

**Supporting Good Decisions**

**Promoting Equality & Human Rights, Reducing Inequality and Protecting the Environment**

**Integrated Impact Assessment Form**

**Integrated Impact Assessment Form**

**Promoting Equality, Human Rights and Sustainability**

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| **Title of Policy/ Proposal** | Amendments to Council Housing Allocations Policy 2019, resulting in preparation of Interim Allocations Policy (Effective from 01 October 2024, as amended 27 September 2024) |
| **Timescale for Implementation**  | 01 October 2024 |
| **IIA Completion Date** | 2 September 2024 |
| **Completed by** | Angela Kirkham, Development Officer / James Coutts, Community Housing Service Manager / Nicky Sandford, Housing Options Service Manager |
|  **Lead Officer** | Angela Kirkham, Development Officer |

**Section 1: Screening**

**1.1 Briefly describe the policy/proposal/activity you are assessing. Set out a clear understanding of the purpose of the policy/ proposal/ activity being developed or reviewed (e.g. objectives, aims) including the context within which it will operate.**

The Council’s Allocations Policy describes how we let our Council houses and set priorities between applicants based on their housing needs. It covers both applicants to the housing list and tenants who wish to transfer to other properties. It sets out how the Council will meet legal and good practice commitments, and in particular, the range of housing needs specified in Allocations and Homelessness legislation. The Policy also ensures that the Council continues to offer equal opportunities for all applicants, through an in depth understanding of the needs of service users as part of the allocations process. The Policy assists the Council to make best use of Council housing stock and achieve balanced and sustainable communities via local lettings plans.

The Council’s Allocations Policy has been operational since July 2007. A review of the Policy took place in 2018/2019 with full implementation on 1 May 2019 and in parallel with this, an Integrated Impact Assessment completed. The Policy continues to deliver positive outcomes for many households on the housing list; providing choice to applicants; supporting high tenancy sustainment levels; and maintaining low refusal rates, assisting with the quick turnaround of empty properties.

Notwithstanding these positive outcomes, homeless applications are increasing (795 homeless applications in 2023/24 compared with 695 in 2022/23) and demand for temporary accommodation remains high. Waiting times for single homeless applicants for rehousing continues to increase significantly, with a concomitant increase in the length of time single homeless applicants are spending in temporary accommodation (average length of time for single homeless households was 452 days in 2022/23, compared with the Scottish average of 207 days). Accordingly, breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order remain high at circa 125 rolling breaches.

Homelessness and wider housing pressures faced across the county are not unique to East Lothian, with a similar picture emerging across several other local authority areas and on 15 May 2024, the Scottish Parliament declared a national Housing Emergency[[1]](#footnote-1). This followed the Scottish Housing Regulator naming eight local authorities as being at heightened risk of systemic failure regarding the delivery of homelessness services[[2]](#footnote-2) in April 2024. It is recognised that some local authorities are now at, or are approaching, the limits of their capacity to do more, and the demands on some local authorities could shortly exceed their capacity to respond. East Lothian Council is one of the local authorities named, with a particular focus on high levels of breaches in respect of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order and use of temporary accommodation.

Homeless households are negatively impacted by ongoing housing pressures and lack of flow through temporary accommodation, particularly single homeless households, and two key changes to the Allocations Policy are proposed to mitigate this - **Qualifying single homeless households to access two bedroomed properties** and **Removal of the six-month policy, to effectively widen areas of choice and house types.** A report to Council’s Cabinet ‘*Homelessness Action Plan – Response to National Housing Emergency’* on 10 September 2024, set out the proposed changes to the 2019 Allocations Policy as part of a series of wider actions, and this report was approved. Implementation date of the changes is via a revised Interim Allocations Policy, effective from 01 October 2024. Accordingly, an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) is required to ensure the revised Interim Policy is fair; it does not discriminate against any protected group; and it promotes equality, human rights, and sustainability. The Interim Allocations Policy will be reviewed, six-months after implementation (April 2025) and this, combined with an IIA, provides an opportunity to reflect on how changes to the Policy may play out in practice, prior to any longer-term decisions. This IIA will support the Council to re-evaluate as part of the review process, whether the interim changes to the Allocations Policy are appropriate for inclusion going forward, noting positive and negative impacts upon equalities groups.

* 1. **What will change as a result of this policy?**

Two key changes are proposed to the Council’s Allocations Policy as follows:

* **Qualifying Single Homeless Households Accessing Two Bedroomed Properties**

Within the current Allocations Policy (2019), the bedroom entitlement for single households is one-bedroom (2apt) properties. However, assessing both supply and demand for one-bedroom properties, it is evident that there are fewer one-bedroom properties in Council stock (1,938 properties) relative to two and three-bedroom properties (4,733 and 2,366 respectively), and demand for these properties is greatest (57% of the general waiting list and 77% of the homelessness priority list). This means that single homeless households spend longer in temporary accommodation and 93% are waiting for more than a year, resulting in blockages in throughput from temporary accommodation to permanent rehousing. As an interim measure, and in response to homelessness pressures, changing the bedroom entitlement regarding the Council’s Allocations Policy for qualifying single homeless households and allocating two-bedroom (3apt) properties to qualifying single homeless households, will significantly increase their opportunities for an offer of permanent housing and reduce time spent in temporary accommodation. This in turn, will increase flow through the system for non-qualifying single homeless households, having a positive impact on homelessness demand generally. For a single homeless household to qualify for this interim action, checks would be undertaken to ensure rent accounts are being managed appropriately; there are no tenancy management issues or significant vulnerabilities / support requirements.

* **Removal of Six-Month Policy to effectively Widen Areas of Choice and House Types**

The existing ‘six-month policy’ is a key element of the Allocations Policy 2019, stipulating that homeless households can select as many or as few areas for rehousing as they wish, for the six-month period following assessment. Homeless households can also state their preferences for specific house types where available, such as bungalow and double storey. However, if a homeless household has not received an offer of housing within six months from date of assessment, their areas of choice are automatically widened to include a main town as a minimum, and all suitable house types, unless medical evidence is provided to substantiate limited house types going forward. The six-month policy provides choice to homeless applicants; however, it also delays the widening of selected areas to one whole main town and delays consideration of all suitable house types. While the policy could be construed as positively promoting housing options, it can significantly increase time to rehousing and accordingly, inflate time spent by homeless households in temporary accommodation, which can have significant detrimental impacts upon health and wellbeing. This results in lack of flow through the housing system and poses challenges for some households in need regarding initial access to temporary accommodation. To improve access to temporary accommodation; reduce time spent in temporary accommodation; and maximise the opportunity for rehousing, the six-month policy requires to be removed and all homeless households asked to select a minimum of one main town in their application for housing, and all suitable property types, from the date of assessment. This will also enable the Council to meet its statutory homelessness duties.

* 1. **Deciding if a full Impact Assessment is needed.**

**Please answer the following questions:**

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Yes** | **No** |
| 1. The policy/ proposal has consequences for or affects people e.g. how they can access a service?
 | x |  |
| 1. The policy/proposal has potential to make a significant impact on equality?
 | x |  |
| 1. The policy/proposal is likely to have a significant environmental impact?
 |  | x |
| 1. The policy/ proposal has implications for the storage/ collection of personal data?
 |  | x |

* **If you have answered yes to questions 1 and 2 above, please proceed to complete the Integrated Impact Assessment. If you have answered No, then an IIA does not need to be completed. Please keep a copy of the screening paperwork.**
* **If you have identified that your project will have a significant environmental impact, please proceed to complete the Integrated Impact Assessment. You will also need to consider whether you need to complete a Strategic Environmental Assessment.**
* **If you have answered yes to question 4, please seek further advice from the Data Protection Officer.**

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**Section 2: Integrated Impact Assessment**

* 1. **Have those who are affected by the policy had the opportunity to comment on new proposals?**

Changes to the Allocations Policy have been made because of a lengthy period of dissatisfaction with homelessness services in respect of access to temporary accommodation; length of time in temporary accommodation; and days to rehousing. This is evident from formal and informal complaints from homeless service users, member enquiries on behalf of homeless constituents, and customer survey forms.

The East Lothian Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2024-29 outlines the challenges in respect of homelessness pressures and temporary accommodation and sets out a key action to review the Allocations Policy (2019) by 2025. These interim changes to the Allocations Policy and associated IIA are considered to form part of this wider review. Consultation on the draft LHS 2024-29 was significant, with over 1,000 people across East Lothian helping shape the document, including although not restricted to:

* Creating online surveys under different housing themes.
* Dropping in to community groups, including Youth Clubs, Walking Football and Lunch groups.
* Running equalities workshops with staff from East Lothian Council, East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership and Third Sector services.
* Talking to tenants from Sheltered Housing Complexes.
* Holding specialist workshops for teams in East Lothian Council and the Health & Social Care Partnership, including Community Housing, Housing Options, Occupations Therapist and Acute Hospital, Older Adult Mental Health Team and Justice and Social Work.
* Organising focus groups with people with ‘lived experiences’.
* 8 week formal consultation period.

The amendments to the Council’s Allocations Policy (2019) and new actions set out in the Interim Allocations Policy (as amended September 2024) have the support of East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel who concur that a wider consultation with tenants and housing applicants is not required at this stage, given the context described above and elsewhere. These measures will be closely monitored and revisited at various points pending the six-month review of the changes, during April 2025. This will be a critical element of the wider review of the Allocations Policy, as set out in the LHS, providing a further opportunity for comments.

* 1. **What information/data have you used to inform the development of the policy to date?**

Changes to the Allocations Policy have been informed by a detailed analysis of East Lothian Council’s systems in respect of supply and demand, alongside consideration of previous levels of allocations to all groups.

Supply - The Orchard housing management system has been analysed in depth regarding stock availability, allocations, voids, and turnover. Further consideration has been given to the Council’s new build programme and RSL new build programme and discussions have taken place with RSL partners in terms of nominations to homeless households within the context of wider supply and demand issues and competing priorities.

Demand – The Housing Options Team’s AVD homelessness case management system has been analysed regarding demand from homelessness households, time spent in temporary accommodation and time to discharge homelessness duties, with further consideration given to Scottish Government data (i.e. HL1, HL2 etc.). The Homelessness Performance Management Framework was also considered, alongside quarterly reporting to PPRC, and specific research carried out in April 2024 to assess required changes.

* 1. **What does the evidence/ research suggest about the policy’s actual or likely impact on equality groups and those vulnerable/ or experiencing socio-economic disadvantage?**

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| **Evidence**  | **Comment** |
| Which groups are in particular need of this service? | Homeless households - There were 795 homeless applications received by the Housing Options Team in 2023/24 compared with 695 in 2022/23. It is considered changes to the Allocations Policy will enable improved flow from temporary to permanent rehousing, reducing demand, in terms of live homeless applicants, which will be positive for all groups i.e. general needs and transfer applicants. Single homeless households - Applications from single homeless households make up 77% of homeless demand and 93% of households in temporary accommodation awaiting rehousing are single person homeless households. The changes will specifically target and aim to reduce homelessness among single person homeless applicants; however the day-to-day allocations will be carried out to ensure that there is no corresponding detrimental impact upon other homeless households. A similar % will be applied to allocations going forward which will also ensure no impact upon transfer applicants / sustainable communities. Households in temporary accommodation – Homeless households require to spend as little time as possible in temporary accommodation, as long periods of unsettled accommodation can have a detrimental impact on mental health and wellbeing generally. The changes to Policy will ensure length of stay in temporary accommodation is minimised going forward. |
| What level of service uptake/ access is there from protected and vulnerable groups? | All homeless households are vulnerable given the nature of their housing situation, noting reasons for homelessness in East Lothian are predominantly asked to leave; domestic violence; and non-violent domestic dispute / relationship breakdown, with all households having no permanent residence. Protected and vulnerable groups are likely to be in greater need of housing and housing support services and over 54% of homeless households are assessed as being vulnerable due to health, age, mental illness, learning disability or being at risk etc. East Lothian has the 6th highest % of young homeless people nationally and it is noted that an increasing number of homeless households are older, often with corresponding medical needs. As discussed elsewhere, single homeless households make up 77% of homeless demand and 93% of households in temporary accommodation awaiting rehousing are single. This generally links with socio-economic disadvantage, particularly within the context of high LHS rates and expensive housing options compared with Council rents.For a single homeless household to qualify for a 3apt property, checks would be undertaken to ensure rent accounts are being managed appropriately; there are no tenancy management issues or significant vulnerabilities / support requirements. While this could be construed as placing non-vulnerable clients at a distinct advantage over others, this action will result in vulnerable single homeless households positively benefitting from increased flow through the system and it should mean that vulnerable households can be rehoused more quickly with support provided. Over recent years, refugees and asylum seekers have placed further pressure on the housing system and on homelessness outcomes, with 60 Ukraine guests provided with private lets in one year for example, which would ordinarily have been provided to homeless households.  |
| Can you identify positive outcomes for service users  | By identifying the needs of specific vulnerable groups and implementing policies that are designed for them, the reduction in time spent in temporary accommodation will reduce, thereby improving health and wellbeing and associated outcomes. Equity of access for those who need it most via an allocations policy which recognises vulnerabilities and inequity will enhance opportunities for vulnerable groups to access housing that meets their needs75.3% of households are fairly/very satisfied with the standard of their home when moving in (ELC New Tenants Survey); 92.8% of tenants are fairly/very satisfied with the quality of work carried out in their homes (ELC Repairs Satisfaction Survey); and formal feedback from homelessness service users is generally positive. It is considered that satisfaction levels will increase with the implementation of these Policy changes.  |
| What is the service user experience of those from protected or vulnerable groups?  | East Lothian Council has one of the highest levels of tenancy sustainment nationally and formal feedback from homeless households via surveys is generally positive. 96% of people living in social housing rate their neighbourhood as a fairly good/very good place to live. (Scottish Household Survey) 95.5% of tenants were satisfied with the overall standard of service when they moved into their new home (ELC New Tenants Survey) 87.5% of households are fairly/very satisfied with the standard and quality of their homes. (ELC New Build Survey) 92.8% of tenants were fairly/very satisfied with the quality of work carried out in their homes. (ELC Repairs Satisfaction Survey |
| What opportunity have those from protected groups had to co-produce or comment on the service/ plans?  | East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel in consultation with their membership concurred that a wider consultation with tenants and housing applicants is not required for the amendments to the Allocations Policy. This is within the context of significant consultation on the draft LHS and a wider review of the Allocations Policy in 2025. The wider allocations policy was developed following consultation with tenants and residents of East Lothian via postal survey.  |

* 1. **How does the policy meet the different needs of groups in the community?**

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| **Equality Groups*** Older people, people in the middle years

 * Children and young people children
* Women, men and transgender people (includes issues relating to pregnancy and maternity)
* Disabled people (includes physical disability, learning disability, sensory impairment, long-term medical conditions, mental health problems)
* Minority ethnic people (includes Gypsy/Travellers, migrant workers)
* Refugees and asylum seekers
* People with different religions or beliefs (includes people with no religion or belief)
* Lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual people
* People who are unmarried, married or in a civil partnership
 | Specialist Housing specifically designed to meet the needs of older people i.e. sheltered/amenity housing. Older homeless people are typically single and will be positively impacted by the action to allocate single person households to 3apt properties.  |
| Foster carers/kin-ship carers can request an extra bedroom. Supported Accommodation continues to be provided for young vulnerable homeless households. While this cohort will not be allocated 3apt properties, they will indirectly benefit from increased flow through the system and be rehoused more quickly.  |
| The Allocations Policy seeks to provide equal opportunities for housing to all across East Lothian.All victims of domestic abuse are recognised and given priority in the Policy and ELHA (partner RSL) provides platinum passes. Removal of the six-month policy will mean that applicants fleeing domestic abuse will be rehoused more quickly and spend less time in temporary accommodation.Homelessness legislation recognises the vulnerabilities related to pregnancy and maternity and pregnant single households will be considered for 3apt properties.  |
| Properties are designed and allocated to meet the needs of those with health conditions. A Health & Housing process is in place to assess health conditions and housing needs, with appropriate allocations made based on evidence. Properties can be adapted in order to meet those specific needs in certain circumstances. Publications are available in different formats i.e. braille, large font. Staff are able to visit homeless applicants in their homes or at a venue close to them. |
| Language Line for interpretation services.Translation services for all documentation & Global Language Services |
| Specific lettings to meet the needs of refugees. Tenancy Support available to assist. |
| No impact – the policy does not prioritise religion. Extended families may be limited in their choice and property size. The Scottish Household Survey reports that 66% of adults expressed having no religious belongings. Which is significantly higher than Scotland as a whole (51%) |
| No specific work has been carried out in regards to LGBTQIA+ groups. However, the Allocations Policy aims to be an inclusive document, supportive of all groups and it is not anticipated there will be any negative impacts upon these groups.1.8% of adults describe themselves as gay/lesbian in East Lothian. |
| No specific work has been carried out in regards to people who are unmarried, married or in a civil partnership. However, the Allocations Policy aims to be an inclusive document, supportive of all groups and it is not anticipated there will be any negative impacts upon these groups. |
| **Those vulnerable to falling into poverty*** Unemployed
* People on benefits
* Lone Parents
* Care experienced children and young people
* Carers (including young carers)
* Homeless people
* Those involved in the community justice system
* People with low literacy/numeracy
* Families with 3 or more children
* Those with a child/ children under 1
 | Access to housing is available to those claiming benefits and by law does not take income into account. However, Universal Credit has seen significant delays in payments to the applicants and in turn increased rent arrears. Those households with significant rent arrears will be deferred and not eligible for housing until a repayment plan is in place and 3 consecutive payments made. The Housing Options Team is seeking to roll out new procedures to prevent, tackle and support homeless households with former and current arrears, with closer links with the Council’s Rent Income Team and CAB. This new approach to arrears combined with removal of the six-month policy will mean that applicants falling into poverty will be rehoused more quickly and spend less time in temporary accommodation.  |
| 5% of households fall in to the SIMD ‘most deprived’ quintile. The Tenancy Support Service provides support to homeless households moving into permanent accommodation where this is identified as being required. The needs of vulnerable families can be considered by our housing panels ie. Health & Housing/Re-housing Panel which look at housing needs. The latter can see our very vulnerable clients prioritised for housing where this is deemed appropriate.  |
|  |
| Starter flats form part of the Allocations Policy to allow those leaving care to become familiar with managing their own property and the housing panels consider those who wish to move on and those with health problems. Approved foster carers and ‘looked after’ kinship carers can apply for an extra bedroom to provide care for a child. |
| Personal care and housing support funding has changed to allow an individual to make decisions about how their support needs are provided. Those carers that give up their main residence to care for someone are able to succeed to a tenancy or remain in the home, should they have similar need |
| The housing needs of homeless people are met by the Allocations Policy in that it covers all the reasons for homelessness prescribed by law. In addition, it further prioritises those who accommodated in temporary housing by increasing their award of points. The changes to the Allocations Policy will simply enable improved flow through from temporary to permanent rehousing. |
| The Allocations Policy recognises that those who leave prison and who are vulnerable will have difficulty in accessing accommodation. They are given priority to assist them in securing a home and a specific approach is taken to people leaving prison in accordance with SHORE Standards. Removal of the six-month policy will mean that applicants leaving prison will be rehoused more quickly and spend less time in temporary accommodation.A SOLO is in place to carry out appropriate housing assessments. Homeless households with ASB will not be eligible for 3apt properties and support will be provided to enable behaviour change, although removal of the six-month policy and allocation of 3apts to some households with no ASB will mean that all applicants will be rehoused more quickly and spend less time in temporary accommodation. The use of SSST’s is available where required. |
| Applicants can ask for assistance when completing the application forms and review processes. Staff are able to visit to help those who require assistance. The offer process does not require involvement from the applicant i.e. bidding that requires computer literacy. |
| Occupancy levels reflect the needs of children relevant to their age/ability to share a bedroom and large families can select which property size suits their circumstances/household needs. This remains unchanged.  |
| **Geographical communities*** Rural/ semi rural communities
* Urban Communities
* Coastal communities
* Those living in the most deprived communities (bottom 20% SIMD areas)
 | The majority of areas in East Lothian are classed as being accessible rural areas.There are issues including a lack of public transport, access to services/infrastructure and challenges with digital connections. Increasing affordability in rural areas was also highlighted as a key priority for residents, particularly in reference to young people. Staff are able to visit applicants/tenants in their homes to avoid the costs of travel. |
| **Communication Needs:*** Gaelic Language Speakers
* BSL users
* English as a Second Language
* Other e.g. DeafBlind, Plain English, Large Print
 | No specific work has been carried out in regards to people with communication needs. However, the Allocations Policy aims to be an inclusive document, supportive of all groups and it is not anticipated there will be any negative impacts upon these groups. Translation services, plain English and large print for all documentation and Global Language Services. |

* 1. **Are there any other factors which will affect the way this policy impacts on the community or staff groups?**

N/A – Single person households allocated to 3apt properties will not be considered where there is evidence of ASB.

* 1. **Is any part of this policy/ service to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors?**

**If yes, how have you included equality and human rights considerations into the contract?**

All procurement policy will be guided by corporate procurement procedures and by the Corporate Procurement Strategy.

* 1. **Have you considered how you will communicate information about this policy or policy change to those affected e.g. to those with hearing loss, speech impairment or English as a second language?**

The Allocations Policy (2019) and the revised Interim Policy (2024) are available on the Council’s online website. An easy read version will also be made available. The ‘Accessibility Checker’ on Word was used to highlight and solve most accessibility issues within the document, to the best of the team’s ability. The website offers accessibility options through the Recite Me translation service allowing people to translate, change contrast and colours and read the website aloud.

The council offers a Translation and Interpretation Service and will respond to requests for the plan to be available in the requested language including BSL. Services arranged include:

• Interpretation in a wide range of world languages;

• Phone interpretation;

• Translation;

• BSL signing;

• Lip-speaking;

• Note-taking;

• Braille;

The service is provided by accredited interpreters and translators. All frontline staff are provided with language charts, which help clients with no English to identify their own language, so that interpretation support can be arranged. Service requests can be also made by emailing translation@eastlothian.gov.uk .

* 1. **Please consider how your policy will impact on each of the following?**

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| --- |
| **Equality and Human rights*** Promotes / advances equality of opportunity e.g. improves access to and quality of services
* Promotes good relations within and between people with protected characteristics and tackles harassment
* Promotes participation, is inclusive and gives people control over decisions which affect them
* Preserves dignity and self-respect of individuals (does not lead to degrading treatment or stigma)
* Builds support networks, resilience, community capacity
 |
| Comments:* Promotes / advances equality of opportunity e.g. improves access to and quality of services

East Lothian Council aim to be fair, consistent, efficient, and open in allocating properties to homeless households. We aim to offer open and equal access to our housing and to allocate property based on housing need. It is considered that the revised Policy will reduce length of time in temporary accommodation and improve access to permanent housing. * Promotes good relations within and between people with protected characteristics and tackles harassment.

Applications for housing are welcomed from all people regardless of sex or marital status, race, disability, sexual orientation, language, nationality or social origin, religious or political beliefs etc. We value diversity amongst the communities in which we work. We believe that everyone has the right to live their life free of harassment, violence and abuse and recognise this as a housing needs factor within our policy.* Promotes participation, is inclusive and gives people control over decisions which affect them

East Lothian Council encourages and support our tenants & residents to actively participate and become involved in the decision making process by promoting capacity building, offering opportunities for training and providing independent support to ensure that they are effective members of our working groups and are able to fulfil a vital role in their respective communities.* Preserves dignity and self-respect of individuals (does not lead to degrading treatment or stigma)

The use of Local Lettings Plans to reduce levels of anti-social behaviour and reduce the negative reputation of certain areas. The Policy focuses on Domestic Abuse and ensures that people with different characteristics are offered a service which is not discriminatory and ensures their needs are considered appropriately.* Builds support networks, resilience, community capacity

The Health & Housing process within the Allocations Policy provides a route for those with health needs to access housing closer to their support networks. |
| **Reduces Poverty*** Maximises income and/or reduces income inequality
* Helps young people into positive destinations
* Aids those returning to and those progressing within the labour market
* Improves employability skills, including literacy and numeracy
* Reduces the costs of taking part in activities and opportunities
* Reduces the cost of living
 |
| Comments :A statement will be prepared on affordability, to enable consistent messaging for those homeless households who are single and allocated 3apt properties, with DHP applied for to mitigate financial hardship. It is noted that East Lothian Council rents are among the lowest nationally. Tenancy Support Officers assist tenants with information on budgeting and in relation to homelessness, with affordability of rents etc. and referrals can also be made to Financial Inclusion and CAB. Highly energy efficient, new homes have an important role to play in the fight against fuel poverty Energy efficiency – insulation, solar panels etc., which in turn reduce fuel poverty. We aim to implement the EESSH standard against the whole of our stock. We offer digital support and work towards digital inclusion for our tenants. |
| **Protecting the Environment and Improving Sustainability**:* Reduces the need to travel or increases access to sustainable forms of transport
* Minimises waste / encourages resource efficiency / contributes to the circular economy
* Ensures goods / services are from ethical, responsible and sustainable sources
* Improves energy efficiency / uses low carbon energy sources
* Protects and/or enhances natural environments / habitats / biodiversity
* Promotes the transition to a low carbon economy
* Prepares and/or adapts communities for climate change impacts
 |
| Comments:Improvements to the energy efficiency of new homes including promotion of low carbon energy sources to heat homes meaning residents will not need to use as much energy to stay warm.  |

**Section 3.Action Plan**

**What, if any changes will be made to the proposal/ policy as a result of the assessment?**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Changes to be made** | **Expected outcome of the change** | **Resources Required** | **Timeline** | **Responsible person** |
| Removal of six month policy | Areas of choice are widened, and house types expanded from date of assessment, to increase opportunity for rehousing and reduce time spent in temporary accommodation. | Review of processes and supporting literature | Implementation 01 October 2024, with review April 2025 | James Coutts / Nicky Sandford |
| Qualifying single homeless households may be offered two bedroom property | Qualifying single households may be offered a two bedroom propertywhich will increase housing stock available to them and reduce time spent in temporary accommodation. | Review of processes and supporting literature | Implementation 01 October 2024, with review April 2025 | James Coutts / Nicky Sandford |

**For consideration of the Head of Service**

**Can you identify any cumulative impacts on equality groups or vulnerable people arising from this policy, when considered alongside other changes across other services?**

No cumulative negative impacts are identified at this stage, and the revisions to the Allocations Policy (2019) are considered to be fair, not discriminating against any protected group; and promoting equality, human rights, and sustainability. Notwithstanding this, the Interim Allocations Policy will be reviewed, six-months after implementation (April 2025) and this, combined with the IIA, will provide an opportunity to reflect on how changes to the Policy may play out in practice, prior to any longer-term decisions being made. This IIA will support the Council to re-evaluate as part of the review process, whether the interim changes to the Allocations Policy are appropriate for inclusion going forward, noting positive and negative impacts upon equalities groups.

**Sign off by Head of Service**

Name Wendy McGuire

Date 5th September 2024

1. [Scotland’s Housing Emergency – SPICe Spotlight | Solas air SPICe (spice-spotlight.scot)](https://spice-spotlight.scot/2024/06/27/scotlands-housing-emergency/) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. https://www.housingregulator.gov.scot/landlord-performance/the-risks-we-will-focus-on/our-risk-assessment-of-social-landlords-summary-outcomes-april-2024/ [↑](#footnote-ref-2)