



JOINT HOUSING REGISTER ALLOCATION POLICY

For

Affordable Housing in Surrey Heath

Last Revision May 2017

THE HOUSING REGISTER

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The 1996 Housing Act, Part VI - Allocation of Housing Accommodation as amended by The Homelessness Act 2002 – gives direction on the way that social housing is allocated. New flexibilities were introduced in the Localism Act 2011, and new regulation and statutory guidance issued in 2012 directed local authorities on framing their Allocation Policies.
- 1.2 The Council has also had regard to Government guidance ‘Providing Social Housing For Local People’ issued in December 2013’.
- 1.3 Additional advice is given to Registered Providers (i.e. housing associations) by the Homes and Communities Agency on moves into and between their tenancies.
- 1.4 The Surrey Heath Joint Allocation Policy is a combination of the legal requirements and what is considered necessary locally to meet the housing needs of “qualifying persons” (see below at Paragraph 5).
- 1.5 The Council and Registered Providers work in partnership to provide new affordable housing for rent and low cost homeownership, and to allocate existing homes that becomes available to those who have a housing need.
- 1.6 The Surrey Heath Allocation Policy is the agreed way in which every body who wishes to be considered for a move into housing association accommodation, and between housing association homes, will be considered.
- 1.7 The Surrey Heath Allocation Policy has been agreed by the following Partners:

Surrey Heath Borough Council

Accent Housing

- 1.8 These organisations are referred to as the Partners or the Partnership in this Joint Allocation Policy.

2 The Aims of the Joint Allocation Policy

- 2.1 The Partners to this Policy recognise diversity, and are committed to equality of access and to combating inequality and discrimination. This policy seeks to treat all sections of the community fairly and to ensure that all individuals and groups have their housing

need assessed in a fair and consistent way.

- 2.2 The Partners are committed to working in partnership with those organisations and individuals, whether statutory or voluntary, to operate a Joint Housing Register that meets the needs of both individual applicants and the community as a whole in an effective and sustainable way.
- 2.3 The Council uses information from the Housing Register to ensure that planning for affordable housing in the Borough is based on the needs and aspirations of the community.
- 2.4 The Partners have no desire to stop anyone who believes they have a housing need from applying to join the Housing Register but, in order to ensure that it meets its aims, legal action will be taken against those who deliberately make a false application. Under Section 171 of the Act it is an offence to mislead the Council as detailed in (a) and (b) below, for the purposes of trying to secure social housing, which currently, if found guilty, carries a maximum fine of £5,000:
 - a) knowingly or recklessly makes a false statement, or
 - b) knowingly withholds information which the applicant has reasonably been required to give.

Action may also be taken to end tenancies that have been allocated as a result of a false statement by the applicant or a person acting at the applicant's instigation.

3 The Housing Register

- 3.1 To assess an applicant's level of housing need as compared with other applicants a points system has been devised. Points are allocated according to a set of criteria; the applicant is then placed in order of their priority onto the Housing Register. (See below at paragraph 7 for a description of the point's scheme).
- 3.2 The vast majority of lettings of Registered Provider's tenancies can only be made from the Joint Housing Register. Where the Registered Provider is a charitable organisation it will also take into account its charitable objects when making lettings to applicants from the Joint Housing Register.
- 3.3 Persons wishing to be placed on the Joint Housing Register will need to complete and return an application form. Help with filling in the form will be available to those who need it both in the office and over the telephone. Where health or other reasons prevent the applicant attending the office a home visit will be arranged to complete the form and explain the policy and procedures in relation to the Joint Housing Register. The visiting officer, where appropriate, will liaise with a carer, support agency, etc. to ensure that the relevant information is collected and all the applicant's questions are addressed at the visit.
- 3.4 Applicants have the right to request information on how their application is likely to be treated, what priority they are likely to be accorded, whether accommodation is likely to be provided and, if so, within what timeframe.

3.5 Applicants should be aware that as the Surrey Heath Allocation Policy is a points based system their positions can go down as well as up when other applicants join the Joint Housing Register with more points or existing applicants are awarded additional points.

3.6 A summary of this Joint Allocation Policy is available, and a full version will be available on request.

4 `Qualifying Persons' who can join the Housing Register

4.1 An applicant will be accepted onto the Housing Register if he/she:

- a) is at least 18 years of age, and
- b) is not a person who is classed as being ineligible for consideration (see 5 below for ineligible categories); or,
- c) is not a class of person who does not qualify for consideration under this Policy.

NB: 16 and 17 year olds will be able join the Joint Housing Register if they are homeless, are a parent or expectant mother or have an involvement with Social Services. It will be usual for young people with a Social Services involvement to be referred by Social Services through the Special Needs Housing Panel. In some cases a housing provider may wish Social Services, or another agency or individual, to underwrite any tenancy granted for this age group.

4.2 Applicants who are currently in hospital, other specialist accommodation, prison or a remand centre will normally be eligible to join the Register as long as they can demonstrate they meet the criteria as detailed in 4.1 immediately before being placed into such accommodation.

4.3 Some persons have automatic entry onto the Joint Housing Register under Regulations made by the Secretary of State. These are persons over the age of 16 years who are owed a duty by the Council under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996, as amended:

- a) those who have been found to be homeless, in priority need and who are not deemed to have made themselves homeless intentionally (Section 193);
- b) those who are threatened with homelessness, in priority need, and who are not deemed to be threatened with homelessness intentionally and for whom the Council has a duty to secure accommodation is available for their occupation (Section 195(2));

5 Persons who are not able to be considered as Eligible or `Qualifying Persons' to join the Housing Register

5.1 The Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) specifies that certain applicants will not be eligible to join the Housing Register. Section 160ZA of the

Act contains the full details but in summary they are:

- a) A person subject to immigration control unless he or she comes within a class of person prescribed by regulations made by the Secretary of State; or,
- b) A person from abroad other than a person subject to immigration control.

Applicants found to be ineligible will be given written notification of the decision, including the reasons for which the decision has been made. The applicant will then have the right to request a review of that decision, and to be notified of the decision and the reason for the decision on review.

5.2 The Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) gives local authorities the flexibility to decide which 'classes' of people do not qualify for an allocation of accommodation. A 'class of people' is a group of people with a defining feature. The Council has deemed the following people ineligible:

- a. those who do not have a connection to the Borough through residence of 3 out of five years in accommodation of choice or settled employment of at least 16 hours per week based in the Borough that has been continuous for 12 months or a close family member (father, mother, brother, sister or adult child) who is in settled accommodation in the Borough and there is an evidenced need to move to provide or receive care or support (examples of evidence will include receipt of the higher rate care element of DLA, PIP or equivalent or receipt of Carers Allowance); or,
- b. those who are guilty of unacceptable behaviour, or a member of their family is guilty of such behaviour, and that behaviour is serious enough to make them unsuitable to be a tenant at the time the application is made; or,
- c. those with sufficient financial resources (without recourse to welfare benefits including housing benefit) to purchase or privately rent a suitable property in the Borough; or,
- d. home owners; or,
- e. existing social housing tenants who fail to maintain the responsibilities of the tenancy agreement through persistent rent arrears, failure to maintain the property or anti-social behaviour; or
- f. those who have housing related debts or Council Tax debt with a local authority, or outstanding rent arrears with a social or private landlord and who are not maintaining an arrangement to address that debt; or,
- g. those who have deliberately worsened their circumstances to secure social housing or with an expectation that social housing will provide them with a home when they have not sought to provide for themselves. A period of

suitable, settled accommodation is needed before re-application will be considered; or,

- h. those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness who do not consider other options (this will include refusing to view or deliberately undermining private rented or other housing options) and those who are homeless who do not engage with support to secure settled accommodation (this will include seeking accommodation and participation in training or other programmes of support).

5.3 Exemptions

The following exceptions will apply to qualifying classes:

- a) Single people over 60 years of age and couples where both are over 60 years of age applying for sheltered housing will be considered qualifying even without a connection to the Borough;
- b) A person serving in the regular forces or who has served in the regular forces within 5 years of the date of their application will be considered qualifying even without a connection to the Borough;
- c) A person who has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of their spouse or civil partner where (i) the partner was in the regular forces and (ii) their death was attributable (wholly or partly) to that service will be considered qualifying even without a connection to the Borough;
- d) A person who is serving or who 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 will be considered qualifying even without a connection to the Borough;
- e) Single people over 60 years of age and couples where both are over 60 years of age applying for sheltered housing will be considered qualifying even if they own their current home;
- f) Households accepted for the full homelessness duty will be accepted as qualifying even if they do not have a local connection (they must however meet the other qualifications).

5.4 Registered Providers who are party to this Joint Allocation Policy, or who requests nominations from the Joint Housing Register, can refuse to accept applicants into their accommodation in accordance with their own exclusions policies. This will include excluding those who are guilty of anti-social behaviour, those who have threatened or been violent to staff and those with current or former tenant arrears where these arrears are not being addressed.

5.5 Partners to the Joint Allocation Policy will require applicants to sign a declaration to allow the reasonable exchange of information.

6 The Allocations Scheme

6.1 The Council is required by Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 to have a scheme for determining its priorities and procedures to be followed when allocating housing accommodation. A Council's Allocations Scheme is required under section 167(2) to give 'reasonable preference' to certain categories of people. These are:

- a) people who are homeless (within the meaning of Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 as amended) including those who are intentionally homeless, or not in priority need,
- b) people who are owed a duty by any housing authority under section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) of the 1996 Act or who are occupying accommodation secured by any housing authority under section 192(3),
- c) people occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions;
- d) people who need to move on medical or welfare grounds;
- e) people who need to move to a particular locality within the Borough, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or others).

6.2 Section 166A(3) gives local authorities the power to give additional preference to particular people who fall into the reasonable preference categories and have urgent housing needs. The Council does this through a medical assessment processes that identifies those with severe medical and housing need and those with sudden disability. The Council's joint working arrangements through the Special Needs Panel gives a mechanism to meet such urgent need where insufficient priority is achieved through the points and medical process.

6.3 Registered Social Landlords are the main providers of new affordable housing in Surrey Heath. They provide homes to those in housing need, work to end poor housing and meet the wider needs and aspirations of the community.

RSLs are independent, not-for-profit and apolitical. Each has its own policies and procedures and achieve their aims by working in partnership. They have their own mission statements that are available separately.

A RSL that is also a charity also has to work within its charitable objects.

6.4 The views of those applying for RSL accommodation and existing RSL tenants have been taken into consideration in formulating the Joint Allocation Policy.

Applicants and tenants surveyed highlighted the following categories of people should have a priority for access to RSL accommodation:

- (a) People who are overcrowded;
- (b) Homeless families;

- (c) People with medical problems;
- (d) People who lack facilities (e.g. a kitchen);
- (e) People who need to move to give or receive support;
- (f) Families with children who do not have access to a garden.

7 The Points Scheme

- 7.1 Those applicants with the greatest number of points will be at the top of the Register. In allocating social housing however regard will be had to the Registered Social Landlord's stock and the need to create balanced communities as well as matching the applicant's needs to the property type. Therefore it will not always be the case that those at the top of the list will be housed first, although this will predominantly be the case.
- 7.2 Points will be allocated on the information contained on the completed application form. This information may be verified at a home visit by an officer, and additional points may be granted (see below at 7.6). All applicants will be required to receive a home visit if requested of them before being nominated to accommodation.
- 7.3 In order to reflect the exceptional circumstances separate point systems have been devised for homeless households, single people who have no fixed address and traveller families on local authority sites. The points awarded recognise the different circumstances of these households while using the principles of the points system applied to other households applying for affordable housing.

7.4 Current Housing

a) Over-occupation

Twenty points will be awarded for every bedroom the applicant's household is short and for the awarding of points the following, **based on the size criteria in the social housing sector set-out in the Welfare Reform Act 2012**, are deemed as needing a separate bedroom:

- i applicant (and partner)
- ii person needing separate bedroom for medical reasons
- iii each child over 16
- iv two children of the same gender under 16
- v two children of opposite gender under 10
- iv any other person who might reasonably be expected to reside with the applicant, e.g. applicant's parent(s), grown-up child etc.

An additional 10 points will be added where two children of opposite sex are sharing a room and one is over ten years old.

Living rooms will not be considered as an appropriate bedroom in cases where they are being effectively used as such.

Children of separated parents will be considered to have one main residence unless there are substantial social or medical factors that would warrant them being split between two homes. These factors will need to be evidenced along with child care arrangements.

For the purpose of this policy the following will not be considered as part of the applicant's household:

- Any adult child who has left the family home and then returned (unless it is to be the primary carer of the applicant or for the applicant to act as the primary carer to the child and this is evidenced);
- Any member of the applicant's extended family (unless it is to be the primary carer of the applicant or for the applicant to act as the primary carer to the family member and this is evidenced); or,
- A lodger, either paying or non-paying.

b) Assessment of amenities, services and facilities

Points are awarded for certain facilities that are either lacking, considered inaccessible or inadequate, and where facilities are shared with another household. Applicants who let rooms in their property will not be awarded sharing points.

Toilet:	None/inaccessible	20 points
	Traditional outside toilet	15 points
	Shared toilet	10 points
Bath/Shower:	None	20 points
	Shared	10 points
Kitchen:	None/inadequate cooking facilities	20 points

	Shared	10 points
Living Room:	None	20 points
	Shared	10 points
Heating	No heating	20
	No integrated heating (i.e. portable, non-fixed heating only)	15
	Some fixed/some portable heating	10
	Partial central/ integral heating	5
Hot Water:	None to bath/shower	10 points
	None to cooking area	10 points
Mains cold water supply:	None to dwelling	20 points
Electricity:	None to dwelling	20 points
Garden	No access to a garden for families with children under 16 NB where there are no gardens applicants on the ground floor will also receive 10 points	10 points for each floor off ground floor (to a maximum of 30)

7.5 Security of Tenure

Those with only licences (i.e. living with parents, renting a room with a resident landlord, etc.), two months notice to quit served on Assured Shorthold Tenancies, or Possession Orders for those in privately rented or owner occupied accommodation, or those in tied tenancies which are subject to written notification of the date of retirement, redundancy or notice to quit. Where an applicant has already been awarded 15 points as a result of having an AST or summons of possession an additional 15 points will be added to reach this pointing.	30 points
Those owed homeless duties by other housing authorities (For homeless households owed a housing duty by Surrey Heath Borough Council see paragraph 7.9 below)	30 points
Those with Assured Shorthold Tenancies or where a summons for possession has been granted to an owner occupier	15 points
Tied licenses	30 points
Tied tenancies	15 points
Travellers on official sites	15 points
Travellers not on official sites	30 points
Registered Social Landlords and Council tenants	0 points
Owner occupiers	0 points

7.6 Home Visit Assessment

During the home visit, it may be possible to award additional points for:

Poor physical condition of property (NB points will only be awarded where remedial action is not immediately available to the applicant) :	
Level one: Structural faults	20 points
Level two: Major repairs	15 points
Level three:	10 points
Badly situated facilities (e.g. located on a different floor	10 points

from sleeping and living rooms)	
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It is also possible that an applicant's points may be reduced following a home visit where the circumstances detailed on the application form do not correspond to that of the actual housing situation. Unintentional distortions of an applicant's actual housing circumstances will carry no sanction or penalty. Deliberate falsification of an applicant's circumstances on the application form may lead to prosecution by the Council (see paragraph 2.4 above).

7.7 Social and Economic Factors

a) Separated household

Where the household has separated due to lack of suitable accommodation, or there are demonstrable reasons why the household cannot live together in their current accommodations.	20 points
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b) Support/Care

Where the household needs to move to be near a relative to give or receive support/care (medical evidence will be required)	10 points
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c) Employment

Where an applicant can demonstrate a need to move to take up an offer of employment	10 points
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d) Local connection

Where an applicant has lived in the Borough for 3 out of the last 5 years, in accommodation of choice (e.g. does not include accommodation secured in the Borough by another housing authority in respect of their homelessness duties or moves into short term supported housing schemes); or has a close family association with the Borough (i.e. father, mother, brother, sister, adult children) and there is an evidenced need to move to give care or support; or has permanent employment of over 16 hours a week in the Borough; there is a need to move to the Borough for some special reason (the Council will consider each case on its merits and in light of local housing circumstances at the time of application)	80 points
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7.8 Medical Factors

Applicants on the Joint Housing Register can be awarded points if their health is adversely affected by their accommodation or if there would be a benefit to their health in moving to more suitable accommodation.

An independent Medical Advisor will interview the applicant and review medical submissions from the GP, consultant, etc. Following this the Medical Advisor will discuss the link between the applicant's health and housing situation with the Housing Needs Team before assessing the level of points to be awarded.

A causal link is established between an applicant's poor health and their accommodation, or a need identified for accommodation more suitable to the applicant's circumstances/condition.	0 – 80 Points
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Where the applicant has mobility issues and would benefit from living in ground floor accommodation 'Ground floor Essential' points may be awarded to reflect this need. These points will only be counted towards an applicant's priority when bids are made for ground floor accommodation and will be removed in respect of bids for properties with more than one level or above the ground floor without a lift.

In considering an applicant's housing need measures such as providing support into the current accommodation or adapting the current home will be considered. Every effort will be made to ensure that the best solution is found to meet the needs and preferences of the applicant and make best use of the local housing stock and funding.

7.9 Homeless Households

Due to the temporary nature of homeless accommodation and the fact that homeless households may move between a number of accommodations, often sharing facilities, a points award based on the Points Scheme has been developed that reflects the nature and facilities of the accommodation.

They will receive the awards detailed below, along with any bedroom deficiency points that they have in their accommodation.

Those accepted as unintentionally homeless and in priority need who have been placed into hostel, bed and breakfast and other temporary accommodation in respect of <u>this</u> Council's homeless duties under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (including those in private sector leased properties or who have been formally classed as "homeless at home").	90 points
Bedroom deficiency points (see 7.4a)	

After six months of being housed in such accommodation	2.5 points every month from six months onwards (maximum 30 points)
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Non-priority homeless applicants

To allow non-priority applicants to be assessed consistently a single points award will be made for those in a variety of non-settled situations. Such applicants will receive these points along with any local connection and medical points they are entitled to.

Those non-priority applicants who have no fixed abode and who are living between addresses, sleeping rough or are placed in homeless hostel accommodation.	90 points
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7.10 Other Considerations

a) Maximising the Affordable Housing Stock

To ensure that tenants are able to move on when their accommodation becomes too small or too big for them, or otherwise unsuitable, the Partnership recognises that it is important that tenants in housing association homes have the opportunity to move to accommodation that meets their needs. At the same time such moves free homes up for another household.

Registered Provider tenants in Surrey Heath Borough	20 points for each bedroom freed by moving
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b) Welfare/Discretionary Factors

Applicants with insufficient priority for nomination to a Registered Provider under the Points Scheme may be nominated if re-housing into settled accommodation is vital for the care or resettlement of the applicant or a member of the applicant's household.

This will include those applicants who are in supported housing and have completed a programme leading to their ability to live independently and who are ready to move on.

The Applicant should be referred through the Special Needs Housing Panel, and a comprehensive package of care and support to be in place to ensure nomination to a Registered Social Landlord tenancy is successful for the applicant.

c) Surrey Violence Mobility Scheme

To assist survivors of domestic violence, those fleeing racially motivated violence and

others at risk of violence in relocating to a safe area, the Partnership will from time to time assist an applicant referred from another Surrey Authority under the provisions of the Violence Mobility Scheme. In return Surrey Heath Borough Council will be able to refer Borough residents who need to move out of the area for their safety or the safety of their children to another Surrey authority. This scheme will not be used if it prejudices the urgent re-housing of an applicant on the Joint Housing Register.

d) Local Letting Policies

The Partnership recognises the importance of housing and the allocation of accommodation in addressing certain issues. This would include, but not be limited to, issues such as hard to let properties, initial lettings on new developments, the number of children in certain areas, and difficulties in recruiting staff to certain employment.

In light of this the Partnership retains its discretion to implement local or limited letting policies to address these issues in the interest of creating sustainable tenancies and building balanced communities that reflect local needs. Such schemes will only be introduced following a period of consultation and applicants will be notified either directly or through local media of any changes that may affect their application.

e) Supported Housing and Extra Care

In developing a range of accommodation and services to meet the needs of all the community certain accommodation will be allocated outside of this Allocation Policy so that those who will benefit most from the accommodation can be re-housed in appropriate accommodation. This includes extra care housing schemes, adapted housing and supported housing schemes.

The criteria and process for being considered for these schemes is available separately.

Applicants who move into short term supported schemes from outside of Surrey Heath will not usually establish a local connection by residence and housing and support providers will work with referring agencies to ensure appropriate move on arrangements are in place.

8 Re-Registration

8.1 It is vital that the Housing Register reflects the true housing need for the Borough. Applicants are required to notify the Council of any change in their circumstances.

8.2 Applicants will also be sent a re-registration form on an annual basis. Applicants who do not respond will have their applications cancelled if they fail to return the re-register form.

8.3 Applicants removed from the Register for failing to re-register will need to make a new application. Whilst there may be some circumstances when an applicant's original application can be reinstated onto the Register, this will have to be done through the review procedures.

9 Choice and Offers of Accommodation

- 9.1 Applicants will be given the choice of area and the type of property in which they wish to be re-housed, although they must be aware that limiting their choice limits the opportunity for accommodation to be allocated to them. Applicants will be given advice on the availability of accommodation in the areas that they choose so that they are able to make informed choices.
- 9.2 Applicants will receive three reasonable offers of Registered Provider accommodation. A reasonable offer of accommodation is one that is suitable for the households needs.
- 9.3 The Partnership has established a choice based process where properties are advertised and applicants given the opportunity to register their interest in vacancies. The offer is made to the applicant expressing an interest who has the most points.
- 9.4 Any refusal of an offer of suitable accommodation will be investigated to assess whether an applicant's reasons for refusal are justified. The applicant will have the opportunity to submit evidence to support their refusal of an offer, and to meet with the officer undertaking the review of the offer. Applicants can move into the accommodation and still ask for a review of the suitability of the accommodation. An officer senior to the officer who made the allocation will undertake reviews.
- 9.5 To ensure that the best possible use is made of the affordable housing stock, the following table shows examples, and is a guide only, of the size of accommodation likely to be allocated to various sizes of family:

Bed sitting room	Single person
1 bedroom property	Single person or couple (including same sex couples)
2 bedroom property	Single parent/couple and 1 child Single parent/couple and 2 children of same sex under the age of 16 Single parent/couple and 2 children of different sex under the age of 10
3 bedroom property	Single parent/couple and two children of different sex over the age of 10 Single parent/couple and two children over the age of 16 Single parent/couple with 3 or 4 children (depending on age and gender)
4 bedroom property	Single parent/couple and three children over 10 (depending on age and gender) Single parent/couple and 4 or more children (depending on age and gender)

Sheltered Housing Schemes at Ballard Court, Cranmore Court, Derek Horn Court, Orchard Court, Heathermead Court, Windsor Court, Meade Court, Bowling Green Court, and Pollard Grove are for those applicants who are over 55 years of age (in the case of couples both applicants must be over 55). Housing Associations also have some other schemes that are specifically for older people and those with special needs.

When allocating property by size, medical factors may also be taken into account including care and support needs.

9.6 Applicants who are at the top of the Housing Register will not usually be nominated to accommodation if:

- a. they have outstanding arrears with the Council or other housing provider and no arrangement has been made and maintained that has substantially reduced the debt;
- b. they are a tenant under notice for breach of tenancy;
- c. they have failed to provide information requested of them, or are on hold for any other reason;
- d. the property is not suitable for their needs;
- e. the property is needed in order that the Partnership can meet the needs of a Special Needs Housing Panel applicant, assist another authority under the provisions of the Violence Mobility or other reciprocal scheme, or in the operation of a local letting policy.

9.7 Homeless households owed the full housing duty who refuse an offer of accommodation will have the housing duty discharged and there will no-longer be a duty for a Council to provide temporary accommodation, although they will be able to remain on the Housing Register.

9.8 The Council will assist homeless applicants owed the full housing duty by placing bids on all suitable properties in their areas of choice if they have not been successful through Home Choice after 6 months in temporary accommodation. Such applicants must choose a minimum of three areas and when a bid is successful this will be considered a suitable offer.

10 Sanctions and Penalties

Refusal of three reasonable offers	'Active date' changed to date of last offer to reflect the Partner's action to address the housing need
Prosecution for making false statements or deliberately withholding information in an attempt to	24 month suspension from the date of prosecution

obtain social housing	(pending court action application will be placed on hold with no time points accruing). The applicant will need to be a 'qualifying person' at the end of the suspension to have their application re-activated.
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Applicants who are allocated accommodation on the basis of a fraudulent application will be subject to prosecution and proceedings to gain possession of the property allocated.

11 Review Procedure

11.1 Applicants will be notified of the reasons for:

(a) not placing them on the Housing Register,

(b) removing them from the Housing Register other than at their own request.

11.2 Social Services will also be informed if they are involved with an applicant.

11.3 A Review Procedure will be sent to applicants with any adverse decision letter and is available from the Housing Needs Team on request.

11.4 An officer senior to the officer making the original decision will undertake reviews.

12 General Information

12.1 The Partnership has made every attempt to ensure this Joint Allocations Policy meets the needs of those residents living in the most difficult housing circumstances. As with any policy it will be necessary to constantly monitor and review its effectiveness and amendments made to ensure it continues to achieve its goals.

12.2 In order that the Council can retain its ability to act appropriately in exceptional circumstances the Housing Services Manager has the authority to depart from the policy framework contained in this document.

12.3 Registered Providers retain their ability to act in exceptional circumstances to move tenants on management moves, and also use appropriate vacancies for decanting tenants for major works or from redevelopment sites, and for any other purpose consistent with their business

12.4 The Partnership will report annually on the lettings made in Surrey Heath, including the status of applicants and the reasons for lettings made outside of the Joint Allocation Policy.

12.5 It is important that feedback is received from applicants on the operation of the Housing Register. Applicants will be contacted from time to time and asked for their views on the service provided to them and on the quality of the information that they

receive. However, comments at any stage whether they are complaints, criticism or compliments are welcome. All the organisations in this Partnership have their own complaint procedures and these will be made available on request.

- 12.6 Translation services are available for interviews and written information.
- 12.7 The information supplied on Housing Register Forms may be used by other departments within the Council for the detection of fraud.
- 12.8 Information provided by applicants will be shared between Partners where relevant.
- 12.9 All information supplied by applicants will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.
- 12.10 The Housing Services Manager, after consultation with the Portfolio Holder, has authority to update the Policy to reflect current practice and make administrative changes where this does not alter the substance of the Policy.