

East Lindsey District Council Housing Allocation Scheme

In partnership with:

- ACIS Housing
- Anchor Housing
- Housing 21
- Jephson Housing
- Longhurst Housing Group
- Lincolnshire Housing Partnership
- Lincs Rural
- Sanctuary Housing
- Waterloo Housing Group



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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document explains how social housing is allocated in the East Lindsey district. All social housing in the district is managed by registered providers, also known as Housing Associations. The district council does not own or manage any “Council” Housing.
- 1.2 Working in close partnership with providers of social housing, East Lindsey District Council maintains a Housing Register which provides a Choice Based Letting Scheme whereby people can access social housing within the East Lindsey district.
- 1.3 Properties owned by private landlords may be advertised from time to time.
- 1.4 The East Lindsey CBL Scheme enables registered applicants to bid for most available social homes for which they are eligible, in the areas of their choice.
- 1.5 By completing an on-line registration process (insert web address), applicants who are eligible for registration and in need of social housing can bid for housing in the location of their choice.
- 1.6 There is also accommodation providers who offer supported short and long term housing to people with particular support needs. However this type of accommodation usually isn’t advertised through the councils housing register.
- 1.7 **Advice and assistance about any part of this policy can be obtained from ELDC Housing Hub:**
 - Telephone – 01507 613135
 - Email – Housing.Hub@e-lindsey.gov.uk

2 VISION OF THE POLICY – OUR STATEMENT ON CHOICE

- 2.1 East Lindsey District Council (ELDC) are fully committed to enabling applicants to play a more active role in choosing where they live, whilst continuing to house those in the greatest need from East Lindsey or those needing to move to the area. The Policy aims to be as open and transparent as possible and to offer the widest possible choice to people looking for an affordable home.
- 2.2 The main objectives of the Policy are:-
 - To take account of Allocation of Accommodation – Code of guidance for local housing authorities, published 2002; Allocation of Accommodation: Choice Based Lettings, published August 2008; Allocation of accommodation; guidance for local housing authorities in England, published December 2012 and the Allocations Provision contained within the Localism Act 2012
 - To comply with the provisions of the Housing Act 1996 Part 6 when allocating accommodation and not to allocate accommodation except in accordance with the Housing Act 1996 Part 6 and this scheme
 - To take account of the Lincolnshire Homelessness Strategy, Local Authority Housing Strategies and Tenancy Strategies.

- To provide a fair, open and accountable framework in which everyone has equality of access when seeking an affordable home.
- To welcome applicants seeking independent advice this may include Shelter and/or Citizens Advice Bureau's.
- To ensure that the best use of limited housing resources is made and that balanced and stable communities are maintained.
- To ensure that quality and accessible advice about the Scheme is freely available to everyone, especially to those who may have difficulty in registering to join the scheme.
- To ensure all applicants are aware of and understand the Scheme and the ways in which they can apply for a home.
- To provide assistance to applicants of the Scheme who are unable, for whatever reason, to participate fully in the Scheme without help, support or advocacy.
- To ensure that good quality information and property details are easily available.
- To provide registration options that are easy to complete for all sections of the community.
- To provide a guide on the Scheme to all applicants giving them information on how to register and how to bid.
- To provide a bidding process that is easy to access for all applicants of the Scheme.
- To prevent homelessness and reduce the use of temporary accommodation through an effective prioritisation system.

3 PARTNERSHIP WORKING

- 3.1 ELDC and social housing providers who have signed up to this Policy are committed to working together to deliver high quality housing services. The day to day administration of the Housing Register is the responsibility of East Lindsey District Council. However, letting homes through the Scheme is the responsibility of the individual housing providers in accordance with their own lettings policies.
- 3.2 ELDC offers an advertising service for social housing providers in order to increase the number of social homes advertised through the scheme. A charge may be made to the Housing provider for each property advertised or for being a member of the scheme.

4 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

- 4.1 ELDC are committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity for all existing and potential applicants wishing to access the Scheme. No one will be treated unfairly because of gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion,

disability, marital status, age, sexuality, health or other reason. This list is not intended to be exclusive, but indicative of the intention and commitment to ensuring equality.

- 4.2 ELDC aim to promote good race relations and equality of opportunity throughout the community. Copies of each organisation's equality policies are available on request.
- 4.3 Some offices are accessible and fitted with loop system for the hard of hearing.
- 4.4 In appropriate cases ELDC will seek to provide wherever possible interpretation and translation facilities, within a reasonable timescale, as well as using alternative or additional methods of communication.

5 HOUSING OPTIONS

5.1 Due to the high demand on social housing some applicants may have to wait a considerable time before appropriate accommodation is made available to them, particularly in areas of high demand for social housing and/or where the applicant has low priority. In some cases, applicants may have little prospect of ever being allocated accommodation. In order to give such applicants a wider choice, ELDC aims to provide information, or signpost applicants to the appropriate agency, about other appropriate housing options which might be available to them. This might include:

- **Private rented accommodation** - the private rented sector can provide types and sizes of dwellings which may not be readily available within the social rented sector. For those with a lower priority under the CBL scheme, and who may be waiting a considerable time before they are offered accommodation, a vacancy in the private rented sector may offer a quicker and equally suitable housing solution.
- **Shared ownership schemes** – for those people who cannot afford to buy a home outright on the open market, shared ownership allows the applicant to purchase a share of a property and pay rent on the remainder. See www.helptobuymidlands.co.uk for further details.
- **Mutual exchanges & mobility schemes** – possibly a quicker way of moving, rather than applying for a transfer. Tenants find another Housing Association or Council tenant to swap their homes with, providing they have the agreement of their landlord.
- **Home improvement schemes or provision of aids and adaptations** – these may enable applicants to remain in their existing accommodation for longer.

6 SERVICE STANDARDS

6.1 ELDC will also apply the following service standards within the Allocations Scheme to ensure an excellent service is provided to scheme applicants.

- Use Plain English, and avoid using jargon, in all our correspondence.
- Inform you within 14 days of you completing the application process including providing required documentation whether you are eligible to be placed onto the housing register
- Provide you with information about your application and prospects of obtaining social housing

- Publicise details on the number of bids, the priority banding and registration date of the successful bidder for each home advertised.
- Offer the use of a private interview room, if available, when discussing personal details.
- Respect the confidential nature of information provided by or in respect of an applicant.
- Provide support for applicants who need assistance. Support can be in the form of one of the following options:
 - Telephone advice and guidance
 - An appointment with an ELDC officer for assistance in registering to the scheme

7 WHO CAN REGISTER?

7.1 Anyone has the right to make an application to join the Scheme by completing an online application through [East Lindsey CBL scheme](#). Prior to making an application, we recommend you speak to our Housing Hub (01507) 613135 to check you are eligible and to find out your prospects of obtaining social housing. Some applicants will be ineligible or will not qualify for inclusion onto the housing register.

Applications from the following groups will be considered.

- Applicants aged 16 years and over. (see 7.2 below)
- British and Irish Citizens who are habitually resident in the UK, Ireland, Channel Islands or Isle of Man. Habitual residence means your settled in the UK for the foreseeable future
- EU citizens with permanent residence often gained after living in the UK for 5 years
- People from outside the European Union with indefinite leave to remain, refugee status or humanitarian protection. This might include some people with discretionary leave to remain if it include recourse to public funds.
- Applicants who are not classified as ineligible under section 160ZA Housing Act 1996, for example certain persons subject to immigration control or persons from abroad.

The law on eligibility is complex and subject to change.

7.2 Applications from 16/17 year olds will also be accepted where they are:

- A single woman aged 16 or 17 who is expecting a child. Proof of pregnancy will be required in all cases.
- A single parent aged 16 or 17 who has a dependent child.
- A couple aged 16 or 17 who are expecting a child, or have a dependent child. In the former case, proof of pregnancy will be required.

- People aged 16 or 17 who are homeless. In such cases a referral will be made to Children's Services to identify appropriate housing and support needs. This process may include other agencies such as Health, Probation, and Youth Offending Teams.
- Leaving care

Some housing providers require 16/17 year olds accepted for housing to have a guarantor and/or sign up for support from the housing provider or their agent where satisfactory support is not in place from statutory agencies.

7.3 Some eligible applicants could be excluded from the Housing Register:

- A person may also be excluded from the scheme as a result of previous unsuitable behaviour or conduct defined as anti-social within the meaning of the anti-social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014, the severity of which makes them unsuitable to hold a tenancy. In assessing this, all relevant factors will be taken into account. This includes but is not limited to, the time that has elapsed since the offences or occurrences of anti-social behaviour occurred, the applicant's health, dependents and the individual circumstances of the applicant at the point of applying when making these decisions.
- Behaviour which can be regarded as unacceptable includes conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person, conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises, or conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person. In addition to this behaviour which has either directly or indirectly affected the housing management function of a Registered Provider or Local Authority. This includes as aforementioned, anti-social behaviour, non-payment of rent, obtaining a tenancy by way of making false statements, acts of neglect or waste leading to damage to the previous property. This list is illustrative and the examples are not intended to be an exhaustive.
- A person will only normally be excluded from the Housing Register where such behaviour would likely have or did lead to a Possession Order being granted, the tenancy has been demoted, the Court has granted an Injunction to Prevent Nuisance and Annoyance, Criminal Behaviour Order, a Public Spaces Protection Order or other enforceable court order being issued or the Local Authority has enforced a noise abatement notice. Such exclusions may be made regardless of previous tenure.
- When reaching a decision to refuse a registration because of unacceptable/anti-social behaviour, all the relevant factors that a Court would consider before making any order will be taken into account. A decision will also be made on the length of time that the application will be excluded stating the reasons why and the actions that can be undertaken to enable an application to be re-considered earlier.

7.4 Some applicants may not be considered for registration or who may be removed from the housing register:

- people who do not have capacity to manage a tenancy.
- those applicants who have deliberately worsened their circumstances. (See sections 29 & 30).
- those applicants whose application has little or no prospects of receiving an offer of accommodation. This is likely to apply to those applicants seeking accommodation whose application does not fall into bands 1 to 4.
- those with no local connection to East Lindsey (see section 27) other than:
 - members of the Armed Forces and former Service personnel, where the application is made within five years of discharge
 - bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the Armed Forces leaving Services Family Accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner
 - serving or former members of the Reserve Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service
 - Other exceptional circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis. Such cases will usually include those where applicants are deemed at serious risk of harm

7.5 If an applicant is refused access to join the scheme because they do not meet the eligibility criteria or for other reasons, they will be informed why and can request a review of this decision. Other reasons for refusal could include:

- Worsening own circumstances
- Anti-social behaviour or involvement in criminal activity
- Giving false information on their application form

Depending on the severity of the above reasons for exclusion, applicants will be advised that they may re-apply after a period of 12 months. However in serious cases, the exclusion period may be longer and up to 2 years.

7.6 Applicants who have previously been deemed not to qualify may make a fresh application if they consider they should now be treated as qualifying, but it will be for the applicant to show that his or her circumstances have changed.

7.7 Some Housing Providers might advertise low demand properties through other means. These will usually be properties that have already been advertised through East Lindsey CBL scheme and there were no successful applicants. All housing applicants including those refused onto ELDC's housing register might be able to apply for these properties by contacting the housing provider direct.

8 PROVIDING INFORMATION

8.1 Applicants are required to provide proof of their National Insurance Number(s), photographic ID in the form of passport or photo driving licence, 5 year address

history and proof of local connection. This will normally be required before an applicant is allowed to start bidding for properties.

- 8.2 In accepting any registration which includes anyone from abroad, proof of identification, nationality and immigration status will be required. Verification will be sought to safeguard the use and allocation of public funds.

All relevant documentation to verify the details provided will be required from the applicant when they complete their application.

Verification documents might be requested again after bidding for a property to confirm the applicant's circumstance and banding are still accurate.

- 8.3 Where an applicant notifies that they or a member of their household are affected by one or more of the following exceptional circumstances, they will be required to provide relevant documentation upon registration.

- Homeless or facing homelessness (see section 13)
- Medical problems worsened by their current accommodation
- Are or have served in the Armed Forces
- Have been involved in ASB or have criminal convictions
- Moving to receive support
- Moving for education and/or training
- Suffering hardship or have a welfare need
- Current home not fit for habitation

- 8.4 Where there are concerns about a person's suitability as a tenant arising from information given during registration, the Council will make any necessary enquiries, including via the police, to check information given about applications. The declaration Applicants sign on the Registration form gives permission for such enquiries, if necessary.

- 8.5 It is important that the information provided by applicants is accurate to determine the correct priority that the Registration receives. The Housing Act 1996 section 171 states that a person commits an offence if, in connection with the exercise by a local housing authority of their functions under this Part – (a) he knowingly or recklessly makes a statement which is false in a material particular, or (b) he knowingly withholds information which the authority have reasonably required him to give in connection with the exercise of those functions.' The offence is punishable on summary conviction by magistrates by a fine of up to £5000.

- 8.5 Applicants who obtain social housing fraudulently are committing an illegal act and likely to be evicted and fined.

9 BANDING PRIORITIES

- 9.1 A Banding Scheme has been adopted to prioritise the housing needs of applicants. The Banding Scheme has four bands based on the applicant's current housing circumstances. They have been adopted following guidance issued by the Secretary of State and all eligible registrations are placed into one of these bands.

Registrations are generally prioritised first by band, and secondly by date - see Section 22 for further details.

- 9.2 If an applicant is assessed as having two or more identified needs within a band, consideration is given to raising the application into a higher band. For example:
- An applicant who has been assessed as having three or more Band 4 needs is placed into Band 3
 - An applicant who has been assessed as having two or more Band 3 needs is placed into Band 2.

Where the needs are similar, applications are unlikely to move into a higher band. For example a non-priority homeless person would be placed into band 3 but would not be moved into band 2 due to also lacking facilities.

- 9.3 Additional preference can be awarded to applicants who are considered to be in high housing need (bands 1 & 2) in the following circumstances:

- Current and former members of the armed forces; who:
 1. is serving in the regular forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person's service,
 2. formerly served in the regular forces,
 3. 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 (wholly or partly) to that service, or
 4. is serving or has served in the reserve forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person's service.
- Persons who are terminally ill and must move to suitable accommodation
- Other exceptional circumstances

An award of additional preference would mean the date the application is placed into the assessed band would be backdated by up to 5 years for points 1, 3 and 4 and by 1 year for point 2 dependent upon the circumstances.

- 9.4 Housing Priority can be reduced or even taken away in certain situations, for example:

- Circumstances have changed which materially affect the assessment of the application.
- Applicant has deliberately worsened their circumstances

Where priority has been reduced or changed, applicants will always be notified.

- 9.5 The council will expect applicants to improve their circumstances where possible to do so through completing various actions which could reduce or remove the need to move home. This could include attending Money Management advice, asking the landlord to rectify disrepair or refusing suitable accommodation if eligible and considered appropriate. Applicants who unreasonably do not cooperate could have their banding reduced to band 4.

BAND 1 – Urgent Need

1.1	The “Main Housing Duty” has been accepted by East Lindsey District Council. see section 13 – Homelessness
1.2	The District Council has a Corporate Parenting responsibility to any young person who is aged 16 or over who is either a "looked after child" from Lincolnshire, or is a "care leaver" supported by Lincolnshire County Council, up to the age of 25. Band 1 will apply when they are not intentionally homeless and are accessing services, and have been assessed as capable of independent living, even with the support of a Leaving Care Worker.
1.3	The applicant is currently in hospital and homeless or doesn't have a suitable home to return to upon discharge as assessed by ELDC taking advice from relevant professionals. Applicants could be placed into a lower band if they have deliberately worsened their circumstances. Housing providers will require a copy of any support plans if applicable.
1.4	The applicant will be going into hospital for a major operation and they will not be able to return to their current home.

BAND 2- High Need

2.1	The applicant is homeless or threatened with homelessness through no fault of their own within the next 56 days and in priority need as determined by the Local Authority, in accordance with homelessness legislation prevention and relief duties. (This includes persons of no fixed abode - see section 16)
2.2	<p>The household is assessed as needing at least two or more bedrooms than currently available. This is assessed under the space standards contained within Part 10 of the Housing Act 1985 or assessed using the HHSRS set out in the Housing Act 2004.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children of the same sex and from the same household can share a bedroom until the oldest child reaches the age of 16• Children of the opposite sex can share a bedroom until the oldest child reaches the age of 10 <p>Households who live with other households are only placed into this band if they have NOT deliberately made the circumstances worse.</p> <p>People who cannot reasonably be classed as being from the same household are NOT counted within this category e.g. short term lodgers</p>
2.3	The applicant or a member of their household has been awarded High Medical Priority. Medical banding is based on how and why your current living conditions are not appropriate to your medical needs
2.4	The property in which the applicant lives is subject to a Direction, Demolition, Compulsory Purchase Order or Category 1 Hazard, with a prohibition order being made. Applicant do NOT qualify for this band if such orders have been made because they have failed to satisfactorily maintain their own property or because the disrepair has been caused by them and had the financial means to prevent the disrepair
2.5	The applicant is a retiring agricultural worker who falls under ADHAC (Agricultural Dwelling-House Advisory Committee) and their home is required for a new employee

2.6	The applicant is a tenant of a registered housing provider living in permanent accommodation within the area of East Lindsey and no longer needs the property because of its extensive disabled adaptations
2.7	The applicant or a member of their household needs extensive disabled adaptations and is prepared to move to a property with such adaptations rather than having them done at their current home. Evidence from an OT/or copy of the DFG referral will be required
2.8	The applicant is a tenant of a registered housing provider living in permanent accommodation within the area of East Lindsey who is releasing 2 or more bedrooms to move to a smaller property
2.9	The applicant is suffering from harassment or domestic abuse and it is considered that the accommodation is unreasonable to occupy as defined in the homelessness legislation and determined by the Local Authority. Any recommendations made by a MARAC will be taken into consideration, where appropriate. A risk assessment must be conducted in accordance with MARAC for all offers of accommodation in such cases
2.10	The applicant is a victim of domestic abuse and resident in supported accommodation and assessed by the service provider as ready to move into social housing
2.11	Urgent need to move due to violence, harassment, protection issues. Evidence will be required.
2.12	The applicant currently lives in supported accommodation in Lincolnshire (excluding sheltered housing for older people and where floating support is being provided) and is actively engaging and has been assessed as being ready to move into social housing
2.13	The applicant has been verified by the ELDC or P3 Rough Sleeper Outreach Service to be a rough sleeper who is actively engaging and assessed as being ready to move into social housing
2.14	The applicant has two or more housing needs as set out in Band 3

BAND 3- Medium Need

3.1	The applicant is homeless or threatened with homelessness through no fault of their own within the next 56 days but not in priority need as determined by the Local Authority, in accordance with homelessness legislation prevention and relief duties. (This includes persons of no fixed abode - see section 16)
3.2	The applicant is a tenant of a registered housing provider living in permanent accommodation within the area of East Lindsey who is releasing 1 bedroom to move to a smaller property
3.3	The applicant or a member of their household has been awarded Medium Medical Priority. Medical banding is based on how and why your current living conditions are not appropriate to your medical needs
3.4	The household is assessed as needing one more bedroom than currently available. This is assessed under the space standards contained within Part 10 of the Housing Act 1985 or assessed using the HHSRS set out in the Housing Act 2004. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children of the same sex and from the same household can share a bedroom until the oldest child reaches the age of 16 • Children of the opposite sex can share a bedroom until the oldest child reaches the age of 10

	<p>Households who live with other households are only placed into this band if they have NOT deliberately made the circumstances worse. If they have, they are placed in Band EX/removed from the list.</p> <p>People who cannot reasonably be classed as being from the same household are NOT counted within this category e.g. short term lodgers.</p>
3.5	<p>The applicant's current home is assessed as permanently lacking or the applicant is unable to access basic essential facilities and it is through no fault of their own, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an inside toilet • hot and cold running water • bathing facilities • mains services i.e. electrical / water supplies <p>This category excludes caravans/mobile homes unless on a permanent site. It will not be used where any of the above has been caused by the occupier.</p>
3.6	<p>The property in which the applicant lives is subject to a Category 1 Hazard, as per HHSRS legislation (written confirmation required) and the landlord is refusing to rectify the disrepair.</p>
3.7	<p>A household with dependent children unable to live together as a family unit (this is defined as spouse/partner/children) and wishes to live with them</p>
3.8	<p>The applicant is experiencing undue financial hardship which is a direct result of current housing circumstances. To fall into this band the situation must be;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one that is not likely to be short lived • one that is not/has not been caused by a deliberate act or omission and, • one that the applicant is unable to have any reasonable control over • The circumstances make their current home unaffordable in terms of rent and utilities where they previously could have afforded it. <p>A full financial assessment will be undertaken as the basis for placing/not placing registrations into this category. The assessment could result in the applicant being assessed as threatened with homelessness and placed into a higher band.</p>
3.9	<p>A household with dependent children lodging and sharing facilities with friends or family</p>
3.10	<p>The welfare of the household is being <u>severely</u> affected by the current accommodation or location, this could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant is <u>currently unemployed</u> and has been offered permanent employment (seasonal work not considered) and <u>must</u> move to be able to carry out the job. • The applicant is <u>currently unemployed</u> and <u>needs</u> to move to access full time education/training that cannot be accessed in their current location. • The applicants <u>needs</u> to move to provide long term care and support. This could include foster carers and those approved to adopt who need to move to a larger property. • The applicant is severely isolated and <u>must</u> move to access vital services.

	Each case will be assessed on individual circumstances
3.11	Right to Move applicants (see section 12)
3.12	The applicant has three or more housing needs as set out within Band 4

BAND 4- Low Need

4.1	The applicant has housing need that would ordinarily place them into a higher band but has been found Intentionally Homeless within the last 12 months and has not had a settled home in that time
4.2	Applicants who fail to reasonably cooperate with advice provided by the council in respect of preventing or relieving their homelessness or following other advice and actions to reduce the need for them to move home. This includes failing to bid for properties.
4.3	A household without dependent children lodging and sharing facilities with friends or family
4.4	The applicant's relationship with their partner has broken down and they do not have the legal right to live there but they haven't been asked to leave within 56 days
4.5	The applicant or a member of their household has been awarded Low Medical Priority. Medical banding is based on how and why your current living conditions are not appropriate to your medical needs
4.6	The applicant's existing tenancy is insecure i.e. an assured shorthold tenancy
4.7	<p>The households welfare is being affected by the current accommodation or location, this could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has been offered employment (including seasonal work) and wishes to move nearer to the job. • The applicant or family member <u>wishes</u> to move to access education/training that cannot be accessed in their current location. • The applicant <u>wishes</u> to move to provide long term care and support. This could those applying to become foster carers or to adopt and need to move to a larger property. • The applicant is isolated and <u>wishes</u> to move to access services. <p>Each case will be assessed on individual circumstances</p>

10 MEDICAL BANDING

10.1 Medical banding is awarded to housing applicants or those to be rehoused with them who can demonstrate that their medical condition (physical or psychological) is currently being adversely affected by their housing situation AND that a change to more appropriate housing would benefit them medically.

10.2 An assessment of medical need is made by the Council after receipt of a completed medical assessment form, evidence of disability benefits and list of medication. Supporting evidence and reports from medical professionals will be taken into account if provided but these are not usually necessary and there might be a charge which the Council will not pay. If the assessment places an applicant into a higher band, then the registration will be re-dated to the date of the assessment. If the assessment does not change the band into which the registration falls, the existing effective date and banding remains unchanged.

10.3 There are FOUR recommendations that can be returned;

High Priority – Registration placed into Band 2
Medium Priority – Registration placed into Band 3
Low Priority – Registration placed into Band 4; or
No Medical Priority.

10.4 The Assessor determines medical priority based on the current housing circumstances in relation to the illness or disability of the applicant or household member (who is moving with them) as well as considering measures that could be taken to make the current home more suitable.

10.5 The Council will consider a request for a further medical assessment if it is satisfied that there has been a significant change in the medical circumstances of the applicant or their household.

10.6 Applicants who require a specific type of property will normally only be allowed to bid for such as property. If applicants consider they can manage a different type of property, their medical assessment will be reviewed. For example an applicant who needs a ground floor property due to a disability who wishes to bid for a first floor property would either not be allowed or would have their medical assessment reviewed.

11 REASONABLE PREFERENCE

11.1 The law states that certain groups of people have 'reasonable preference' within any scheme of allocation. These groups are:-

- People who are homeless (within Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002); this includes people who are intentionally homeless, and those who are not in priority need;
- People who are unintentionally homeless or threatened with homelessness and who are in priority need who are owed a duty by any housing authority under section 193 (2) or 195 (2) of the Housing Act 1996 (or under Section 65 (2) or 68 (2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any housing authority under Section 192 (3) ;
- People occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions;
- People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to disability;
- People who need to move to a particular locality in the area, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others).

12 RIGHT TO MOVE

12.1 The Right to Move regulation enables social housing tenants to move to another authority to take up a job or live closer to employment or training.

Existing social housing tenants living outside East Lindsey may apply to join the housing register in cases where:

- The social housing tenant has a need to move to East Lindsey to avoid hardship, and
- The social housing tenant has a need to move to the district because the tenant works or has been offered work in the district and has a genuine intention to take up the offer.

12.2 Anyone wishing to apply under this regulation must provide evidence of employment/training in East Lindsey and reasons why they would experience hardship if they were not able to move into the district.

The employment should be long-term – at least 12 months, and should be for at least 16 hours per week. The work must be based in East Lindsey, not just requiring the applicant to travel to the area occasionally. Voluntary work is not eligible, apprenticeships are eligible.

Where an applicant has received an offer of a job, there must be genuine intent to take it up.

Applicants must provide evidence to confirm employment. This may include:

- A contract of employment
- Wage/salary slips
- Bank statements (for zero hour contracts)
- Proof of working tax credit
- A formal offer letter

Verification of on-going employment in the borough will be sought at the point of making an application active, and at the point of allocation.

13 HOMELESSNESS

13.1 In cases where ELDC has accepted a main housing duty following on from the “prevention” and “relief” duty, applicants will be placed into Band 1. Such applicants are required to make bids on the first suitable property that they are eligible for, from the date that they have been accepted as homeless. ELDC will also bid on their behalf for properties which the Council consider meet their needs and they are eligible for. If an applicant refuses a successful bid, the homelessness duty to them will be discharged but a right to a review is available. In such cases they will no longer have reasonable preference awarded and the application will be re-assessed.

13.2 Where statutorily homeless applicants have a housing related debt they could be placed into temporary accommodation under section 193 of the Housing Act 1996, during this time an affordable repayment agreement will be made with them to repay the debt. This will allow applicant(s) to place bids, however, they will not be offered a property unless the debt has been cleared or regular payments have been made to reduce the debt over a period of time determined by the relevant housing provider.

13.3 Statutorily homeless applicants will also be considered for an offer of accommodation in the private sector. This could result in the homelessness duty being discharged.

- 13.4 Anyone provided with a temporary tenancy pursuant to a homeless application will be required to update their application and continue to bid on suitable properties.

14 CORPORATE PARENTING RESPONSIBILITY

- 14.1 The District Council has a Corporate Parenting responsibility to any young person who is aged 16 or over who is either a "looked after child" from Lincolnshire, or is a "care leaver" supported by Lincolnshire County Council, up to the age of 25. Band 1 will apply when they are not intentionally homeless and are accessing services, and have been assessed as capable of independent living, even with the support of a Leaving Care Worker. Children's Services would need to make this request and provide appropriate evidence to confirm the young person did not become homeless intentionally.

15 ROUGH SLEEPING

- 15.1 Defined as being street homeless and having access to no accommodation at all. People of 'No Fixed Abode', who are for example staying at various locations on an ad hoc basis, are not regarded as rough sleepers.

16 NO FIXED ABODE

- 16.1 Applicants who claim that they are of no fixed abode have to satisfy ELDC that they genuinely have no settled accommodation and are living at various locations for very short periods of time.
- 16.2 In confirming cases where applicants claim that they are of no fixed abode, proof may be sought from each address and/or other agencies with which they are registered.

17 HOUSING RELATED DEBTS

- 17.1 Where an applicant(s) has any current/former rent arrears or other housing related debt they might be accepted onto the housing register and placed in the appropriate band. This would allow applicant(s) to place bids however, housing providers might still refuse to offer a property whilst the debt is still outstanding.

Applicants, who have such as debt, should clear the debt or make regular payment to reduce the debt or clear the deb. ELDC Housing Hub or Citizens Advice Bureau will be able to offer advice.

18 FINANCIAL CAPACITY

- 18.1 All households applying to the scheme are assessed for their ability to buy their own home, or adapt their own home to meet their assessed needs. Assets that may be taken into consideration when assessing financial capacity may include but are not limited to savings, shares, bonds, commercial property, residential property, property abroad and money apportioned through the proceeds of a divorce settlement, inheritance or any form of cash windfall. An allocation will not be made where an applicant(s) owns a property that would be reasonable for them to live in or where, if they sold it, they could afford to buy another property in the area.

18.2 In determining the priority an applicant receives within the scheme, the following are considered:

- Whether the applicant(s) can sell their current home.
- The expected equity after the proposed sale of the property.
- The applicant(s) current financial circumstances and commitments.
- Whether the applicant(s) will be eligible for a mortgage.
- The supply of accommodation suitable for the applicant(s) specific needs on the private market for either sale or rent.
- Whether the applicant(s) housing need can be met in the private market taking into consideration the cost of housing within the district.
- Whether adaptation of the present property is a viable option.
- Whether significant care and support needs would impact on the ability of the applicant to secure and maintain accommodation.

18.3 An allocation will not be made to an applicant who can obtain and afford a mortgage to buy a property which meets their requirements within the area by using their assets and income.

19 HOUSING SUPPORT

19.1 A range of support services are available throughout the area and are there to help vulnerable people live safely and independently within the community.

19.2 Housing providers might request to risk assessments, support plans and other relevant information from Social Services, Addaction, Probation, Community Mental Health Team, LCC Public Health team (formerly Supporting People Team) and other relevant agencies before making an offer of a property.

19.3 Housing Providers reserve the right to refuse any bids from applicants for accommodation it deems unsuitable and where in its opinion, support plans are not sufficiently detailed to provide support to the applicant to ensure that their tenancy remains sustainable.

20 CARERS

20.1 Applicants with a disability or other need who require an additional bedroom to accommodate a carer are required to provide an approved and detailed Care Plan. Such Care Plans will need to be shared with all providers so that appropriate accommodation can be considered.

21 RENT (AGRICULTURE) ACT 1976

21.1 The Rent (Agriculture) Act 1976 and the Housing Act 1988 give certain agriculture workers (including retired workers and successors) living in farm cottages, security of tenure. However, under these Acts a farmer may apply to the appropriate Local Authority to have the protected worker re-housed, if they need the cottage for another worker in the interests of efficient agriculture. To assist the authority in considering the farmer's application the 1976 Act provides for an Agricultural Dwelling Housing Advisory Committee (ADHAC) to give advice on the case made by the applicant concerning the interests of efficient agriculture and regarding the urgency of the application.

If the ADHAC considers that the farmer requires the farm cottage for a new employee, ADHAC may recommend that the local authority award priority re-housing to the retiring farm worker. If urgent re-housing is recommended, the application will be placed into Band 1.

22 DATING OF REGISTRATIONS

22.1 The initial registration date of an application will be the date that the applicant registers their application details online.

Once the application and accompanying evidence has been provided, the banding will be assessed and the application placed within a band in date order.

- **new application**, the banding date will be the date that all requested evidence has been provided
- **change in circumstances which results in a higher band assessment:** the banding date will be the date the applicant provides satisfactory evidence of the change in circumstances.
- **change in circumstance which results in the banding remaining the same:** the banding date will not change
- **change in circumstances which result in a lower band assessment:** the banding date will revert to the original application date.
- **Refusal of three offers:** the banding date will be changed to the date of the last refusal and the application might be placed into a lower band (see 9.5). Applicants will be informed in writing and can request a review of this decision.

23 CHANGES IN CIRCUMSTANCES

23.1 All changes in Applicant's circumstances must be updated on the applicants application through [East Lindsey CBL scheme](#) or via the Housing Hub. Changes in circumstances that lead to re-banding will be dealt with in accordance with this policy and the Applicant(s) advised accordingly.

24 SUPPORTING VULNERABLE APPLICANTS

24.1 Some vulnerable applicants may require help to ensure that they have the same opportunity to access the scheme. If an applicant is determined as vulnerable they may be offered support to access the scheme. In order to ensure that vulnerable applicants can express an interest in a property, the 'auto bid' function can be activated on their application. This means that during each bid cycle an applicants details are matched to suitable available homes and a bid is automatically placed on their behalf through the system.

24.2 Applicants can also ring the Housing Hub (01507) 613135 where an advisor will be able to place a bid on their behalf.

24.3 Referrals for auto bid may come from a number of sources, although most would come from the following (however this is not exclusive);

- Request from support worker or Housing Officer
- Self-referral.
- From monitoring applicants who have not bid – where the Council identifies applicants who are not making bids for accommodation.

25 THE BIDDING PROCESS

- 25.1 When the applicant(s) has been accepted onto the scheme, they will then be able to bid for up to 3 properties in each cycle, for which they are eligible.
- 25.2 **ADVERTISEMENTS** – Available properties are advertised in the following ways:
- **Property Leaflet** – This is available in ELDC offices and can be emailed upon request to applicants and stakeholders
 - **Website** – applicants are able to view available properties and apply 'on-line' for properties of their choice.
 - **Telephone** – Applicants can telephone the Housing Hub where an advisor will be able to place a bid on their behalf.
- 25.3 All available properties will normally be advertised on a weekly basis from midnight on a Wednesday through till midnight on a Sunday. Any bids received after the deadline will not usually be considered.
- 25.4 Occasionally it is necessary to withdraw a property/properties from an advert. Housing Providers reserve the right to withdraw properties without notice. Each advert contains an advisory note to this effect. This may be due to the notice on the property being withdrawn or for other reasons of good Housing Management practice.
- 25.5 **PROPERTY DESCRIPTIONS** – Properties advertised using the above methods will have (where possible) a photograph of the property and a full description. This normally includes:
- Type of property
 - Number of bedrooms
 - Location of property
 - Any adaptations (e.g. disabled facilities etc)
 - Services provided (e.g. warden, caretaker, cleaning)
 - Heating type
 - Rent charged/service charges
 - Whether it has a garden
 - Amenities in the area
 - Details if pets are permitted
- 25.6 Adverts also give information on who will be eligible to bid for the property including household size. For example if the property is a sheltered housing unit also known as independent living the advert may state that only applicants above a certain age or those with assessed support needs will be eligible to apply. Those properties that have local connection criteria will be appropriately detailed to indicate who is eligible to bid.
- 25.7 **BIDDING FOR A PROPERTY** – Where an applicant meets the bidding criteria they may bid for that property within the deadline given. Applicants may use any of the following methods to make a bid:
- Via the Housing Hub on 01507 613135
 - Through the [East Lindsey CBL](#) website
 - By email to Housing.Hub@e-lindsey.gov.uk
 - Via the auto bid function (where no action by the applicant is necessary)

25.8 DETERMINING PRIORITIES BETWEEN APPLICANTS WITH A SIMILAR LEVEL OF HOUSING NEED - Where two or more applicants with similar housing needs (i.e. within the same band) bid for a property, the usual policy of offering the property to the applicant who has been in the band the longest might be overridden in certain circumstances such as:

- Local Connection - applicants with a strong connection to the location of the advertised property (i.e. town or village) might be prioritised over applicants without a local connection. A local connection is usually created through living or working in the location of the property or needing to move near to close family such as mum, dad, brother or sister for support.
- Financial means – rent levels for social housing properties can vary significantly even for identical properties which can result in some properties being less affordable. This might require an applicant with less disposable income to be prioritised over an applicant that has greater financial means.
- Adapted properties – the Council wishes to make best use of the limited supply of adapted homes and might prioritise applicants who best meet the property requirements over an applicant who doesn't require all of the adaptations.

25.9 ADAPTED PROPERTIES – adapted properties will be advertised for rent and these will range from fully wheelchair accessible properties to homes with minor adaptations such a ramped access, level access showers or stair-lifts. These properties are prioritised for applicants who evidence they need such adaptations.

Generally, disabled people will not be allowed to bid for a property which is not suitable for their needs but rules might be relaxed if the home can be adapted quickly and not leave the applicant at significant risk of coming to harm.

25.10 PROPERTIES LET OUTSIDE THE SCHEME - The majority of available properties will be advertised through [East Lindsey CBL scheme](#). However, there are circumstances where a property may be let outside of the scheme through a direct letting. Examples of this are, where:

- Properties that have been advertised through East Lindsey CBL scheme and there hasn't been any bids/suitable applicants
- a Housing Provider has been requested to help ELDC in their duty to accommodate statutorily homeless households
- a Housing Provider has to temporarily decant (move) a tenant whilst major works are carried out at their current property
- a property is required for use as supported accommodation by ELDC
- a Housing Provider is carrying out major refurbishment works leading to the demolition of property and a tenant has to be housed in alternative accommodation
- High Level Supported accommodation, such as Extra Care Schemes
- a Housing Provider carries out a Management Transfer
- For reasons of good Housing Management practice.
- Sensitive lets – see section 25.14

Such properties will usually not be advertised through East Lindsey CBL scheme.

- 25.11 Housing Providers will make appropriate arrangements for the housing of such tenants into suitable accommodation without their requirement to bid for any available properties.
- 25.12 Extra Care schemes are not let through Homes Direct and have separate Housing Registers. Schemes exist in Louth, Skegness and Sutton on Sea. These properties are let by a Lettings Panel selecting the most suitable applicant from a list. Further information can be obtained from the Housing Hub.
- 25.13 **VERIFICATION PROCESS** - Applicants who are being considered for a property will be contacted to verify the details of their application and banding are still accurate. It is advisable for applicants to ensure their application is accurate at all times.
- 25.14 If the applicant's details are not accurate and further information is required, this could result in the applicant being overlooked for a property if they can't quickly provide the required information. If the banding is incorrect, the Council will review the application to ensure the applicant is eligible to remain on the housing register, review the banding and decide whether the applicants can still be considered for the property concerned.
- 25.15 Applicants might be required to provide a reference from their current or previous landlord. Those with an unsatisfactory written reference where there has been a serious breach of tenancy will not normally be offered accommodation. Each case is considered individually and applicants will be advised of what is required of them in order to be re-considered for an offer at a future point in time.
- 25.16 **OFFERS OF ACCOMMODATION** – At the close of the bidding process a list will be produced in priority and date order, and where required (on certain properties) highlighting applicants with a local connection. The housing provider will contact the first suitable applicant (taking into account sections 19 Housing Support and 31 Managing Risks) to establish that the property being considered is suitable in meeting the households needs. If not, the applicant might be bypassed.
- 25.17 In making this decision, the housing provider will consider a range of factors including family make-up, financial, health, isolation, safeguarding, support needs, previous tenancy and criminal history and their own lettings policy.
- 25.18 Occasionally, a Housing Provider may wish to carry out a “**sensitive let**” which is where they are trying to achieve community cohesion. This could result in applicants being over-looked for a property.
- 25.19 Once an application has been approved, arrangements will usually be made by the Housing Provider for an accompanied viewing to take place followed by a sign-up which includes the applicant(s) signing the relevant tenancy agreement which might be on the same day.
- 25.20 There is a right of appeal against any decision not to make an offer and this should be detailed in each housing provider's lettings policy

25.21 **RENT IN ADVANCE** will be required by most housing providers and it is recommended that applicants save up in the region of £400 prior to being offered a property.

25.22 **TENANCY TYPES** - Housing Providers always make formal offers of accommodation in writing to successful bidders. However, to ensure that homes are let as quickly as possible, verbal offers may be made prior to a written offer. The type of tenancy offered may be a Starter, Assured, or an Assured Shorthold fixed term depending on the circumstances of the let. The type of tenancy to be issued will be confirmed at the point of offer. Housing Providers may also operate two different rent levels; either a social rent or an Affordable Rent (where the rent level is set at 80% of the market rent level for the local housing allowance area).

Housing Providers will operate their own internal Policies around rent levels and type of tenancy offered.

25.23 If the property is refused the next suitable applicant on the list will be contacted until the list is exhausted. At that point the property may be re-advertised.

25.24 **WITHDRAWING OFFERS** – There may be occasions where housing providers have cause to withdraw an offer on a property. This may be due to information coming to light about an applicant’s circumstances that affect their entitlement either their level of need, priority or other factors including the out-going tenant withdrawing their notice to quit.

25.25 **REFUSALS / NON BIDDING** – If an applicant refuses 3 offers, (unless homeless, see section 13), they will be contacted regarding their housing requirements to ensure they understand the system and to offer support and assistance if required.

25.26 An applicant who refuses 3 offers for unsatisfactory reasons will be penalised in the form of having the band effective date changed to the date of last refusal.

25.27 All applicants in Band 1 and 2 who have not placed a bid during a 6 month period will be monitored to establish if any suitable properties have been advertised during the period. If eligible properties have been advertised the Applicant may be interviewed to establish why they did not bid, and their Registration will be reassessed.

25.28 All other applicants who have not placed a bid during a 12 month period will be contacted asking if they still wish to remain on the register. Applicants who fail to respond will be removed from the register.

25.29 **FEEDBACK** – An important part of the Scheme is the need to give applicants feedback on allocated properties. This will help applicants make an informed evaluation of their housing options. Feedback information will include:

- Property size and type
- Property location
- Banding of the successful Applicant
- Number of bids received
- Band effective date of successful Applicant

25.30 This feedback will be made available on the website and in the property magazine. No information that might identify an individual applicant will be published.

26 PROPERTY TYPES AND HOUSEHOLD SIZE

26.1 The Policy covers the letting of a range of property types throughout the area. These properties range from bed-sitting rooms to five bedroom houses. See Appendix A for a guide to the size and type of accommodation that you may be eligible for.

26.2 Housing Providers always endeavour to make the best possible use of their stock in terms of size and suitability when setting the criteria for eligibility. For example, ground floor flats may be reserved for people with a disability. Housing Providers may also relax the criteria for example where a particular location has few properties of a specific type and size.

26.3 Each housing provider will have different rules about when they will consider an expected child in calculating the number of bedrooms required. Most will require a copy of the MATB1 maternity certificate which is usually issued after 20 weeks.

26.4 Housing Providers can amend the bid criteria of previously advertised properties to widen the eligibility and enable successful bids to be made.

26.5 Housing Providers will generally let in accordance with the social size criteria, introduced by the Welfare Reform Act 2012. (Specific details will be shown on the property advert). The rules allow 1 bedroom for

- Every adult couple (married or unmarried)
- Any other adults aged 16 or over
- Any 2 children of the same sex aged under 16*
- Any 2 children aged under 10*
- Any other child (other than a foster child or child whose main home is elsewhere)*
- Children who can't share a bedroom because of a disability or medical condition
- A carer (or team of carers) providing overnight care

One spare bedroom is allowed for

- An approved foster carer who is between placements, but only for up to 52 weeks from the end of the last placement
- A newly approved foster carer for up to 52 weeks from the date of approval if no child is placed with them during that time.

Rooms used by students and members of the armed or reserve forces will not be counted as 'spare' if they're away and intend to return home.

* If an applicant shares the care of a child with the child's other parent, the child will be treated as living with the parent who provides the child's main home. If the child spends equal amounts of time with both parents, they will be treated as living with the parent who claims Child Benefit for them. This may mean that the applicant won't be allowed a bedroom for the child. The housing provider might be lenient if there is low demand for the type of property

requested from applicant who meet the property requirements and the applicant can provide evidence they can afford the rent payments.

- * Unborn babies will be considered on receipt of the MATB1 certificate which is normally issued at about 20 weeks.

26.6 Warden supported accommodation (also known as Independent Living Schemes) are usually prioritised for persons over 55 years of age who want the support of a scheme manager who is regularly on site plus an emergency alarm service. Most schemes will have communal facilities such as a lounge and laundry. There will be an additional charge for these services.

26.7 Adapted properties are prioritised for applicants who need the use of adaptations such as a level floor shower due to a disability. Generally disabled applicants will not be allowed to bid for non-adapted properties but exceptions might be made by the housing provider if there are minimal adapted properties within the applicant's area of choice or the property can be adapted within a reasonable timescale. The applicant would need to be able to evidence to the housing provider's satisfaction that they can get the property adapted to meet their needs. Some housing providers will require the applicant to sign a disclaimer and might not allow the applicant to apply for a transfer for a period of time.

26.8 Within East Lindsey there is a proportion of social housing properties that have 'small' bedrooms (i.e. less than 6.5 m²). When allocating such units, housing providers might alter the lettings criteria

26.9 In some circumstances a second living room in a property may be considered for use as a bedroom providing certain criteria are met.

27 LOCAL CONNECTION

27.1 To be considered for registration (see section 7.7) an applicant must have a connection to East Lindsey as follows:

- Permanent residence in East Lindsey (*1) for the last 12 months; or
- Previous Residence within East Lindsey (*1) for 3 out of the last 5 years; or
- Resident in East Lindsey at birth
- Permanent Employment in East Lindsey(*2); or
- A need to move to receive support (*3) and this support cannot be provided within the current location; or
- A "Main Housing Duty" has been accepted by ELDC
- The applicant has moved to a refuge or temporary supported accommodation to flee domestic abuse (*4)
- The applicant is rough sleeping in the district (*5)
- Lincolnshire Care Leavers up to age of 25
- Right to Move (see section 12)

Exceptional circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis

(*1) Time spent living on a seasonal caravan site won't count as residency in the district. Applications from occupiers of permanent all year round sites which are licenced by ELDC can be considered once they have been resident in East Lindsey for over 12 months as their **sole and main residency**.

(*2) Temporary and seasonal work is not included. The applicant must also be working a minimum of 16 hours per week

(*3) An applicant must evidence a **need** to move rather than a wish to move plus evidence the need cannot be met in their current location. The person they are moving to receive support from must have been resident in East Lindsey for two years. Below is not an exhaustive list but provides some examples of why an applicant needs to move.

- Child/Children with special needs and support is needed to enable normal daily living
- Applicant or child suffering from severe illness and support is needed to enable normal daily living
- Team around Child or similar recommendation
- MARAC recommendation

The following are examples of where an application may be refused because support can be provided in current location:

- Have a partner who is able to offer support
- Have close relatives or friends within a 10 mile radius who are able to offer support
- Other sufficient support networks i.e. public or charitable sectors i.e. housing support, social worker, Home-Start can provide the support
- Financial ability to buy in support i.e. personal budgets or sufficient savings
- Social tenant with reasonable prospects of getting a mutual exchange within a 10 mile radius of support networks

(*4) It is considered safe for the victim to reside in the district and any properties bid for must not place the applicant at risk of further domestic abuse from the perpetrator.

(*5) The rough sleeper is unable to return to an area where they have a local connection and this has been confirmed by an appropriate professional. The rough sleeper is also actively engaging with appropriate agencies and professionals to access suitable accommodation and support services.

27.2 Where there are local connection restrictions relating to a property, these will be detailed on the property advert. They will vary depending upon the Housing Provider and Local Authority restrictions. Any applicant can bid, but in the first instance preference will be given to applicants who have a local connection to the town, village or district as stated in the advert. Applicants will be ordered according to the strength of their local connection, followed by Band and then Band Effective Date.

To be considered as having a local connection to an area one of the following must normally apply:

The applicant must:

- Have been born in the town or village
- Currently reside in that town, village for a stated period of time.

- Have previously resided in that town, village or district for a continuous stated period.
- Have permanent employment in that town, village or district for a given number of hours per week for a continuous stated period.
- Need to reside in that town, village or district to give/receive support to/from someone who has resided in the district for a stated period of time.

If none of the above apply, the property will be let to the applicant who has been registered within the relevant housing need band the longest.

This local connection definition does not apply to Local Lettings Policies or Section 106 agreement, see section 27.

28 LOCAL LETTINGS POLICIES, PLANNING CONDITIONS AND SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS

- 28.1 Local Lettings Policies are usually introduced to meet a particular local need and have an overall positive effect on estates. For example, if an estate had a high level of anti-social behaviour, applicants who bid for the advertised property would have a criminal check completed to ensure they were suitable for the property.
- 28.2 To be considered for a property within a Local Lettings scheme, the applicant would have to meet the criteria listed in the advert. Applicants would usually need to have a local connection to the town or village of the advertised property. Suitable applicants for tenancies will be selected from those who bid for the properties and invited for interview with the Housing Provider, the Council or Police. Selection will be based on the interview, employment, current accommodation and history of applicant.
- 28.3 There aren't currently any local lettings schemes in East Lindsey.
- 28.4 When new developments are advertised restrictions may have been set on the development by the Planning Department of the Local Authority, these can be planning conditions with letting restrictions or Section 106 agreements. These are legal agreements between local authorities and developers, which are linked to a planning permission. For example, the Planning Department may restrict a new development in a village by stating that only people with a local connection to that village can be housed in the available properties meaning local connection could take priority over housing need. In cases where restrictions have been placed on a development properties will be advertised appropriately.

29 DELIBERATELY WORSENEED CIRCUMSTANCES

- 29.1 Applicants who are found to have deliberately worsened their housing circumstances in order to improve their prospects of receiving an offer of social housing will not be eligible for inclusion onto the housing register for up to 2 years from the date of our decision.

Deliberate worsening of circumstances arises where the applicant or anyone in their household has given up accommodation that was suitable for their needs and where there was no requirement or obligation to do so.

For example, an applicant moves from a secure tenancy to an insecure tenancy and it can be evidenced that they did this deliberately (or against professional advice) in order to increase their banding.

- 29.2 Applicants who had deliberately worsened their housing circumstances, but have since resolved the situation will remain ineligible for inclusion onto the housing register for a minimum of 12 months. To resolve the situation, the applicant must obtain accommodation that would move their application into the band that they would have been in prior to deliberately worsening their circumstances.

At the end of the relevant period applicants can request reconsideration.

- 29.3 Where priority has been reduced, applicants will always be informed in writing stating the reasons.

Applicants will have the right to request a review of this decision and to request their banding is re-assessed if they consider they have resolved the situation.

30 PLACING APPLICANTS INTO A DIFFERENT BAND

- 30.1 In some cases, people have worsened their circumstances but they did not do so to deliberately improve their banding. In this situation, we may place the application in a different band than the circumstances call for. Reasons may include but not limited to the applicant or anyone in their household has within the past 12 months:

- abandoned a previous tenancy
- moved to new housing that is worse than their previous housing without good reason
- moved from an adapted to an un-adapted home
- sold a property or given notice on a tenancy without securing other housing first.

- 30.2 If we think that the applicant has made their housing circumstances worse, inclusion onto the housing register will be refused for 12 months from the date of our decision.

At the end of the 12 month period applicants can request re-assessment of their application. On re-assessment, the application will be placed into the appropriate band from the date the application was re-assessed.

- 30.3 Where priority has been reduced, applicants will always be informed in writing stating the reasons.

Applicants will have the right to request a review of this decision and to request their banding is re-assessed if they consider they have resolved the situation.

31 MANAGING RISKS

- 31.1 The primary aim of Housing Providers is to maintain balanced and stable communities which are safe, thriving and attractive places to live. In working towards this vision, housing providers recognise that all people have a right to a home that is more than just somewhere to live. However, there will always be people who are more difficult to integrate into mainstream housing. To manage

risks to individuals and communities, a multi-agency approach must be taken. For example, securing accommodation for a high-risk ex-offender will be done in consultation and with the approval of the appropriate agencies. In order to achieve this there may be occasions when the Applicant(s) who has/have the greatest priority within the scheme may not be offered a particular property. In such cases they will be written to by the housing provider explaining the reasons why.

- 31.2 Where an applicant is subject to MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Agency), we will liaise with the MAPPA panel to ensure an appropriate housing solution to meet the needs of the applicant and the community as a whole. In such cases, the offer of any accommodation following a successful bid, will be directed and approved by relevant statutory agencies. For any case registered with MAPPA and Divisional High Risk Meetings, ELDC is the nominated point of contact and will take the lead on working with registered housing providers in the provision of suitable accommodation.
- 31.3 Where an applicant suffering domestic abuse is the subject of a MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) housing providers will liaise with the appropriate agencies to ensure any accommodation offered is as suitable in terms of location and security. Where it is possible to identify perpetrators of domestic abuse, consideration of the victim will be given when providing them with accommodation as far as is practicable.
- 31.4 An integral part of managing risks is to ensure that appropriate support networks are in place and are regularly monitored and reviewed.
- 31.5 Any successful bid will be deferred if the relevant agencies have not provided a relevant Care Plan/Risk Assessment to manage the risk.

32 CONFIDENTIALITY AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION.

- 32.1 The information given during the registration process includes special category data as defined by Article 9 of the General Data Protection Regulation and will be collected, processed and retained by East Lindsey District Council for the purpose of administering the Choice Bases Lettings Scheme. Applicants have the right to request a copy of the information held about them (there is no fee) alongside other rights which help them to control their data. For the purposes of Data Protection Legislation, East Lindsey District Council is the data controller.
- 32.2 Applicants have to right to request information regarding any decision about the facts of their case which is likely to be, or has been, taken into account in considering their application to join the Scheme or assess the banding.
- 32.3 Information that you provide is held securely and only shared with housing providers if you have given us permission to do so and you are being considered for a property.
- Confidential information held about applicants will not be disclosed to third parties apart unless ELDC is required by law to make such disclosures
- 32.4 In order to maintain confidentiality, Applicants will be asked a number of 'checking' questions when they contact ELDC by telephone before discussing their application. If Applicants wish another person (friend or family member) who is not a joint applicant to enquire about their application on their behalf, permission will be required from the Applicant beforehand.

33 REQUESTING A REVIEW

33.1 Every Applicant has the right to request a review of;

- The band into which they have been placed or
- Any decisions taken in relation to their Registration
- The outcome of their support needs assessment e.g. sheltered housing, risk assessment

33.2 All requests for a review must;

- Be in writing, addressed to the Senior Housing Officer, East Lindsey District Council, Tedder Hall, Manby Park, LOUTH, Lincs LN11 0BU
- Be received within 21 days from the date of the decision letter, from the applicant(s) or their representative, clearly stating the grounds on which the review is being sought and providing any supporting evidence. Verbal representation will be allowed in exceptional circumstances.
- ELDC will review such requests and provide a written response within 56 days of receipt of the request setting out the reasons for the decision.

33.3 The outcome of a review will always be given in writing.

34 MONITORING

34.1 In order to ensure that the Scheme is achieving its aims of being as open and accessible as possible to all members of the community the following may be monitored:

- The number of applicants on the register by band each quarter
- The number of lettings in the financial year (cumulative) each quarter
 - By property type (and bedrooms)
 - Separate listings for general needs and sheltered housing
 - Whether Homeless, transfer or general
 - Whether restricted (i.e. eligibility criteria advertised)
 - Bids overlooked
 - Whether to out of area Applicant
 - How many allocations by banding
 - Properties let outside of the scheme
- Property Feedback for each allocation as follows weekly:
 - Address of property
 - Number of bedrooms
 - Type of property
 - General / Sheltered
 - Property band
 - Number of bids
 - Refusals
 - Successful applicant bid
 - Band effective date
- List of all properties let by the scheme for current financial year each quarter
- Refusals and number of complaints about the scheme each quarter

- Non bidders, customer satisfaction & performance against service standards annually
- The numbers accessing help to bid through the assisted list and the reasons for being on the assisted list each quarter.
- Monitoring will also take place to test equality of access and opportunity, and levels of satisfaction across:
 - All ethnic groups using the scheme
 - Applicants of the assisted list

Glossary of Terms

“Applicant(s)”	A person or persons submitting an application for Registration and those accepted onto the housing register
“Application”	An application for Registration submitted on a Registration Form
“Banding Scheme”	How applicants are prioritised in the scheme
“Bid”	The process of applicants saying which property they would like to live in
“CBL”	Choice Based Lettings
“Feedback Procedure”	The procedure followed to make a complaint/compliment
“Household”	People who can be reasonably expected to live with you, e.g. children dependent adults, carers
“Housing Related Debt”	Rechargeable repairs, current or former rent arrears, rent assist or homeless prevention payments
“Policy”	The Choice Based Lettings Policy
“Registration”	The method of applying for housing
“Registration Form”	The form which must be completed to apply for housing
“Repayment Agreement”	An agreement made by the applicant to repay any housing related debt
“Scheme”	The Housing Register - also known Choice Based Lettings Scheme
“Service Standards”	The service standards set out at Section 6
“Stakeholders”	Other agencies/organisation with an interest or involvement with the scheme
“Street Homeless”	Sleeping rough on the streets

Appendix A

This chart provides a guide to the type and size of property that applicants can bid for. Exact details will vary per property and will be dependent upon a range of factors including the size of the bedrooms, the sex and age of the children as well as any disabilities within the household. Some properties are designated for certain age groups. The approximate numbers of properties are shown in brackets. If you need to know details for a specific area, please contact the Housing Hub.

	Single person	Childless Couple	Single OAP	Couple OAP	1 Child Family	2 Child Family	3 Child Family	4 Child Family	5 Child Family	6 Child Family	7 Child Family
Bedsit/Apartment (30)	✓		✓								
Warden Assisted Bedsit/Apartment (74)	✓		✓								
Warden Assisted 1 Bed Flat (367)	✓	✓	✓	✓							
Warden Assisted 1 Bed Bungalow (296)			✓	✓							
Warden Assisted 2 Bed Bungalow (177)				✓							
Warden Assisted 2 Bed Flat (45)				✓							
1 Bed Flat (199)	✓	✓	✓	✓							
1 Bed House (124)	✓	✓									
1 Bed Bungalow (196)	✓	✓	✓	✓							
2 Bed Flat or Maisonette (779)		✓		✓	✓	✓					
2 Bed Bungalow (1493)		✓		✓	✓	✓					
2 Bed House (1273)					✓	✓					
3 Bed Flat or Maisonette (57)						✓	✓	✓			
3 Bed House (2127)						✓	✓	✓			
3 Bed Bungalow (21)						✓	✓	✓			
4 Bed House (130)							✓	✓	✓		
4 Bed Bungalow (1)							✓	✓	✓		
5 Bed House (2)									✓	✓	✓