would otherwise qualify for a Priority banding, or where exceptional circumstances apply, the Council may decide not to give lower priority. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Income and Asset Thresholds

3.15. Applicants will be awarded a lower Banding if they meet the following financial criteria:

- Single applicants or couples requiring one-bedroom accommodation with:
 - a gross household income exceeding the average (median) gross weekly earnings for Bridgend, as indicated by the latest available Office for National Statistics (ONS) Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) or
 - savings/assets over £30,000;
- Families or households requiring two or more bedrooms with:
 - a gross household income exceeding double the average (median) gross weekly earnings for Bridgend, as indicated by the latest available Office for National Statistics (ONS) Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) or
 - savings/assets over £30,000;
- Ownership of a residential property or a significant (50% or more) share in a residential property (domestic or international).

3.16. Discretion may be applied in limited cases where strict adherence to thresholds would disadvantage applicants due to specific circumstances. These may include but are not limited to:

- Medical and disability grounds;
- People in hospital ready for discharge whose property is not suitable;
- Homeowners who are eligible for sheltered or supported accommodation;
- In exceptional circumstances, where a homeowner or person with a financial interest in a property is unable to occupy that property.

False or Misleading Information

3.17. If an applicant, or someone on the applicant's behalf, knowingly provides false information or withholds information that is relevant to their application for housing (which is a criminal offence under the Housing Act 1996 and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £5000) then the applicant will be given lower priority. The Council will inform the applicant in writing of their Banding and the notification will include the reasons for reduced priority as well as the procedure to review that decision.

4.0 Making an application

- 4.1.** Guidance on how to apply for housing is provided separately on the Council's website, or from the Housing Department directly. This policy sets out the principles that govern application, assessment and allocation.
- 4.2.** An application to join the Housing Register is subject to a housing assessment being completed. The outcome of the housing assessment will take into account the applicant's circumstances, including:
- whether they meet reasonable preference categories (see section 1);
 - the suitability of their current housing, including overcrowding (see glossary of terms);
 - their specific housing needs.

All relevant additional information provided by the applicant or by other agencies

on the applicant's behalf will be considered during the assessment.

- 4.3. Following the assessment, applicants will be notified of the outcome.
- 4.4. The Council may retain details of applicants who are not eligible for housing allocation but qualify for other forms of accommodation (see section 4.6).
- 4.5. Applicants may express interest and be offered other forms of accommodation under this Policy to meet their housing need including:
 - low-cost home ownership;
 - intermediate rented housing;

More information about these housing options can be obtained from the Council and its Partners.

- 4.6. In order to ensure that the Council is treating all applicants fairly, applicants who are Council Members, Council Employees or a member of their family, Partners' Employees or a member of their family should disclose this fact on any application for housing. These applications will be assessed in the normal way but registrations and any allocation of accommodation will require the approval of a Senior Officer of the Council and will be considered in accordance with the Partner Housing Association's rules.
- 4.7. Joint applications will be accepted where all parties are eligible. Where one party is ineligible due to immigration status or unacceptable behaviour, the application will be processed as a sole application only.
- 4.8. Applicants may indicate a preferred area in which they wish to live. However, it is important to note that restricting preferences to a single area significantly reduces the likelihood of being offered accommodation. While preferences will be considered, allocations are dependent on availability and housing need.
- 4.9. Applicants who are homeless, in supported accommodation, or making an application directly from a care placement will, by default, be considered for all available areas within the Borough to maximise their chances of being offered suitable housing. However, they may choose to opt out of specific areas, provided this is in line with the reasonable offer criteria. (Outlined in 4.15, Offer of Accommodation).
- 4.10. The date on which the applicant contacts the Council for a housing assessment is the "effective date" of registration. Allocations will normally be taken in effective date order, from the highest Band, subject to the target arrangements.
- 4.11. Applicants will be required to re-register their housing application in order to confirm that they still want to and are eligible to be considered for housing. On the anniversary of their registration date, applicants will be required to renew their application. Applicants will be notified in writing of the arrangements for completing this renewal. Failure to complete the renewal within the time period specified will result in the applicant being removed from the Housing Register.

Rapid Rehousing and Housing Allocation Principles

- 4.12. This policy operates in alignment with the principles of Rapid Rehousing, which aims to ensure that people experiencing homelessness are supported to move into settled housing as quickly as possible, rather than remaining in temporary accommodation for extended periods.

The key principles of Rapid Rehousing are that:

- everyone is considered 'housing ready' with the right support;
- people spend as little time as possible in temporary accommodation;
- people are able to access the right home in the right place for them;
- multi-agency support is made available and tailored to individual needs

4.13. Rapid Rehousing is the default approach for homeless applicants, but allocation decisions will continue to be made within the framework of this Policy.

Banding

Applicants will be placed in one of four Bands depending on their housing need identified through the housing assessment and according to the following criteria:

PRIORITY BAND

Those applicants falling within the reasonable preference categories set out in sections 1.12 and 1.13 where the following also apply:

- a number of statutory agencies are involved; or
- there is a statutory requirement to intervene; or
- immediate provision of housing will alleviate intense agency input; or
- immediate provision of housing is needed because of a critical medical or welfare need including emergencies; or
- a care leaver in an intensive care or supported accommodation placement requires accommodation, which will result in the alleviation of wider intensive agency input; or
- under occupation of social housing and need to transfer to a smaller property in order to avoid loss of tenancy*

In addition, due to the high demand and limited availability of certain property types, priority will also be given to:

- applicants under-occupying four-bedroom or larger properties who desire smaller accommodation*; or
- households who require two or three-bedroom properties who are occupying a one-bedroom property*; or
- applicants occupying an adapted or accessible (e.g. ground floor or with a wet room, wheelchair accessible etc.) property that is no longer required for their needs*

*Where the applicant's current property is in Bridgend and let by a Bridgend based Social Housing provider as per section 1.2.

BAND A

Those applicants assessed as having urgent housing need who:

- have an urgent need to move because of your disability and the need for an adapted property; or
- are owed a homeless duty under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 (unless they are owed a duty solely because the Council has had regard to a restricted

person (within the meaning of Part 2 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014) including:

- Applicants who suddenly lose their existing home as a result of a disaster e.g. fire or flood
- Victims of domestic or other abuse;
- Victims of hate incidents;
- Witnesses of crime or victims of crime who would be at risk of intimidation amounting to violence or threats of violence if they remained in their current homes; or
- need to move on from supported housing; or
- need to move because of urgent medical or hardship reasons; or
- need to move to suitable adapted accommodation because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability which they, or a member of their household has sustained as a result of service in the Armed Forces; or
- need accommodation as a result of leaving the Armed Forces and the loss of military accommodation; or
- are under occupying social housing and want to transfer to a smaller property in order to avoid financial hardship; or
- are 16-25 and need to move on from a care placement

BAND B

Those applicants assessed as having non urgent housing need who:

- need to move for medical or hardship reasons; or
- need to move because of overcrowding conditions or insanitary conditions; or
- need to move because they are disabled and their property is not suitable and cannot be easily adapted; or
- are homeless but do not qualify for Band A (for example, those who are homeless but not owed a duty by the council); or
- people who need to move to a particular locality for reasons of employment, meeting the needs in the local area, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others); or
- meet the criteria set out in these Bandings but they have no local connection with the area (individuals applying immediately upon leaving the Armed Forces or care experienced children / care leavers aged 16-25 for whom Bridgend is their corporate parent will not have to meet a local connection criteria).

Band C

Those applicants who meet the criteria in the above bands, but:

- Are a single applicant or couple requiring one-bedroom accommodation with a gross household income exceeding the average (median) gross weekly earnings for Bridgend, as indicated by the latest available Office for National Statistics (ONS) Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) or savings/assets over £30,000; or

- Families or households requiring two or more bedrooms with a gross household income exceeding double the average (median) gross weekly earnings for Bridgend, as indicated by the latest available Office for National Statistics (ONS) Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) or savings/assets over £30,000; or
- Have ownership of a residential property or a significant (50% or more) share in a residential property (domestic or international); or
- Those applicants who are owed a duty under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 solely because the Council has had regard to a restricted person (within the meaning of Part 2 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014); or
- Have refused an offer of suitable accommodation made by the Council; or
- Have made a false or misleading statement within their application; or
- Where the Council has reason to believe the applicant has rent arrears/former tenant debt that is equivalent to or more than 8 weeks' rent arrears; or
- Following assessment, are established to *not* meet the criteria in the above bands.

4.14. An applicant will normally remain in the allotted Band until an offer of housing is made, except in the following circumstances:

- 4.14.1. A material change in circumstances requires re-banding. If promoted to a higher Band, the effective date will reset to the date the change was reported. If demoted, the original effective date will be retained.
- 4.14.2. Applicants who deliberately worsen their situation to gain advantage will be assessed on the basis of their situation immediately prior to this taking place.

Offer of Accommodation

4.15. Applicants will usually receive one reasonable offer of accommodation, based on the information gathered as part of the housing assessment. The offer will be considered reasonable if it:

- matches the household's required property size and type;
- meets verified needs for adaptations and/or accessibility;
- the location provides access to necessary support needs when required;
- the location provides reasonable access to schools and/or employment when required;
- the location offers reasonable access to public transport when required.

Applicants who have refused an offer of suitable accommodation or who have made a false/misleading statement in order to gain an allocation of accommodation will remain in Band C for a period of 12 months. It is for the applicant to contact the Council after this time for a reassessment.

Bedroom Eligibility

4.16. For applicants who are eligible to join the Housing Register the applicant's requirements in relation to property size will normally be determined according to the

standard indicated in the household table below. A definition of who is considered to be a “household” can be seen within the glossary.

4.17. Exceptions may occur (subject to the applicant demonstrating ability to afford rent) which will include, but not exclusively:

- When the housing provider needs to consider the sustainability of an area;
- Where there is limited stock or low demand;
- Where a household member has a disability or health related condition which requires an additional bedroom. This must be supported by information from a relevant medical professional and will be subject to an affordability assessment.
- Where the applicant has shared responsibility for a child/children who is/are not a permanent household member, an additional bedroom will be permitted subject to a financial assessment.

Household	Bedrooms
Single person	1 or bedsit
Couple	1
Single pregnant woman (and in receipt of the MATB1 certificate)	2
Single parent or couple with one child	2
Single parent or couple with two children of same sex	2
Single parent or couple with two children of opposite sex under 10 years	2 or 3
Single parent or couple with two children of opposite sex where at least one child is over 10 years	3
Single parent or couple with three children	3
Single parent or couple with four children	3 or 4
Single parent or couple with five children	4
Single parent or couple with more than five children	4

4.18. The following should be read in conjunction with the table above:

For the purposes of sharing bedrooms, the following apply:

- Under 10 years old, mixed sexes may share a bedroom. However, where a child is within twelve months of being 10 years old, an additional bedroom may be provided;
- Under 16 years old, same sexes may share a bedroom. However, where a child is within twelve months of being 16 years old, an additional bedroom may be provided;
- Over 16 years old, own bedroom required.

Parlour type properties can be considered as having an additional bedroom to assist where necessary with housing larger families where larger accommodation is not available.

In all cases child refers to dependent child (see glossary of terms).

4.19. Individual assessments will be required for applicants whose household comprises more than two adults or for other households who do not fit within the standards in the table.

Accessible and Sheltered Housing

- 4.20.** Properties particularly suitable for people with a medical need or following an Occupational Therapist Assessment will normally be allocated to people where the adaptations will meet their needs or where the property can be easily adapted to meet their needs, e.g. adapted properties, bungalows and ground floor flats. Applicants in need of adapted or accessible properties will be able to outline their requirements at the point of application. This is to support the allocation of accommodation that appropriately meets their requirements (e.g. adapted for wheelchair use, level access wet room, ground floor, hoists, stairlifts etc.) All specified requirements must be supported by appropriate evidence demonstrating the need.
- 4.21.** Sheltered housing will normally be offered to people over 55 or people over 50 who have a medical need for sheltered housing. Applicants for sheltered housing who are assessed as being in housing need will be placed in either the Priority, A or B bands.

5.0 Local lettings policies

- 5.1.** Section 167(2E) of the Housing Act 1996 enables the Council to allocate accommodation to people of a particular description, whether or not they fall within the reasonable preference categories (outlined in section 1.13).

Such local flexibility is permitted, provided that:

- Reasonable preference groups do not become marginalised or dominated by other allocations; and
- The scheme continues overall to give preference to those in the greatest housing need in line with statutory duties.

This legal basis underpins the use of Local Lettings Policies (LLPs), which allow for tailored allocation approaches to address specific community housing management objectives,

- 5.2.** Local Lettings Policies can be used to address a number of issues such as:

- Supporting people with a local connection who need support
- Support the Armed Forces Covenant
- Creating more mixed communities;
- Managing a concentration of deprivation;
- Ensuring properties that are particularly suited to being made accessible are prioritised for those with access needs;
- Relocating essential workers such as teachers, nurses and police officers within a reasonable travelling distance from their work;
- Dealing sensitively with lettings in rural areas to sustain communities by giving priority to those with a local connection to the local area;
- Under occupancy as a result of the Welfare Reform Act 2012;
- Supporting people in work, training or volunteering or who are seeking work or to take up volunteering opportunities;
- Sustaining Welsh-speaking communities by giving priority to those in housing need

- with a local connection to the area;
- Taking account of the needs of mobile workers such as those in the armed forces.

5.3. The Council may introduce Local Lettings Policies for housing management reasons. These may include:

- Supporting regeneration or redevelopment schemes
- Managing lettings for specific property types
- Encouraging community sustainability, integration and cohesion.

Lettings will be monitored to ensure that they comply with the Local Lettings Policy. Please refer to the Council's website for details of current Local Lettings Policies.

5.4. Local Lettings Policies will be monitored as to their effectiveness and reviewed regularly so that they can be revised or revoked where they are no longer appropriate or necessary.

6.0 Change of Circumstances

6.1. Applicants should notify the Council in writing of any change in their circumstances, as this may affect their housing eligibility or banding. Changes that must be reported include, but are not limited to:

- i. A change of address, for themselves or any other person on their application; or
- ii. Any additions to the family or any other person they would wish to join the application (N.B. it is for the Council to decide whether they will allow a person/s to join the application); or
- iii. Any member of the family or any other person on the application who has left the accommodation; or
- iv. Any change in income or savings

6.2. A change of circumstances may require a further housing assessment.

7.0 Transfer arrangements

7.1. The social landlords who are participating in this Policy may operate internal transfer schemes. Tenants who wish to transfer within their existing landlord's stock should contact their landlord directly for details of transfer eligibility and procedures.

7.2. Tenants who wish to move from one housing association to another social landlord in Bridgend or elsewhere may use the national HomeSwapper scheme. Online information about HomeSwapper can be found at <https://www.homeswapper.co.uk/>, or by contacting Bridgend County Borough Council or the social landlords in Bridgend.

8.0 Complaints

8.1. Any applicant who is unhappy with the service with which they have been provided by

the Council may complain. It is best for everyone if complaints are dealt with as quickly as possible. Applicants should contact the officer or individual they usually deal with first who will try to solve the problem quickly.

- 8.2.** If a complaint is not resolved at an informal level the applicant may make a formal complaint. Detail in relation to complaints, including how to complain, is available on the Council's website (<https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/council/customer-services/concerns-and-formal-complaints/>) or from the Council's Offices.

9.0 Right to review

- 9.1.** Any applicant has the right to request a review of any of the following decisions:
- i. That they are not eligible under the Allocation Policy. This includes decisions where an applicant is deemed ineligible due to unacceptable behaviour; or
 - ii. To remove an application from the Housing Register following unreasonable refusals of offers of accommodation; or
 - iii. About the facts of an applicant's case which have been, or are likely to be, taken into account in considering whether to make an allocation to them; or
 - iv. The assessment of an application, including the Banding; or
 - v. The cancellation or withdrawal of an application.
- 9.2.** Any applicant wishing to request a review of a decision must do so by contacting the Council in writing within 21 days of the date of the letter that informed them of that decision.
- 9.3.** Homeless applicants may also have a statutory right of review on certain homelessness decisions, including decisions on the suitability of accommodation offered and any discharge of duty.
- 9.4.** A Review Officer who was not involved in the original decision will deal with the review within 14 days of the request. All decisions following reviews will be notified to the applicant in writing giving the reasons for the decision. The decision letter will be sent out within 21 days of the original request. The review decision cannot be appealed at the County Court and the only available legal challenge against the review decision is by means of judicial review.

10. Glossary of Terms

Code of Guidance	The document issued by Welsh Government, and periodically updated which provides direction and further explanation on the way in which Housing Legislation should be implemented
-------------------------	--

Dependent child	A child (person under 18) who depends on a parent or guardian for financial, emotional or other support and where there is no alternative (one parent or guardian will usually be regarded as providing the principal home)
Existing social housing tenants	Existing tenants of one of the seven Partner Housing Associations
Hardship	Difficulty which is beyond mere inconvenience causing the applicant suffering or deprivation which is likely to be endured over a long period
Household	This policy regards a “household” as parents, children (aged under 18), any adult children living with their parents, and potentially other relatives who are dependent on the main applicant and are either residing with the applicant or might reasonably be expected to reside with the applicant.
Housing Association	Independent organisations that provide low-cost social housing on a not-for-profit housing basis for those in need of housing
Overcrowding	A housing situation is considered to be overcrowded if it fits one of the following situations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Two adults of opposite sex not living together as partners, who have to share a bedroom; ii. Three or more people of any age are sharing a bedroom where one or more is over 10 years of age; iii. Anyone sleeping in a room that is not a bedroom or a room that could reasonably be used as a bedroom; iv. For medical reasons a separate bedroom is necessary;

	v. For reasons of ethnicity, culture or religious belief it is not possible to share a bedroom.
Restricted Person	A “restricted person” means a person— (a)who is not eligible for help as set out at 3.1-3.6, and (b)who is subject to immigration control within the meaning of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, and (c)who either— (i)does not have leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom, or (ii)has leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom subject to a condition to maintain and accommodate himself or herself, and any dependants, without recourse to public funds.
Sheltered housing	Rented housing for older and/or disabled or other vulnerable people

Social housing	Social housing is housing that is let at low rents and on a secure basis to people in housing need. It is generally provided by Councils and not-for-profit organisations such as Housing Associations
Unacceptable behaviour	When the Council refer to “behaviour” it means anti-social behaviour and other prohibited conduct which comes within section 55 of the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 and the Council is satisfied that an outright possession order would have been made under that section (see Appendix One).

Appendix One – Section 55 of the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016

Section 55 Anti-social behaviour and other prohibited conduct

1. The contract-holder under an occupation contract must not engage or threaten to engage in conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person with a right
 - a. to live in the dwelling subject to the occupation contract, or
 - b. to live in a dwelling or other accommodation in the locality of the dwelling subject to the occupation contract.
2. . The contract-holder must not engage or threaten to engage in conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person engaged in lawful activity—
 - a. in the dwelling subject to the occupation contract, or
 - b. in the locality of that dwelling.
3. The contract-holder must not engage or threaten to engage in conduct—
 - a. capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to—
 - i. the landlord under the occupation contract, or
 - ii. a person (whether or not employed by the landlord) acting in connection with the exercise of the landlord's housing management functions, and
 - b. that is directly or indirectly related to or affects the landlord's housing management functions.
4. The contract-holder may not use or threaten to use the dwelling subject to the occupation contract, including any common parts and any other part of a building comprising the dwelling, for criminal purposes.
5. The contract-holder must not, by any act or omission—
 - a. allow, incite, or encourage any person who is living in or visiting the dwelling to act as mentioned in subsections (1) to (3), or
 - b. allow, incite, or encourage any person to act as mentioned in subsection (4).

Appendix Two – Eligibility / Non Eligibility Criterion

Persons subject to immigration control who are eligible for an allocation of housing accommodation: Regulation 3, Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (Wales) Regulations SI 2014/2603. These classes of people change and reference should always be made to the updated text of Regulation 3.

The following classes of persons subject to immigration control are persons who are eligible for an allocation of housing accommodation under Part 6 of the 1996 Act—

Class A – a person who is recorded by the Secretary of State as a refugee within the definition in Article 1 of the Refugee Convention and who has leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom;

Class B – a person—

- (i) who has exceptional leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom granted outside the provisions of the Immigration Rules; and
- (ii) whose leave to enter or remain is not subject to a condition requiring that person to maintain and accommodate themselves, and any person who is dependant on that person, without recourse to public funds;

Class C – a person who is habitually resident in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland and whose leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom is not subject to any limitation or condition, other than a person—

- (i) who has been given leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom upon an undertaking given by the person's sponsor;
- (ii) who has been resident in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland for less than five years beginning on the date of entry or on the date on which the undertaking was given in respect of the person, whichever date is the later; and
- (iii) whose sponsor or, where there is more than one sponsor, at least one of whose sponsors is still alive;

Class D – a person who has humanitarian protection granted under the Immigration Rules;

Class E – a person who is habitually resident in the United Kingdom, the Channel

Islands, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland and who has limited leave to enter the United Kingdom as a relevant Afghan citizen under paragraph 276BA1 of the Immigration Rules;

Class F — a person who has limited leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom on family or private life grounds under Article 8 of the Human Rights Convention, such leave granted under paragraph 276BE(1), paragraph 276DG or Appendix FM of the Immigration Rules, and who is not subject to a condition requiring that person to maintain and accommodate themselves, and any person who is dependent on that person, without recourse to public funds;

Class G – a person who is habitually resident in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland and who has been relocated to the United Kingdom under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016 and has limited leave to remain under paragraph 352ZH of the Immigration Rules;

Class H – a person who is habitually resident in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland and who has been granted Calais leave to remain in the United Kingdom under paragraph 352J of the Immigration Rules;

Class I — a person who is habitually resident in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland and who has limited leave to remain in the United Kingdom as a stateless person under paragraph 405 of the Immigration Rules ;

Class J — a person—

- (i) who has limited leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom by virtue of Appendix Hong Kong British National (Overseas) of the Immigration Rules ;
- (ii) whose leave to enter or remain is not subject to a condition requiring that person to maintain and accommodate themselves, and any person who is dependent on that person, without recourse to public funds; and
- (iii) who is habitually resident in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland;

Class K — a person—

- (i) who is granted leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom in accordance with the Immigration Rules , where such leave is granted by virtue of—
 - (aa) the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy; or
 - (bb) the previous scheme for locally-employed staff in Afghanistan (sometimes referred to as the ex-gratia scheme); or
- (ii) with leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom not coming within subparagraph (i), who left Afghanistan in connection with the collapse of the Afghan government that took place on 15 August 2021, but excluding a person (P)—
 - (aa) who is subject to a condition requiring P to maintain and accommodate themselves, and any person who is dependent on P, without recourse to public funds; or
 - (bb) who has been given leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom upon an undertaking given by P's sponsor and has been resident in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland for less than five years beginning on the date of entry or the date on which P's sponsor gave the undertaking in respect of P, whichever date is the later, and whose sponsor or, where there is more than one sponsor, at least one of whose sponsors, is still alive;

Class L — a person who has been granted leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom by virtue of Appendix Ukraine Scheme of the Immigration Rules;

Class M — a person who has temporary leave to remain in the United Kingdom granted in accordance with Appendix Temporary Permission to Stay for Victims of Human Trafficking or Slavery of the Immigration Rules;

Class N — a person who—

- (i) was residing in Sudan before 15 April 2023;
- (ii) left Sudan in connection with the violence which rapidly escalated on 15 April 2023 in Khartoum and across Sudan;
- (iii) has leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom given in accordance with the Immigration Rules;
- (iv) is not a person whose leave is subject to a condition requiring that

person to maintain and accommodate themselves, and any person who is dependent on that person, without recourse to public funds; and

(v) is not a person (P)—

(aa) who has been given leave upon an undertaking given by P's sponsor;

(bb) who has been resident in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland for less than five years beginning on the date of entry or the date on which P's sponsor gave the undertaking in respect of P, whichever date is the later; and

(cc) whose sponsor or, where there is more than one sponsor, at least one of whose sponsors, is still alive;

Class O — a person who—

(i) was residing in Israel, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights or Lebanon immediately before 7 October 2023;

(ii) left Israel, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights or Lebanon in connection with the Hamas terrorist attack in Israel on 7 October 2023 or the violence which rapidly escalated in the region following the attack;

(iii) has leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom given in accordance with the Immigration Rules;

(iv) is not a person whose leave is subject to a condition requiring that person to maintain and accommodate themselves, and any person who is dependent on that person, without recourse to public funds; and

(v) is not a person (P)—

(aa) who has been given leave upon an undertaking given by P's sponsor;

(bb) who has been resident in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland for less than five years beginning on the date of entry or the date on which P's sponsor gave the undertaking in respect of P, whichever date is the later; and

(cc) whose sponsor or, where there is more than one sponsor, at least one of whose sponsors, is still alive;

Class P – a person (P) who has indefinite leave to enter the United Kingdom by virtue

of Appendix Victim of Domestic Abuse of the Immigration Rules in circumstances where P is a victim of transnational marriage abandonment;

Class Q – a person who has limited leave to enter or limited leave to remain in the United Kingdom and who, after making a change of conditions application, has had their no recourse to public funds condition lifted by the Home Office in accordance with section 3(1)(c)(ii) of the Immigration Act 1971 and is not a person within Class F or Class J; and

Class R — a person who—

- (i) was residing in Israel, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip or East Jerusalem on or before 23 June 2025;
- (ii) left Israel, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip or East Jerusalem in connection with the conflict between Israel and Iran which escalated in June 2025;
- (iii) has leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom given in accordance with the Immigration Rules;
- (iv) is not a person whose leave is subject to a condition requiring that person to maintain and accommodate themselves, and any person who is dependent on that person, without recourse to public funds;
- (v) is not a person (P)—
 - (aa) who has been given leave upon an undertaking given by P's sponsor;
 - (bb) who has been resident in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland for less than five years beginning on the date of entry or the date on which P's sponsor gave the undertaking in respect of P, whichever date is the later; and
 - (cc) whose sponsor or, where there is more than one sponsor, at least one of whose sponsors, is still alive; and
- (vi) within 6 months beginning with the date on which His Majesty's Government first published advice to British nationals to leave Israel, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip or East Jerusalem, or from the date of the first evacuation from Israel, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip or East Jerusalem, whichever is later, made an application for an allocation of housing accommodation under Part 6 of the 1996 Act.

Appendix Three – Habitual Residence Requirement exemptions

The following categories of people are exempt from the habitual residence requirement under Regulation 4(2), Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (Wales) Regulations SI 2014/2603. These classes of people change and reference should always made to the updated text of Regulation 4(2).

- A. a worker;
- B. a self-employed person;
- C. a person who is the family member of a person specified in sub-paragraphs (a) or (b);
- D. a person with a right to reside permanently in the United Kingdom by virtue of regulation 15(1)(c), (d) or (e) of the Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations 2016/1052;
- E. a person who is in the United Kingdom as a result of the person's deportation, expulsion or other removal by compulsion of law from another country to the United Kingdom;
- F. a frontier worker;
- G. a person who—
 - (i) is a family member of a frontier worker; and
 - (ii) has a right to reside by virtue of having been granted limited leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom under the Immigration Act 1971 by virtue of Appendix EU to the immigration rules made under section 3 of that Act;
- H. a person who left Afghanistan in connection with the collapse of the Afghan government that took place on 15 August 2021;
- I. a person who was residing in Ukraine immediately before 1 January 2022 and who left Ukraine in connection with the Russian invasion which took place on 24 February 2022;
- J. a person who was residing in Sudan before 15 April 2023 and left Sudan in connection with the violence which rapidly escalated on 15 April 2023 in Khartoum and across Sudan;
- K. a person who was residing in Israel, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem,

the Golan Heights or Lebanon immediately before 7 October 2023 and who left Israel, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights or Lebanon in connection with the Hamas terrorist attack in Israel on 7 October 2023 or the violence which rapidly escalated in the region following the attack; and

L. a person who—

(i) was residing in Israel, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip or East Jerusalem on or before 23 June 2025;

(ii) left Israel, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip or East Jerusalem in connection with the conflict between Israel and Iran which escalated in June 2025; and

(iii) within 6 months beginning with the date on which His Majesty's Government first published advice to British nationals to leave Israel, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip or East Jerusalem, or the date of the first evacuation from Israel, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip or East Jerusalem, whichever is later, made an application for an allocation of housing accommodation under Part 6 of the 1996 Act.