

# Housing allocation scheme 2018

This document sets out Islington Council's Allocation Scheme for allocating council homes and nominations to housing associations.





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# Introduction

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This document sets out Islington Council's Allocation Scheme for allocating council homes and nominations to housing associations, including procedures and determining priorities. In revising the Allocation Scheme, the council has also taken into account the following documents, among other sources:

- 1996 Housing Act (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017)
- Government guidance
- Localism Act 2011

The scheme is guided by the following principles:

- it must comply with statutory rules set out under legislation and accompanying regulations and take into account Codes of Guidance issued by central government from time to time
- the cost of temporary accommodation is reduced by ensuring homelessness is prevented and homeless people and people who are threatened with homelessness are rehoused as soon as practicably possible
- applicants considered to be extremely high priority should be assessed accordingly so that the priority is reflected in their position on the register
- the scheme must complement the council's other responsibilities, for example meeting social care needs and minimising financial risk to the council
- it must be simple and fair, so that it is easy for local people to understand, allows vacant properties to be filled quickly, and ensures equal opportunities for all sections of the community
- it should anticipate the majority of housing problems so that the need for individual discretionary decisions is minimised
- procedures for reviewing decisions on priority or the suitability of offers need to be open and accountable
- the most serious insanitary or overcrowded housing in the borough must be addressed.

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## The legal framework - giving 'reasonable preference'

Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) sets out that a local authority must design their allocation scheme in such a way as to give 'reasonable preference' to certain categories of people. These are prescribed by the Act and are as follows:

- (a) People who are homeless within the meaning of Part VII of the 1996 Act.
- (b) People owed a duty by any housing authority under section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) of the Housing Act 1996 or under s65 (2) or s68 (2) of The Housing Act 1985 or who are occupying accommodation secured by any housing authority under section 192(3) of the 1996 Act.
- (c) People occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions.
- (d) People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (including grounds relating to a disability).
- (e) People who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the housing authority where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others).

The scheme must also be framed so as to give additional preference to a person within one or more of paragraphs (a) to (e) with urgent housing needs who:

- (i) is serving in the regular forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable to the person's service;
- (ii) formerly served in the regular forces;
- (iii) has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of that person's spouse or civil partner who has served in the regular forces and whose death was attributable to that service:  
or
- (iv) is serving or has served in the reserve forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable to the person's service.

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## **Equalities**

The council serves a diverse community, and is committed to meeting the needs of that community in the provision of housing allocation, by working in partnership with other housing providers.

The council will ensure that people are treated fairly and equally and, when allocating housing, ensure that the allocation scheme and its operation do not discriminate unlawfully against any particular group.

The implementation of a clear and consistent allocation scheme goes hand in hand with careful equalities monitoring. The data collected is used to ensure that the scheme is being operated in a fair and non-discriminatory manner, as well as for the purposes of regular equality impact assessments and subsequent improvements to service delivery. All applicants to the Housing Register are asked to provide details of their ethnic origin, age and gender, disability, religion/faith and sexual orientation to enable monitoring to take place.

There is no compulsory requirement to provide the relevant information and failure to do so does not affect an applicant's chances of rehousing. However, applicants are strongly encouraged to comply and informed of the important purpose this information serves.

The council recognises that it is important that everyone who applies for rehousing understands the allocation scheme. The council will produce information leaflets, along with translations, large print and Braille versions on request.

## **Discretionary powers**

The allocation scheme cannot cover every eventuality. In special cases with exceptional needs, the Service Director for Housing Needs and Strategy has discretionary power to, for example, award additional priority and approve offers of housing, taking into consideration all factors relevant to housing and social needs.

# Housing Register

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## Applying for social housing - joining the Housing Register

Any person may apply to the council to join the Housing Register. However not everyone will be eligible or qualify for housing.

### The Housing Register

#### What is it?

The Housing Register is a list of applicants registered for council or housing association properties. It is governed by Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and Localism Act 2011.

#### Who can apply?

Anyone can approach the council for advice and assistance; however the council does exclude certain categories of people from the housing register.

#### Applicants who cannot join the Housing Register

People in the following categories are not eligible to join the housing register.

##### People from abroad

A person is ineligible and may not be allocated accommodation under Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 who is either a person subject to immigration control and is not within a class of persons set out in regulations made by the government or is within a class of other persons from abroad set out in regulations made by the government unless they are:

- already a secure or introductory tenant, or
- an assured tenant of a private registered provider of social housing or registered social landlord.

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People in the following categories are not ‘qualifying persons’ and are not able join the housing register.

### **1. Unacceptable behaviour**

Generally, applicants or members of their household who have committed or been involved in unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make them unsuitable to be council tenants will not be accepted onto the Housing Register.

Unacceptable behaviour may include:

- failing to pay rent
- breaching a condition of the tenancy agreement
- causing a nuisance to neighbours
- being convicted of using their home for immoral or illegal purposes
- making a false statement to obtain a tenancy
- causing the condition of the property to deteriorate by a deliberate act
- being convicted of an indictable offence, in or in the vicinity of their home
- being the perpetrator of violent, coercive or controlling behaviour towards a resident of the borough.

### **2. Non-Residence**

People who are not resident in the borough on the date of application and have not lived in Islington for at least three out of the previous five years from the date they apply for housing cannot join the housing register. Applicants must also continue to live in the borough if they wish to remain on the housing register. Exceptions may be made if they are:

- Resident in a hospital
- Resident in supported housing
- Serving a custodial sentence and were resident in Islington for three years prior to entering hospital/custody.
- Housed through an agreement with other local authorities, for example through a mobility scheme or following an itinerant lifestyle (confirmed by a support agency) and have assessed care needs that can only be met in Islington.
- Accepted homeless applicants under section 193 of the Housing Act 1996



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- An exception will also be made where an existing social tenant needs to move to take up employment or an apprenticeship in Islington where;
    - They are in, or under definite offer of, paid work or an apprenticeship and,
    - have signed, or been offered, a contract of employment or an apprenticeship agreement for a minimum period of 12 months, and
    - will work 24 hours per week on average in Islington, and
    - earn the national minimum wage
    - and where failure to meet that need would cause hardship to that person or others
  - An exception will also be made where an applicant:
    - (a) is serving in the regular forces or who has served in the regular forces within five years of the date of their application for an allocation of housing under Part 6 of the 1996 Act;
    - (b) has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of that person's spouse or civil partner where:
      - (i) the spouse or civil partner has served in the regular forces; and
      - (ii) their death was attributable (wholly or partly) to that service; or
    - (c) is serving or has served in the reserve forces and who is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to that service.
  - Or in any other exceptional circumstance.

**3. People who own or jointly own or part-own a property which is reasonable for them to occupy. If you recently owned a home you will be asked to provide evidence of the sale and give details of any capital gained from the sale.**

**4. People who are social housing tenants, or joint tenants, of any other local authority or housing association in the UK regardless of the type of tenure. Exceptions may be made if you are a Corporation of London tenant living in the borough of Islington or in the circumstances set out above in relation to a need to move to take up employment or an apprenticeship.**

**5. People applying for housing, or for a housing transfer, who have fewer than 100 points under the points scheme (see page 20).**

**6. Households with sufficient income or capital to meet their own housing need.**  
Where we believe that an applicant or partner have deliberately deprived themselves of capital to qualify for housing, we will still include the capital in our assessment of housing need after taking into account the reasons why the money was spent.

**7. Households placed in Islington by another local authority which has an interim or long term duty to them as a homeless applicant.**

If a person is not eligible to join the housing register, then the council cannot allocate a tenancy to him or her with someone else who is entitled to join the Housing Register.

Details of how to appeal against a decision on eligibility and qualification for the housing register can be found in **chapter 10**.



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### **How to apply**

There is a limited amount of social housing available each year. We strongly advise that other housing options are considered. Advice and information regarding other options is available at:

[www.islington.gov.uk/findingahome](http://www.islington.gov.uk/findingahome)

Applications for housing and for a housing transfer can be made at:

[www.islington.gov.uk/housingapplication](http://www.islington.gov.uk/housingapplication)

Information about the average points needed to secure social housing in Islington can be viewed online at:

[www.islington.gov.uk/findingahome/councilhousing](http://www.islington.gov.uk/findingahome/councilhousing)

Applicants approved for rehousing will need to provide satisfactory evidence of identity, and past and current residence for themselves and all household members. The council will request documentary evidence from each applicant and will carry out enquiries as necessary.

### **Change of address and/or circumstances**

It is the responsibility of all applicants to notify the council in writing of any change in their accommodation or household circumstances. It may be necessary to provide documentary evidence to support the change in circumstances. Applications may be suspended whilst the council reassess the information provided by the applicant.

The reassessment of the application may result in the increase or decrease of points. All applicants will be notified in writing of any changes.

[www.islington.gov.uk/changeapplication](http://www.islington.gov.uk/changeapplication)

### **Adding adults to an application**

Adults may not be added to an application where this would result in the need for larger accommodation than originally assessed, unless the applicant can demonstrate a need to join the household.

### **Making a Waiting List and homelessness application**

Where an applicant has a waiting list application, and subsequently makes a homelessness application, the waiting list application will be re-assessed once the homelessness application has been determined.

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## Rehousing standards

The council's rehousing standards determine the size of accommodation that may be offered.

The housing size standards operated by the council are:

- A single parent will be treated as a couple.
- people aged 16 years or older not living as a couple should not have to share a bedroom
- people of opposite sex where one or both is over the age of 10 should not have to share a bedroom unless they are both over 16 and living as a couple
- no more than two people should have to share a bedroom
- a confirmed pregnancy over 24 weeks supported by details of the expected date of delivery counts as a child.

In exceptional cases, an extra bedroom may be agreed on medical or welfare grounds where the nature of a condition suffered by a household member makes it essential to have a separate bedroom.

Applicants may bid for properties that are a bed size smaller than their housing requirements. This decision is at the discretion of the rehousing manager or the housing options manager.

### Size standard

- Single person - Bedsit
- Single person or couple with no children - 1 Bedroom
- Couple or single person with 1 child - 2 Bedroom
- Couple or single person with 2 children - 2/3 Bedroom (dependent on age/sex of children)
- Couple or single person with 3 children - 3 Bedroom
- Couple or single person with 4 children - 3/4 Bedroom (dependent on age/sex of children)
- Couple or single person with 5 or more children - 4+bedrooms

### Splitting large households

With the household's agreement consideration may be made to offering two separate properties to a large household. The council will consider the types of properties required and ensure that there is an adult as part of each tenancy.

## The points scheme

Applicants are given points for housing need factors and these points are added together. The needs of all individuals in the applicant's household will be taken into account when points are given. Only one award of points will be made for each housing need, even if the need could fall within more than one category. Points may be reviewed at any time and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on changes in circumstances.

Applications which are assessed as having fewer than 100 points will not be included on the Housing Register.

**The points scheme is summarised in a table on page 20.**

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### Housing Transfers

Council or housing association tenants seeking a transfer, and living in poor conditions and/or needing to move for example because of medical or welfare reasons or because they are overcrowded, generally qualify for inclusion on the housing waiting list and their priority is determined according to the allocations scheme.

Low priority transfer cases can be assisted to move through other schemes which already exist to help tenants move both in and out of borough, this is covered in **chapters 2 and 6**.

### Points are given to applicants on the Housing Register as follows:

#### Residence points

100 points are awarded to everyone who has been resident in the borough for at least three out of the last five years at the date of application.

#### Waiting time points

Additional points for waiting time are awarded. The additional points are calculated at a rate of 5% per year on all points, except residence points and any previous waiting time points. The waiting time points will only be added to an application from the anniversary of the week that housing needs points are first added to an application, not the date that an application is first made.

#### Overcrowding

Applicants who have moved to a council or housing association property without the permission of the landlord will not be awarded overcrowding points.

The council will consider the rooms available to your household and assess your application accordingly.

- Bedroom lacking points are awarded for each additional bedroom required by the applicant.
- An additional award of 30 points are awarded where an applicant is lacking two or more bedrooms
- 10 Opposite Sex Overcrowding points is awarded where two people of the opposite sex have to share a bedroom and one is 10 years or older (unless they are over 16 and living as a couple.) Where there is more than one occurrence 5 additional points will be given per occurrence.

### Medical Points

#### Unsuitable housing due to medical condition or disability

The council may give points if it considers that the accommodation of an applicant or a member of their household is unsuitable because of a medical condition.

Medical priority will be awarded according to the extent to which the health of one or more members of the applicant's household is affected by their housing conditions and the expected benefits of providing alternative housing. **No medical points will be given if there is a medical condition but the accommodation is suitable.**

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A household will be assessed together and one award made for the whole household.

The number of medical points an applicant will be given depends on the household's health and the severity of the conditions in their home. There are three categories of medical points:

**Category A** – this gives the maximum 150 points, an award will be made:

- In exceptional circumstances for households where a member of the household has an immediately life-threatening or progressive condition which is seriously affected by their current accommodation
- To serving members of the regular forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service
- To households where two members of the households are assessed as being Category B – see below.

These points are awarded for six months only because we expect that applicants will have sufficient points to bid successfully for a suitable property within that time.

**Category B** – is an award of 80 points and is for households where a member of the household's current housing conditions are having a major adverse effect on their medical condition. It will not apply where the effect of the housing conditions on health is moderate, slight or variable.

**Category C** – awards 40 points and is for households where a member of the household's current housing conditions is having a moderate or variable effect on their medical condition. It will not apply where the effect of the housing conditions on health is slight.

The council's medical advisor may recommend the type, size and location of housing that is suitable including sheltered housing.

Applicants may choose to accept properties from a wider range than recommended without affecting their medical priority.

An offer of accommodation may be withdrawn where medical evidence strongly suggests it would be detrimental to the health and well-being of the applicant.

### **Accessible Housing Register**

The Accessible Housing Register (AHR) is a way of storing and displaying information about whether a property has level access, has steps or has any adaptations such as a level access shower or stair-lift. When a property becomes vacant, the category and other access information will be displayed on the Home Connections website and weekly property advertisement sheets.

Each property has been assessed according to published building design guidance and allocated a category. These range from fully wheelchair accessible (category A) to general needs housing (F).

The AHR category will be displayed in every property advertisement on Home Connections. This will include all wheelchair accessible properties. Disabled and elderly applicants will be able to identify properties that are likely to meet their needs and place a bid. The categories are a guide to how accessible a property is likely to be. Successful bidders will still need to view the property before accepting a tenancy.

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## Carers

Applicants may bid for an additional bedroom for a carer if:

- there is an assessed need for a member of the household who would otherwise be expected to share to have his or her own room
- An applicant or a member of their household requires personal care or supervision by day or night and an additional room is required for a live-in carer. In order to qualify for this position, a carer should live with the applicant on a full time basis and provide care for at least 35 hours per week or have to provide overnight care for more than 3 nights a week. The applicant should be in receipt of Attendance Allowance or Personal Independence Payments at the middle or highest rate. The carer should normally be in receipt of carer's allowance or receiving a package of care following a social work assessment that identifies a need for night time care.

## Property access categories

### Category A: Wheelchair accessible throughout.

Designed to allow full use of all rooms and facilities to someone who uses a wheelchair all the time.

### Category B: Wheelchair accessible essential rooms.

Properties designed or adapted to meet the needs of wheelchair users but may not offer full use of all facilities.

### Category C: Lifetime Homes.

(Properties may have internal stairs. Where this is the case, the stairs are likely to be able to accommodate a basic-sized stair-lift.)

Designed to meet the space standards of Lifetime Homes. Main features include a level approach / entrance and wider doorways.

### Category D: Easy access.

(Properties may have internal stairs. Where this is the case, the stairs are likely to be able to accommodate a basic-sized stair-lift.)

Designed with level access to the property door.

### Category E: Step free.

(Properties may have internal stairs. Where this is the case, the stairs are likely to be able to accommodate a basic-sized stair-lift.)

Level access housing but possibly with narrow doors and corridors.

### Category E+: Up to six steps.

(Properties may have internal stairs. Where this is the case, the stairs are likely to be able to accommodate a basic-sized stair-lift.)

May have up to six steps to the home.

### Category G: Not yet assessed.

Any property we have not yet been able to assess.

### Category F: General housing.

Properties that do not meet the above specifications.

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### Welfare points

Welfare points may only be given where housing or other circumstances affect the welfare needs of the applicant or a member of their household. Where there are welfare or social issues, these will be assessed by either the council's medical advisor or senior officers.

One award will be made for the household.

Assessments may be carried out in liaison with social services or a support agency.

**Welfare Category A** is an award of **150 points** which may be awarded to applicants whose welfare needs are so severe that the protection of vulnerable adults or children is only possible in a permanent home and where the present housing circumstances could deteriorate to such an extent as to place household members, particularly children, at risk or in need of residential care unless permanent housing is offered. These points should only be awarded where housing or the domestic situation severely affects the welfare of the applicant.

In general, this very high award will rarely be made. If too many households receive this high award it will slow down the rehousing of the most vulnerable people.

Examples of this include:

- Where the applicant or a member of their household is severely vulnerable due to frailty or advanced age and is unable to be placed in temporary housing.
- Where the applicant or a member of their household has a learning disability and needs to move into mainstream accommodation. This decision will be based on an assessment made by the Learning Disabilities Team.
- Where the applicant has undergone lengthy and expensive rehabilitation in residential surroundings and is ready to attempt independent living in the community and temporary accommodation would risk undoing the work of the centre or unit.
- Where the accommodation is required to meet the assessed needs of relevant children and other care leavers under the Children Leaving Care Act 2000.
- Where it is necessary to move because of the threat of violence or harassment, including domestic and sexual violence **except for council tenants who have been awarded 150 management transfer points.**
- Households where two members of the households are assessed as being Welfare Category B – see the following page.

**Welfare Category B** is an award of **80 points** and may be awarded in the following circumstances:

- Where an applicant or a member of their household has to move in order to be near a person to whom they give or receive care and support.
- Bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the regular forces where (i) the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their service spouse or civil partner, and (ii) the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service.

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**Welfare Category C** is an award of **40 points** may be awarded to applicants whose welfare needs are comparable to the following:

- The applicant was a substance abuser and had attended a rehabilitation programme. The applicant may be adequately housed but there is a need to move away from the immediate area where they are vulnerable.
- The applicant's household includes someone with a need for settled accommodation on welfare or medical grounds who cannot reasonably be expected to find accommodation for themselves in the near future.
- Former members of the regular forces
- The applicant is living in such insanitary conditions that their welfare is prejudiced, and there are no remedies available to improve the conditions.

#### **Islington Care leavers, adult services and children services**

- The Service Director has discretion to agree housing for referrals from Islington Council Adult Social Services and Children's Services. Rehousing under these schemes may be in council housing or through nomination rights to a housing association.
- The Housing Options Manager will make an award of 150 points if rehousing has not been achieved, an additional 50 points may be considered if the applicant has been actively bidding.
- Care leavers up to the age of 25 may be referred for housing under the Care Leaver Scheme and the Housing Options Manager will make an award of 90 points.

#### **Decants and major works**

Points may be given when a tenant needs to be rehoused to allow repair, re-development, demolition or disposal of their home.

The council and Partners for Improvement in Islington may determine points awarded when a property is in a works programme, but rehousing is not immediately required. Most moves required due to major works will be temporary and the tenant may be required to return to their original property upon completion of the work.

Points may be agreed by the Council and Partners for Improvement in Islington where it is necessary to move a tenant on decant and major work grounds. In most cases, 60 points will be awarded to major work cases and 100 points will be awarded to decant cases.

The council and Partners for Improvement in Islington may award points when a transfer is urgently required. In these exceptional cases 120 points will be awarded to major work cases and 200 points will be awarded to decant cases.

In some instances, a permanent move may be agreed.

The council may also award major works or decant points in exceptional circumstances to allow a housing association tenant to move where the housing association cannot provide rehousing. The council reserves the right to make an offer of housing outside the choice based lettings scheme to applicants who have been unsuccessful at bidding for properties.

These points will be reviewed every six months.



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### Management transfers

Points may be agreed by the council and Partners for Improvement in Islington where it is necessary to move a tenant on management grounds. In most cases, 60 management points will be awarded.

In exceptional circumstances, 120 points may be awarded. These points will be reviewed every six months.

150 points may be awarded:

- Where there is evidence to indicate that the tenant is currently at risk of serious harm from a third party perpetrator(s). For example, risk of possible homicide, serious injury, assault or abuse including domestic or sexual violence
- where it can be evidenced that the risks can only be managed effectively by moving the tenant elsewhere
- where there is a corresponding safety plan in place setting out how the new address will be kept confidential, minimising the risks of the perpetrator (s) finding the victim / survivor.

These points will be reviewed every six months.

### Points awards from previous allocation schemes

Applicants for housing prior to the introduction of previous allocation schemes in 2010 and 2013 who have not had a change in circumstances leading to a re-assessment of their housing points will retain points awarded under the previous schemes.

- 2010 – bedroom lacking instead of bed space lacking, waiting time points from date of application and social housing tenant points.
- 2013 – new generation scheme points for single people and couples

Applicants for housing under the 2015 allocation scheme and this allocation scheme will not retain points awarded under previous schemes.

### Review of points awarded

Applicants who have been awarded a high level of housing points, examples of which are listed below:

**Medical category A** – 150

**Welfare category A** – 150

**Management transfer** – 120 or 150

These will be reviewed every six months and may be removed if the applicant is either not bidding, or not making realistic bids.

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### Relationship breakdown

Where a relationship breakdown has occurred between couples and one or both partners are an Islington council tenant, one or both former partners will be eligible for 50 points providing:

- both partners have been living at the accommodation for the past twelve months
- Under-occupation of the accommodation will not result from rehousing just one of the former partners.

Generally, in cases where under-occupation would result, both partners will be housed in suitably sized accommodation. In such cases (and unless there are exceptional circumstances), neither partner will be eligible for re-housing unless both former partners agree to be housed in suitably-sized accommodation. Under this policy, the term "couples" refers to heterosexual, lesbian and gay relationships.

The points will be reviewed after six months.

### Joint tenancies

In certain circumstances the council and Partners for Improvement in Islington may consider giving relationship breakdown points for other joint tenants seeking to become sole tenant.

### New generation scheme

The scheme is open to the sons and daughters of council, housing association and private sector tenants living with their parents in the borough. This scheme is only open to applicants who require bed sits or one or two bedroom properties.

The criteria for the scheme are:

- applicants must be aged eighteen years or above
- applicants must be living as an agreed member of the household of an Islington resident
- applicants must have lived continuously as an agreed member of the household of an Islington resident for the three years prior to the date of application
- applicants must not have been previously housed by the council

Additional priority will be given to applicants in overcrowded households through overcrowding points.

**90 points** will be given to applicants who require two bedrooms.

**20 points** will be given to single applicants or childless couples who require a bedsit or one bedroom.

In exceptional circumstances applicants with a severe long term disability may qualify for the NGS irrespective of the tenure of their parents or guardian and will be awarded an additional 20 points.

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### Statutory homeless applicants

10 points are awarded to;

- Applicants who are living in insecure accommodation and are threatened with homelessness or
- accepted homeless applicants under section 193 of the Housing act 1996

Applicants to whom the main duty is owed under section 193 of the Housing Act 1996 will be placed on the Housing Register.

Accepted homeless applicants in temporary accommodation may also be awarded the following additional points if they fall under one of the following criteria:

- 100 points will be given to accepted homeless applicants in properties where the temporary accommodation lease is about to expire and who cannot be found comparable alternative temporary accommodation. These points are to be given once it is clear that actual eviction is to take place and to remain until the applicant is either housed or placed into further long term temporary accommodation, whichever is the earliest.
- 100 points will be given to accepted homeless families in bed and breakfast, or in shared annexes for more than six consecutive weeks from the date of placement and who cannot be found suitable self-contained temporary accommodation. This does not include families placed in council owned reception centres.
- 40 points will be given to accepted homeless families where the applicant needs to move due to financial hardship or where it is in the council's wider strategic interests or it helps the council manage temporary accommodation more effectively.
- 70 points will be given to single homeless applicants assessed as needing studio or 1 bedroom accommodation, where the council has accepted a full housing duty.

### Service occupiers

Islington Council estate services employees who are retiring or leaving their employment for another reason, have held service tenancies or licences for at least three years and are required to move may receive decant points. They will be able to bid for any suitable vacancies that meet their housing requirements. They will be awarded decant points if they:

- Leave the council's service to retire on grounds of ill-health retirement or medical incapacity, provided they have completed the standard contractual probation period.
- Take voluntary redundancy or early retirement.
- Leave their post because they are appointed to a non-residential post within the council.

However, such decant points are not awarded to:

- Staff who are dismissed from the council's service for disciplinary or competence issues or for unsatisfactory attendance.
- Staff who resign from a post that has tied accommodation with it to take up employment outside the council.

Staff who need to move to another property because their service tenancy is unsuitable in terms of size or facilities may apply for a transfer in the same way as other council tenants. A transfer will be considered provided they can remain in the post at another property.

These points will be reviewed every six months.

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### **Reciprocal rehousing arrangements**

The Head of Housing Needs and the Housing Options Manager have the authority to consider and approve reciprocal rehousing requests made by other councils or housing associations.

### **Applicants who have deliberately created unsatisfactory living conditions**

The council will consider whether an applicant has exacerbated their housing circumstances. If the applicant has lost the accommodation as a result of a deliberate act or omission, the council reserves the right to assess their needs on the basis of the home that was lost.

### **Under-occupation scheme**

The objective of the scheme is to make the most effective use of the limited housing stock by releasing properties for use to households who are living in overcrowded or temporary accommodation.

The under-occupation scheme may also provide a financial incentive for applicants who are under-occupying their property.

Under-occupying applicants in four bedroom properties or larger who would normally qualify for a one bedroom property may bid for a two bedroom property. Applicants who are in three bedroom properties may bid for two bedroom property, however this will reduce their priority and the financial incentive to move.

In some circumstances it may also be possible for an under occupying household to be approved for a move to two properties. Under occupying household who move into two properties are not eligible for financial incentive payments.

Benefit changes may reduce the housing benefit that tenants of working age and who are under occupying their home receive. Advice and assistance can be obtained from the council.

Points are awarded as set out in the table on page 20.

### **Housing association and other council tenants living in Islington**

Applications from housing associations and tenants of other councils living in Islington are considered in the same way as Islington Council tenants if the housing association or council confirm in writing that Islington Council will be given nomination rights to the vacated property.

If the housing association and the other council does not agree to grant the council nomination rights as outlined above, the application will be assessed in accordance with general housing register procedures.

### **Rent arrears**

Generally, Islington Council or housing association tenants in rent arrears may not be eligible to bid for a property unless they have permission from their landlord.

Where an Islington Council or housing association tenant applies for a transfer and is registered but subsequently falls into arrears, they may not be permitted to bid unless the arrears are cleared.

# Points scheme summary

## Key

**TR:** Council tenants

**HA:** Housing Association tenants

**HL:** Homeless applicants

**WL:** All other applicants

**\*** Except those in reception centres

Criteria	Points	Who is eligible			
		TR	HA	HL	WL
Applicants who are resident in the borough or who are granted an exception under non residence criteria	100	●	●	●	●
Opposite sex overcrowding; where two people of the opposite sex have to share a bedroom and one is 10 years or older (unless they are over 16 and living as a couple.)	10	●	●	● *	●
Where there is more than one occurrence additional points will be given per occurrence	5	●	●	● *	●
For each additional bedroom required	20	●	●	● *	●
Additional points for households lacking 2 or more bedrooms (per household).	30	●	●	● *	●
Sharing or lacking access to facilities i.e. cooking facilities, hot or cold water or toilet	10			● *	●
Medical needs	40, 80, 150	●	●	●	●
Welfare needs	40, 80, 150	●	●	●	●
Islington key workers scheme	90				●
Islington care leavers	90				●
Discretionary succession					●
Children's Services	150 or 200	●	●	●	●
New Generation scheme:					
1 Beds	20				●
2 Beds	90				●
Where an NGS applicant has a disability.	20				●
Statutory homeless	10,40,70 or 100			●	
Decants	100 or 200	●			
Major works	60 or 120	●			
Management transfers	60, 120 or 150	●			
Relationship breakdown	50	●			
Under occupying social housing tenants – points per bedroom under occupying.	80	●	●		
Under occupying tenants in two bedroom properties.	150	●	●		
Under occupation dependents	100				●
All applicants will receive 5% of their total housing needs points for each year on the list starting from the week that housing needs points are added to an application – residence and waiting time points are not included.					
For homeless applicants this will be from the date of application.					

# Points scheme summary

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Applicants who are resident in the borough or who are granted an exception under non residence criteria receive **100 points**. This applies to:

- Council tenants
- Housing Association tenants
- Homeless applicants
- All other applicants

Opposite sex overcrowding; where two people of the opposite sex have to share a bedroom and one is 10 years or older (unless they are over 16 and living as a couple) receive **10 points**. Where there is more than one occurrence an additional **5 points** will be given per occurrence. This applies to:

- Council tenants
- Housing Association tenants
- Homeless applicants (except those in reception centres)
- All other applicants

For each additional bedroom required, **20 points** will be awarded. This applies to:

- Council tenants
- Housing Association tenants
- Homeless applicants (except those in reception centres)
- All other applicants

An additional **30 points** is given to households lacking 2 or more bedrooms (per household). This applies to:

- Council tenants
- Housing Association tenants
- Homeless applicants (except those in reception centres)
- All other applicants

Applicants sharing or lacking access to facilities i.e. cooking facilities, hot or cold water or toilet will be given **10 points**. This applies to:

- Homeless applicants (except those in reception centres)
- All other applicants

---

The number of points given for medical needs depends on the which of the three categories (details are on page 12) the applicant comes under. **The points awarded are 40, 80 and 150**, this applies to:

- Council tenants
- Housing Association tenants
- Homeless applicants
- All other applicants

The number of points for welfare needs are also explained in more detail on page 14. **The points awarded are 40, 80 and 150**, this applies to:

- Council tenants
- Housing Association tenants
- Homeless applicants
- All other applicants

Applicants that are part of Islington's Key workers scheme will receive **90 points**. This applies to:

- All other applicants

Islington care leavers get **90 points**. This applies to:

- All other applicants

Applicants with a discretionary succession receive no points. This applies to:

- All other applicants

Applicants working for Islington's Children's Services are entitled to **150 or 200 points**. This applies to:

- Council tenants
- Housing Association tenants
- Homeless applicants
- All other applicants

Applicants on the New Generation Scheme with 1 bed properties are awarded **20 points**. This applies to:

- All other applicants

Applicants on the New Generation Scheme with 2 bed properties are awarded **90 points**. This applies to:

- All other applicants

Where an NGS applicant has a disability, they are awarded **20 points**. This applies to:

- All other applicants



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Statutory homeless applicants are awarded **10, 40, 70 or 100 points** (page 17 has further details). This applies to:

- Homeless applicants

**100 or 200 points** are awarded for decants. This applies to:

- Council tenants

Tenants with major works taking place are awarded either **60 or 100 points**. This applies to:

- Council tenants

**60, 120 or 150 points** are given for management transfers. This applies to:

- Council tenants

Where a relationship breakdown has occurred, **50 points** may be given. This applies to:

- Council tenants

Under occupying social housing tenants – get **80 points** per bedroom under occupying. This applies to:

- Council tenants
- Housing Association tenants

Under occupying tenants in two bedroom properties get **150 points**. This applies to:

- Council tenants
- Housing Association tenants

Under occupation dependents will receive **100 points**. This applies to:

- All other applicants

All applicants will receive 5% of their total housing needs points for each year on the list starting from the week that housing needs points are added to an application – residence and waiting time points are not included.

For homeless applicants this will be from the date of application.

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## Choice based lettings

Islington Council operates a choice based lettings scheme (CBL) called Home Connections. As far as possible all council, housing association, co-op managed and tenant management organisation (TMO) properties are allocated through this scheme. There are exceptions such as sheltered housing.

The council may refuse bids from applicants if the property does not meet their assessed housing need or to avoid any potential risk to the applicants or others.

### Who can bid?

The council will set thresholds for the points above which applicants will be able to bid and may set annual quotas for applicants in local priority categories. These will be established for each bedroom size and will be reviewed annually by the Service Director of Housing Needs and Strategy based on supply and demand levels.

### How to Bid

The Council's housing stock is let through a choice based letting scheme, Home Connections. Properties are available weekly and applicants will have to bid for properties, in order to be considered.

Applicants cannot bid for properties larger than their assessed need.

However, applicants will be able to bid for a property with one less bedroom than their assessed need where this would improve their current housing situation.

The Council will shortlist applicants with the highest points who have bid on a property and invite them to a viewing. After a viewing the property will be offered to the applicant with the highest points. If the applicant with the highest points refuses the property it will be offered to the second highest bidder.

If an applicant has the same amount of points as another applicant, the Council will allocate the property according to the date of their application.

Where a property has been advertised with a restriction, only applicants who meet the criteria will be shortlisted for the property. For example, applicants under 50 would not be considered for an over 50's block.

Ground floor properties suitable for applicants with a ground floor medical recommendation (awarded by the Council's medical advisor) will be allocated to applicants within this category.

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### **Supported Choice**

The council may operate supported choice lettings to any applicant or group of applicants which include:

- Accepted homeless applicants who have been awarded points at or above the threshold at which applicants are able to bid,
- Applicants who are vulnerable and need support in accessing accommodation.

Where supported choice lettings are made an applicant will be given access to the choice based lettings system for a minimum of four weeks. If they are not successful within this time they will be given a choice of two suitable properties based on their assessed need for accommodation.

Failure to accept one of the two offers may result in points being removed from an applicant's application, or, in the case of a homelessness application, the council discharging its duty.

### **Applicants not bidding**

The council will review all applications where no bid has been placed on a regular basis. Applicants will be contacted to make sure that they understand how to bid and to ensure that they will be able to make future bids.

Applicants who persistently bid and do not attend viewings and applicants who consistently accept and later refuse properties may be suspended from the list for 6 months.

### **Direct Offer**

In certain circumstances the council may make a direct offer of suitable accommodation outside of the CBL scheme in circumstances where in its discretion it considers it is necessary or appropriate to house a registered applicant otherwise than through the choice based lettings process. This includes:

- Applicants who need to move urgently so that repair or redevelopment work can be completed.
- Applicants living in a property larger than they need and the property could be used to house another household in housing need. Where adult sons and daughters are living in the property and are not moving to the smaller property, the council may also make them a direct offer of a property to meet their assessed needs at the same time.
- Applicants who have been assessed as needing Sheltered Housing.
- Where the council has agreed to provide accommodation under the National Witness Mobility Scheme, the Safe and Secure Programme or the North London Domestic Violence protocol or pan London Domestic Violence protocol.
- It is in the council's wider strategic interests to move an applicant or it helps the council manage the housing stock more effectively or efficiently.

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## Bidding and Offers

### Property type

Ground floor flats, street properties, houses and maisonettes and properties that are suitable for adaptation are in very short supply. The council will ensure that the few that do become available are available to those in most need of them. Applicants may be selected for these properties on the basis of an assessed need for this property type, not on the basis of applicants' preferences. This applies equally to council tenants and other applicants for rehousing.

### Sensitive lettings

The council reserves the right to participate in sensitive lettings where it is considered to be necessary for the effective management of the stock. A sensitive letting will take account of the needs of the applicant and other residents.

### Applicants in supported housing

Applicants in supported housing may be restricted from bidding until they have been assessed as being capable of independent living. They may also be considered for accommodation in the private sector.

### Lettings to older applicants

There are blocks in the borough which are designated for lettings to older applicants.

Offers in these blocks will be made in accordance with the allocation policy but only to older people.

## New homes local lettings policy

### New homes on estates

The council is committed to ensuring that its new homes are meeting the needs of the local community. Where we construct new homes on existing estates, the lettings of these new homes prioritise people currently living on the estate on which they are being built.

- This will apply to either current tenants or family members living with the tenants for the last 12 months.
- The local lettings policy will apply to those households living on the estate where the development is taking place
- Those households who meet the bidding threshold will be able to bid for the new homes before anyone else in the borough.
- The applicant bidding with the highest number of points from the estate will, subject to matching the size and any other characteristics of the property in question, be offered the property first.
- Under-occupiers will be able to bid for a property with an extra bedroom, but other applicants must fulfil the size requirements for the new homes.
- Wheelchair adapted properties will be restricted to applicants who require such properties.

- 
- Ground floor properties will be restricted to applicants with an assessed need for ground floor accommodation.

Once those in need have been allocated homes, the properties will be reserved for tenants on the estate, who wish to move into a property of the same bedroom size as their existing property, unless they are under-occupying by more than one bedroom. The tenant who has had a tenancy in their name at their current address for the longest will be offered a property.

Remaining properties will be let according to the council's general housing allocation policy.

The Service Director of Housing Needs and Strategy can exercise discretion to include more than one ward in the local lettings allocation. In the case of large scale developments of over 150 units the Service Director of Housing Needs and Strategy may exercise discretion to take properties above the 150 threshold outside of the local lettings scheme.

### **Other new homes**

Islington Council wants to make sure local people benefit from other, new social housing.

We have therefore introduced a local letting policy for all newly built homes for social rent that mirrors our policy for new council homes on existing council estates.

People living in the ward where the new homes for social rent are built will be given priority when the new homes are let.

- This will apply to either current social housing tenants or family members living with the tenants for the last 12 months.
- The local lettings policy will apply to those households living in the ward where the development is taking place.
- Those households who meet the bidding threshold will be able to bid for the new homes before anyone else in the borough.
- The applicant bidding with the highest number of points from the ward will, subject to matching the size and any other characteristics of the property in question, be offered the property first.
- Applicants must fulfil the size requirements for the new homes.
- Wheelchair adapted properties will be restricted to applicants who require such properties. Ground floor properties will be restricted to applicants with an assessed need for ground floor accommodation.

Remaining properties will be let according to the council's housing allocation policy.

The Service Director of Housing Needs and Strategy can exercise discretion to include more than one ward in the local lettings allocation. In the case of large scale developments of over 150 units the Service Director of Housing Needs and Strategy may exercise discretion to take properties above the 150 threshold outside of the local lettings scheme.

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### **Intra-estate transfers**

The aim of this initiative is to enable tenants who want to stay on the estate to remain there.

20% of all available void properties on estates will be prioritised to tenants on the particular estate who are able to bid and who would like to be housed within the estate. Applicants will then be short-listed in accordance with the general allocation policy.

### **Housing co-ops, tenant managed organisations (TMOs) and other landlords**

Some landlords, including co-ops and TMOs, due to their specialist nature, may require applicants with certain additional criteria for example, ability to take part in a co-op. These additional criteria will be included as part of the advertisement.

## **Succession**

### **Succession rights before and after 1 April 2013.**

In relation to tenancies that started before 1 April 2013, a person can succeed to a council tenancy on the death of a tenant if they are the tenant's spouse, civil partner or other close family member.

From 1 April 2013 new tenancies can only be succeeded to by a spouse or partner. Where other family members have been resident in the property for the previous 12 months and the property is suitable according to their housing needs we will permit a succession to the tenancy. Where there is under-occupation or the property is unsuitable due to an occupancy criteria e.g. an over 55 block we will enable the family member to be offered the tenancy of an alternative, suitably sized property.

### **Discretionary succession**

In certain circumstances the council or Partners for Improvement in Islington may grant the tenancy of a property to people resident in the property who were members of the tenant's family if there had already been a succession. This is known as a discretionary succession.

Where a discretionary succession is agreed, consideration will be given to the suitability of the property being occupied. A tenancy will be granted for the occupied property if it is of the right size and does not have adaptations or features required by disabled people and there are no arrears on the applicant's account. Right size means the household will not under-occupy the property according to the council's rehousing standards.

Applicants agreed for discretionary successions that are under- occupying or occupying an adapted property may be offered rehousing in another suitable property. These applicants will be given 150 points.

# Mutual exchange

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## Mutual exchanges

### What is it?

Secure tenants of a council have the right to exchange their home with another secure tenant, or with an assured tenant of a housing association. Exchanges can involve more than two households. Tenants do not need to be registered on the transfer list or have any points to participate in this scheme.

### Who can apply?

Tenants must get written permission from their landlord before they exchange and the other tenant must also get written permission from their landlord. Both tenants must sign a "deed of assignment" before they exchange properties.

### How does it work?

Most council and housing association tenants advertise their properties through Homeswapper ([www.homeswapper.co.uk](http://www.homeswapper.co.uk)). Once a tenant has found another tenant to exchange with they should complete the mutual exchange form, which can be downloaded from the council's website: [www.islington.co.uk/housing](http://www.islington.co.uk/housing)

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## Homeswapper.co.uk

### What is it?

Homeswapper is a national mutual exchange scheme. Islington Council tenants can register for free. Some housing association tenants may have to pay a small fee to register if their landlord is not part of the scheme.

### Who can apply?

Applicants must be a council or housing association tenant; they do not have to be on the council's housing register. Applicants are allowed to swap into a home that is either one bedroom too large or one bedroom too small for their family's need with the permission of your landlord.

### How does it work?

This is a web-based scheme only and tenants can register on the web-site at [www.homeswapper.co.uk](http://www.homeswapper.co.uk)

Applicants can also view the Homeswapper site at their area housing offices.

Homeswapper will carry out searches for possible swaps on a daily basis. When an applicant has found the person they want to exchange with, they must complete the mutual exchange form and return it to their landlord. They must contact the person who is living in the property they want to move into to make viewing arrangements.



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## Smart move

### What is it?

Smart Move helps to match people living in properties with more bedrooms than they need (under-occupying tenants) with people living in overcrowded homes, to arrange a mutual exchange.

### Who can apply?

This scheme is available to Islington Council and housing association tenants only. It is a free service.

### How does it work?

The council will advertise the mutual exchange property details of tenants who wish to move to smaller homes on the Home Connections advert each week.

The advert is available to view online at [www.islington.gov.uk/homeconnections](http://www.islington.gov.uk/homeconnections)

If tenants express their interest in a property which matches their requirements, the council will put all the parties in contact with each other.

### Further information

- ✉ Islington Customer Centre, Housing Options Team, 222 Upper Street, N1 1RX
- @ rehousing@islington.gov.uk
- ☎ 020 7527 4140
- 🌐 [www.islington.gov.uk/housing](http://www.islington.gov.uk/housing)

# Shared ownership

## Shared ownership

### What is it?

This scheme is intended to help people who cannot afford to buy a home outright. Through shared ownership an applicant can buy a share starting at 25% in a flat from the council or a housing association and pay rent on the part they do not own. An applicant can increase their share if they want, and can eventually own the property outright.

### Who can apply?

You can apply if you have a gross household income of up to £90,000 per annum.

Priority for shared ownership schemes is generally given to existing council and housing association tenants and Islington residents on Islington's housing register. An applicant will only qualify for shared ownership if they can afford to buy part of a property.


### How does it work?

Islington Council operates its own scheme directly, and works with several housing associations to provide shared ownership properties for people in Islington. Most schemes are based on properties specifically built or renovated for shared ownership by housing associations.

Information about all shared ownership properties available in London are advertised on the Share To Buy website which is in partnership with First Steps. The Share To Buy website also includes information about obtaining mortgages and contact details of solicitors who have experience in assisting clients with shared ownership purchases.

Registering your contact details with Share To Buy enables you to keep up to date when new properties become available. If you find a property you are interested in the share to buy portal will direct you to the housing associations website that owns the property and their sales team will be able to answer any questions you have, go through your application form and assess your eligibility.

### Further information

 [www.sharetobuy.com/london](http://www.sharetobuy.com/london)

# Sheltered housing

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## What is it?

Sheltered Housing is designed to provide a supportive environment to vulnerable or older people. The scheme is made up of individual self-contained properties most of which also have communal facilities. There is a 24 hour emergency on call system.

## Who can apply?

Applicants must be aged 55 years or over and have some support needs.

## How does it work?

Sheltered schemes are owned and managed by housing associations. Most schemes in Islington are managed by Clarion. Other sheltered housing providers include Peabody Housing Trust, Family Mosaic, Mercers, Crown Housing Association, Islington and Shoreditch Housing Association (ISHA), ASRA and Anchor Housing Trust.

Applicants interested in sheltered housing must apply to the housing register and an assessment will take place to decide if sheltered housing is suitable for their housing needs (**Chapter 1** has further details).

## Further information

- ✉ Islington Customer Centre, Housing Options Team, 222 Upper Street, N1 1RX
- @ rehousing@islington.gov.uk
- ☎ 020 7527 4140
- 🌐 [www.islington.gov.uk/housing](http://www.islington.gov.uk/housing)

# Supported housing

## What is it?

Supported Housing is accommodation that is provided to help develop and sustain a person's capacity to live independently. The accommodation consists of flats or shared houses where people with support needs can live independently in the community.

## Who can apply?

Supported accommodation is usually provided for groups of people who are vulnerable, such as people with:

- mental health needs
- substance misuse problems
- young people
- people with learning difficulties
- people with a history of offending.
- single homeless people with a range of support needs
- women escaping violence

## How does it work?

Applicants are supported by staff who may be based on site or provide visiting support to the residents. Applicants can live in supported housing for varying lengths of time, usually up to two years depending on the individual's needs and the type of service they require. They may then get support to move on to independent accommodation in the private rented or social housing sector.

### Further information

- ✉ Referrals Co-ordinator Team, Islington Customer Centre, Housing Options Team, 222 Upper Street, N1 1RX
- @ housing.advice@islington.gov.uk
- ☎ 020 7527 3360
- 🌐 [www.islington.gov.uk/housing](http://www.islington.gov.uk/housing)

# Moving out of Islington

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## Seaside and Country Homes Scheme

### What is it?

This is a housing mobility scheme that offers council or housing association tenants the option of moving out of London.

### Who can apply?

Social housing tenants approaching the age of 60 years who are able to live independently.

### How does it work?

The scheme's landlords manage approximately 3,500 bungalows and flats along the coast from Cornwall in the south west, to Norfolk and Lincolnshire in the east and across the countryside from Dorset to Cambridgeshire. The scheme does not guarantee a move and priority is given to tenants who are giving up larger sized properties.

### Further information

✉ Islington Customer Centre, Housing Options Team, 222 Upper Street, N1 1RX  
@ rehousing@islington.gov.uk  
☎ 020 7527 4140  
🌐 [www.islington.gov.uk/housing](http://www.islington.gov.uk/housing)

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# Housing moves

## What is it?

Housing Moves is a London wide housing mobility scheme that allows tenants of London councils or housing associations to move outside their existing borough to a different part of London. It is run by the Greater London Authority and most London councils and housing associations are participating.

## Who can apply?

Current tenants of a participating London council or housing association with an assured or a secure tenancy.

## How does it work?

Every application is placed into one of five bands. Band 1 applicants have the highest priority, and Band 4 applicants have the least priority and priority is given to tenants who are giving up larger sized properties.

## The bands are as follows:

### Band 1

Applicants must be under occupying their current home and willing to downsize. Applicants will receive additional priority if they give up more than one bedroom.

### Band 2

One or more members of the household must be either

- in employment, for at least 16 hours a week and continuously (although not necessarily in the same job) for the last 6 months
- in training that leads directly to employment (e.g. an apprenticeship).

### Band 3

You must be overcrowded in your current home and living in accommodation that is too small for your needs.

### Band 4

You must be providing unpaid, voluntary care to a family member or friend who is not a member of your own household and lives in a different borough.

### Band 5

Do not meet any of the criteria in other bands

All housingmoves properties are advertised on the housingmoves website

[www.housingmoves.org](http://www.housingmoves.org)

# Keyworker housing

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## What is it?

Islington Council operates a Keyworker scheme that aims to encourage employees to have a long-term career within the borough. Key workers should also consider Shared Ownership options (chapter 3). Only applications for one bedroom properties will be accepted.

## Eligibility criteria

Applications may be considered from Children's Social Workers, Metropolitan Police Officers, Occupational Therapists, teachers and nurses working in Islington. The main place of work must be in Islington.

## How does it work?

All applications for Islington Key worker scheme must be made in writing to the appropriate Human Resource department. Accommodation offered through this scheme is linked to the applicant's continuous employment with Islington Council. Tenancies will be "non-secure". Properties let as "non-secure" tenancies are not subject to Right to Buy.

## Further information

✉ Islington Customer Centre, Housing Options Team, 222 Upper Street, N1 1RX  
@ rehousing@islington.gov.uk  
☎ 020 7527 4140  
🌐 [www.islington.gov.uk/housing](http://www.islington.gov.uk/housing)



## Sanctuary scheme for victims of domestic violence

### What is it?

If an applicant is experiencing or has experienced domestic violence and is still at risk, the scheme enables them to remain in their home by installing security in their property to prevent the perpetrator from gaining access

### Who can apply?

Any person who is homeless or threatened with homelessness due to domestic violence will be eligible.

### How does it work?



An applicant's safety needs will be assessed and the council will then install additional security measures such as solid doors, extra locks and grills. The council can also refer an applicant to other organisations to help with legal advice.

### Further information

Islington Council tenants should contact their area housing office. Housing association tenants should contact their landlord.

#### Women's Aid

Contact Islington Women's Aid to talk to someone about domestic violence.

 020 8269 2121  [www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)

**In an emergency always dial 999.**

# The private sector

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## Renting in the Private sector

### What is it?

Renting in the private sector means that rent is paid directly to a private landlord rather than the council or a housing association.

### Who can apply?

Anyone can rent from a private landlord. If they are on a low income they may be able to claim housing benefit to cover all or part of the rent.

### How does it work?

It is possible to find houses and flats to rent from landlords by viewing the local newspapers where they have sections relating to private rented accommodation.

Islington Council will provide you with advice and support even after you move in.

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## Private sector opportunities for homeless people

### What is it?

The Private Sector Opportunities Scheme is an incentive to assist landlords to offer housing to homeless people. The scheme also offers advice and support for applicants looking for housing in the private sector. Eligible applicants may not have to pay an initial deposit to the landlord.

### Who can apply?

Applicants who are homeless or threatened with homelessness can apply.

### How does it work?

A housing officer will assess whether applicants qualify for this scheme and advise where places are available.\*

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## Private sector housing grants

### What is it?

Grants are available from Islington Council to enable repairs, adaptation and grants for energy efficiency of owner occupied and private rented properties.

### How does it work?

You will need to contact **Residential Grant Support Service** on **020 7527 3104** to ensure your property qualifies for a grant.

### Further information

\*If you have already been accepted as homeless, contact your housing case worker.

✉ Islington Customer Centre, Housing Solutions Team, 222 Upper Street, N1 1RX

@rehousing@islington.gov.uk

☎ 020 7527 2000    🌐 [www.islington.gov.uk/housing](http://www.islington.gov.uk/housing)

# Internal reviews

## and who makes decisions

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Applicants who wish to challenge a decision of the council under its allocation scheme should try to resolve the problem informally in the first instance.

If the applicant is still not satisfied they may request a formal internal review within 21 days from the date the applicant is notified of the decision. An applicant can request a review of any decision about the facts of their case which is likely to be, or has been, taken into account in considering whether to allocate housing accommodation to them.

**All internal reviews will be processed within 56 days.**

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### Reviews of decisions regarding eligibility or qualification

A review can be requested if one of the following is in dispute:

- the eligibility or qualification of the applicant to join the Housing Register
- removal or suspension of an applicant from the Housing Register.

### Review of exclusion from the register

In exceptional circumstances the council will consider lifting the disqualification applied to an applicant i.e. the applicant may be able to join the list after 12 months.

### Review of points awards

If an applicant is unhappy about the points awarded, or a reduction in their points, they can ask for the relevant manager to review their assessment. They can request a formal internal review within 21 days from the date the applicant is notified of the points awarded or decision whether to allocate housing accommodation to them.

### Review against offers

Applicants who have been made an offer of housing outside of choice based lettings, and believe the offer of housing is not suitable, have the right to an internal review within 21 days from the date the offer is made. The internal review is considered by a panel of officers from the Housing and Adult Social Services department of the council.

Applicants should also be aware that if the council or housing association grants a tenancy as a result of false information given by the applicant or someone else on their behalf, the landlord will take court action to repossess the property.

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## **Update of applications**

The council will contact applicants periodically to ensure the information held on applicants is up to date. If applicants do not respond to a review within 28 days of being requested to do so the council may remove their application from the register without further notice.

Applicants are expected to provide adequate information in order for their applications to be processed. Without this their application will not be processed.

False or misleading information may leave the applicant at risk of prosecution.

If an applicant's circumstances change after they have applied the council may suspend or remove them from the Housing Register.

## **The type of decisions and assessments are made by the following:**

### **A Housing Options service officer**

- Determining eligibility and qualification to join the register.
- Deciding that a housing register application should be cancelled.
- Assessing and prioritising housing applications.
- Assessing size of home needed by an applicant.
- Assessing medical issues.
- Shortlisting applicants for council and housing association homes via the choice based lettings system.

### **A Housing Options service manager**

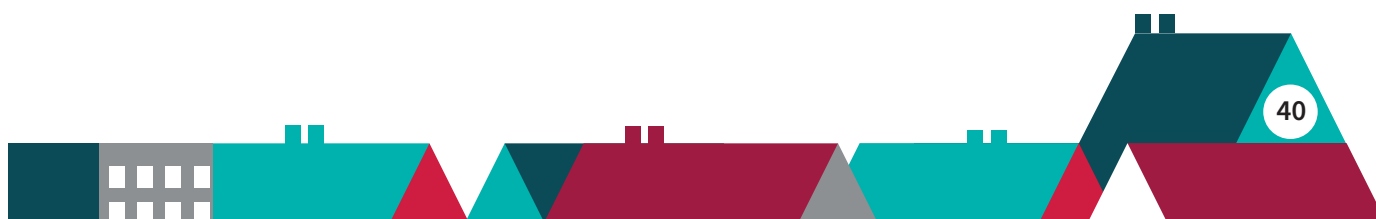
- Assessing welfare issues.
- Reviews regarding eligibility, qualification, exclusion, points award and decision on whether to allocate.

### **A Housing Options service/Homes and Communities service/Partners for Islington manager level**

- Assessing management transfer/decant/major works.

### **A panel of officers from the Housing Options service. Officers directly involved in the original decision will not take part in the panel decision**

- Reviews on suitability of offers.



# Complaints

## Complaints regarding the service

The council operates a two-stage procedure:

### Stage 1

The first stage is investigated and responded to locally by the service area in which the complaint originated.

### Chief Executive's stage

The second stage of the complaints procedure gives the customer the right to request that an investigation of their complaint is undertaken by the Corporate Customer Service Team on behalf of the Chief Executive.

## Complaints to the Housing Ombudsman

If you feel your complaint has not been dealt with properly or fairly you can make a request for your complaint to be considered by the Housing Ombudsman; the Housing Ombudsman considers housing matters such as rent, repairs and transfers.

You can complain to the Housing Ombudsman directly, eight weeks after you have received the final response from the Chief Executive and not before then.

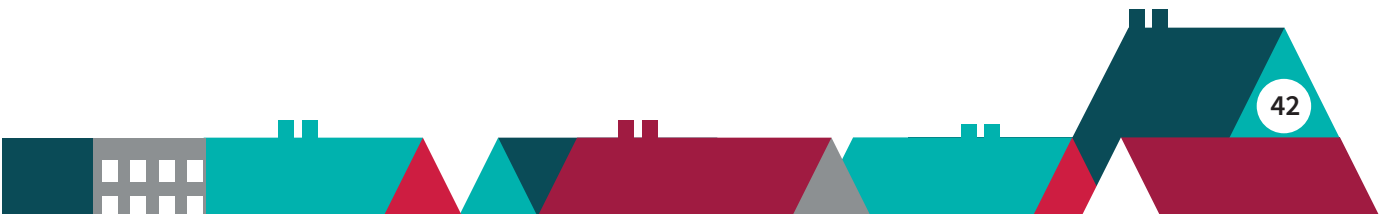
If you do not want to wait that long you can ask a 'designated person' to refer your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman once the council's complaint procedure has been fully completed. In Islington the designated person is the Lead Member for Housing. If you want the designated person to refer your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman you must write and give them your permission to refer your complaint. You will get more advice on how to do this when you receive the final response at the Chief Executive stage.

The designated person can try and resolve the complaint themselves or refer the complaint straight to the Ombudsman. If they refuse to do either a person may contact the Ombudsman directly.

- ✉ Housing Ombudsman  
Exchange Tower  
Harbour Exchange Square  
London, E14 9GE
- 📞 0300 111 3000
- @ [info@housingombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housingombudsman.org.uk)

## Further information

- 📞 020 7527 3007
- 🔗 <https://www.islington.gov.uk/contact-us/comments-and-complaints-info>



**If you would like this document in large print or Braille, audiotape or in another language, please contact 020 7527 2000.**

**Greek**

Εάν θέλετε αυτές τις πληροφορίες στη δική σας γλώσσα παρακαλώ τηλεφωνήστε στο 020 7527 2000.

**Italian**

Se desidera queste informazioni nella sua lingua, è pregato di contattare 020 7527 2000

**Somali**

Haddii aad jeclaan lahayd macluumaadkan oo ku qoran luqadaada fadlan la xidhiidh 020 7527 2000

**Spanish**

Si desea esta información en su idioma, llame al 020 7527 2000.

**Turkish**

Buradaki bilgilerin Türkçesini istiyorsanız, lütfen 020 7527 2000 numaraya telefon edin.

**Albanian**

Nëse dëshironi ta keni këtë informacion në gjuhën tuaj, ju lutemi telefononi në numrin 020 7527 2000

**French**

Si vous voulez recevoir ces informations dans votre langue veuillez appeler le 0207527 2000.

**Chinese (Traditional)**

如果你想要這資料的中文本, 請致電 020 7527 2000 聯繫。

**Arabic**

إذا أردتم الحصول على هذه المعلومات بلغتكم الرجاء الاتصال ب 02075272000.

**Bengali**

যদি আপনি এই তথ্য গুলো আপনার নিজ ভাষায় পেতে চান, তা হলে দয়া করে 020 7527 2000 নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করুন।

**Persian**

در صورتیکه مایل به دریافت این اطلاعات به زبان خود هستید، خواهشمند است با تلفن ۰۲۰ ۷۵۲۷ ۲۰۰۰ تماس حاصل فرمائید.

**Kurdish Sorani**

بیتو نه م ناگاداریه تان به زبانی خوتان پیویست بیت تکایه پیوه ندی بکه نه م ره قه مه: ۰۲۰ ۷۵۲۷ ۲۰۰۰

**Urdu**

اگر آپ یہ معلومات اپنی زبان میں چاہتے ہیں تو برائے مہربانی اس نمبر پر فون کیجئے: 020 7527 2000

If you would like more information please contact:

**Cora Nicholls**

✉ Housing Options Team, Islington Customer Centre, 222 Upper Street, London, N1 1XR

@ rehousing@islington.gov.uk

☎ 020 7527 4175

🌐 www.islington.gov.uk/housing