

**Changes to Cherwell District Council's Approved Allocations Scheme  
March 2015**

This document is designed to highlight the proposed changes to Cherwell District Council's approved Allocations Scheme. It is intended that these changes will help to support more people to join the housing register and allow people with a connection to the districts villages be considered for properties that become available with criteria to be let with a connection to the village or surrounding area. The changes will also assist us to make best use of all vacancies of all rented social housing arising in Cherwell including those expected from new developments to be let as quickly as possible. This will assist our partner Registered Providers and will ensure they are let to local people.

**Eligibility criteria, qualification and applications – Page 8**

We have introduced changes to the eligibility criteria to join the housing register. We have expanded the criteria to include those who don't have a recognised housing need under section 167 (2) of the Housing Act 1996.

**Changes to time limited priority and refusal of offers – Page 10 & 23**

We have introduced fixed periods and penalties for those awarded high bands (1 or 2) that are vulnerable and refusing suitable offers of accommodation.

**Contract of employment to work in the District - Page 10**

To work within the district has been added to the allocations scheme to ensure that we meet the needs of those working within the Cherwell District instead of just those whose headquarters are within the Cherwell boundaries.

**Reserve List – Page 13 & 37**

We have introduced a 'Reserve list' where all applicants who are considered to be eligible and qualify to join the housing register can be placed on the register to be considered for appropriate vacancies not accepted by those vulnerable cases placed in Bands 1, 2 or 3 as appropriate.

**Acknowledgement of Pregnancy at 25 weeks pregnant – Page 15**

Upon evidence that an applicant is 25 weeks pregnant an allocation of a bedroom will be awarded. If the household already have one or more children, the baby will be considered to be the same sex as its sibling.

**Move of from supported accommodation – Page 16**

Applicants that are considered ready to move-on from supported accommodation will be awarded band 1 upon satisfactory information to demonstrate that they possess the skills and knowledge to live independently. This has been introduced to help people move out of this type of accommodation quickly.

**Percentage of Allocations – Page 21**

Percentages have been adjusted to reduce the number of properties that can be allocated to homeless accepted cases and an increase in the number for general needs applicants. Within the general needs category we have also introduced an allocation of 1% for key workers as defined on page 19.

**Financial Hardship – Page 40**

The introduction to the social, welfare and hardship matrix of 'Financial Hardship' . This has been introduced to allow for priority to be awarded where it can be demonstrated that an applicant's current home is unsustainable and cannot be resolved through budgeting advice or changes in finances.