

## **Prioritising Applications - Common Allocation Policy**

## **AGENDA 3, Enc i)**

The council and its partners have agreed a Common Allocation Policy which means that the way houses are allocated will be the same throughout Northumberland. All partners in the scheme will use the policy guidelines to assess housing need. You can view Northumberland's [Common Allocations Policy here](#).

### **Priority Bands**

Northumberland Homefinder uses a banding scheme to prioritise applications. Priority is given to people who are in most housing need and not on a first-come, first-served basis.

We will assess your application and place it into one of 5 bands. These are;

Band P - applicants who are in urgent housing need.

Band 1 - applicants who are in high housing need.

Band 2 - applicants who are in medium housing need.

Band 2R - applicants who would otherwise be in Bands P, 1 or 2 but whose priority has been reduced.

Band 3 - applicants who are currently adequately housed.

Band P applicants will keep their priority status for 3 months, but if they don't bid for a home during this time, could lose this priority. However, if you are in band P and we agree that you are homeless, you will have only one month to bid for a home. In either case, we will contact you when your priority time limit is coming to an end.

### **Additional Preference for Armed Forces Personnel in Urgent Housing Need**

Northumberland Homefinder supports the delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant. Applicants who fall into any of the categories below and who have been assessed as being in **Band P** (urgent housing need) will be awarded additional preference by means of backdating the effective date by one calendar month. For example, a qualifying applicant who is awarded Band P on 1st December will have their effective date backdated to 1st November.

To be eligible for this additional preference applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be assessed as being in Band P

**AND** meet any of the following criteria:

- Be serving in the regular forces and suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person's service
- Has formerly served in the regular forces (Veterans)
- 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 person's service
- 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.

### **What we mean by the "Armed Forces"**

**Regular Personnel/Regular Forces** – Individuals currently serving as members of the Naval Service (including the Royal Navy and Royal Marines), Army or Royal Air Force.

**Reservists/Reserve Forces** – Volunteer Reservists, who form the Royal Naval Reserve, Royal Marine Reserve, Territorial Army and the Royal Auxiliary Air Force, and Regular Reservists, who comprise the Royal Fleet Reserve, Army Reserve and Royal Air Force Reserve.

**Veterans** – Those who have served for at least a day in HM Armed Forces, whether as a Regular or as a Reservist.