

**MINUTES**

**Community Services Scrutiny Panel**

**7<sup>th</sup> May 2008**

**Present:** Councillors Howarth (in the Chair), Crooks, Lightley, McDonnell, Mavin, Norman, Walton and Young.

**Also Present:** Councillors Bell and Kelly.

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Laverick and D Smith.

**2. Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2008, were confirmed as a correct record.

**3. Unauthorised Encampments – Feedback on Report**

The Chairman advised Members that in view of comments made regarding the recommendations in the Panel's report on Unauthorised Encampments, she had included an additional recommendation:-

- 5.8 That this report and the report on Gypsy and Traveller Permanent Encampments, approved by Cabinet in September, 2007, together with all recommendations, be brought to the attention of the Unitary Authority with a view to them being endorsed within the context of the County Council's overarching scrutiny of Gypsy and Traveller Provision. In particular we strongly recommend that the permanent site at Adventure Lane, West Rainton, should be included in any programme of refurbishment implemented by the new Authority.

This additional recommendation had been agreeable to the Scrutiny Committee who, subject to the Panel's approval, had referred the report to Cabinet for consideration.

Panel Members considered this recommendation to be acceptable, and the report would therefore be reported to the next meeting of the Cabinet.

**4. Decent Homes Standard**

The Head of Property Services was in attendance at the Meeting to update Members with progress made towards achieving the Decent Homes Standard.

Copies of an internal audit report from 2005 on the DHS, an audit from 2007 on planned maintenance, performance figures for 2007/2008 and an extract from the Unitary Authority Transition Plan had been circulated in advance of the Meeting for Members' information.

Members were informed that, generally speaking, the Council was on course to meet the Decent Homes Standard by 2010/2011. This year however, there had been a shortfall in funding for planned maintenance as a result of the capital receipts being lower than expected. If this situation occurred in future years, there would be an impact on the amount of works that were able to be carried out, and not all homes would therefore meet the DHS in time.

When the Council had balloted tenants over whether to transfer the housing stock to either a housing association or ALMO, tenants had voted to remain with the City Council. During the

course of this, the Council felt it was able to meet the targets of the DHS while retaining the housing stock itself. In fact, during the ballot of tenants, the 'Durham Standard' had been introduced which set standards in excess of those laid out in the DHS. The Council remained committed to refurbishing properties to the 'Durham Standard'.

Where tenants refused to allow modernisation/improvement works to their homes to be carried out, e.g. rewiring, due to the disturbance and disruption that would be caused, the necessary works would be carried out if the property subsequently became void.

Every effort was made to make an appointment to carry out work. This included telephone and/or house calls. The department had a good record of keeping such appointments once made.

Members expressed their hope that the new Unitary Council would respect tenants' wishes to retain the housing stock within the District, particularly as this provided a direct link between tenants, Councillors and the Council and allowed problems to be rectified more easily. The Council's repairs workforce also had a huge amount of local knowledge which it was considered contributed to the success of the maintenance programme and the repairs service in general.

The Chairman thanked the Head of Property Services for attending the Meeting and indicated that a draft Review Report would be prepared on this topic for consideration at the next Meeting.

**Note:** Councillor Lightley left the Meeting at 6.10pm

## **5. Any Other Business**

The Chairman advised that the Allocations Policy would be considered at the next Meeting, and that copies of the application form for Council housing would be circulated to Members with the Agenda papers.

The Meeting terminated at 6.15 pm

## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL**

#### **REVIEW OF SCRUTINY OF THE DECENT HOMES STANDARD**

##### **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Decent Homes Standard (DHS) was originally scrutinised by the Community Services Scrutiny Panel in 2004, and has been reviewed by the Panel on a number of occasions since that time.

##### **2. Actions/Outcomes**

- 2.1 The Head of Property Services attended the Panel's Meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> May, 2008, to update Members with progress made towards achieving the Decent Homes Standard, and copies of an internal audit report from 2005, an audit from 2007 on planned maintenance, performance figures for 2007/2008 and an extract from the Unitary Authority Transition Plan were also circulated to Members.
- 2.2 Generally speaking, the Council is on target to meet the Decent Homes Standard by 2010/2011.
- 2.3 This year there has been a shortfall in funding as a result of capital receipts being less than expected. If this continues in future years, there will be an impact on the amount of work which is able to be carried out, and not all homes would meet the DHS in time.
- 2.4 When the Council balloted tenants over whether they wished to transfer the housing stock to either a housing association or arms length management organisation, the tenants had voted to remain with the City Council. During this process, the Council felt itself able to achieve the targets set down by the DHS while retaining the housing stock.
- 2.5 During the stock options process, the 'Durham Standard' had been introduced, which set standards in excess of those required by the DHS. The Council remains committed to refurbishing properties to the 'Durham Standard'.
- 2.6 Where tenants refuse to allow modernisation/improvement works to their homes to be carried out, necessary works are carried out if the property subsequently becomes void.
- 2.7 Every effort is made to make an appointment to carry out works, and Property Services has a good record of keeping such appointments when they are made.
- 2.8 The Council's repairs workforce has a vast amount of local knowledge which contributes to the success of the maintenance programme and repairs service, and it is hoped that the new Unitary Authority will respect tenants' wishes with regard to the future management of their homes, in particular where this wish is to remain with the Council. Retention of the Housing stock by the Council also provides a direct link between the Council, Councillors and tenants and allows problems to be rectified more easily.

##### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 That the necessary funding be put in place to allow the Council to achieve DHS on target.
- 3.2 That the new Unitary Authority be requested to respect tenants' wish that the Council housing stock be retained in-house.

- 3.3 That the valuable skills and local knowledge of the repairs workforce be recognised and that the new Unitary Authority be requested to consider this when reviewing the future of the Housing Service at the appropriate time.

Community Services Scrutiny Panel  
June 2008



**CITY OF DURHAM  
QUESTIONING PLAN**

**PLANNING SHEET**

<b>TOPIC FOR SCRUTINY: Allocations Policy</b>
<p>Purpose of Review</p> <p><i>To consider the impact and effectiveness of the new Allocations Policy since its introduction in August 2007.</i></p>
<p>Specific issues to be looked at</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ New Allocations System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Why the system had to change;</li> <li>▪ Number of applications made under the new banding system;</li> <li>▪ Details of allocations made;</li> <li>▪ Bands which Officers have difficulty delegating applicants to.</li> </ul> </li>   <li>◆ Appeals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How the appeals system works;</li> <li>▪ How many appeals had been submitted and whether Officers were able to cope with these;</li> <li>▪ Whether there is a procedure and timescale for advising applicants of the outcome of their appeal.</li> </ul> </li>   <li>◆ Medical Need <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If the criteria for medical banding have proved controversial;</li> <li>▪ What constitutes medical priority;</li> <li>▪ Who makes the decision to award medical priority;</li> <li>▪ Whether it is possible to move up this list without medical need e.g. through length of time on the list.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Required Outcomes
Possible Risks





City of Durham

Application for City of Durham

# Council Housing Register

APP

Application No.

You need to complete this form if you would like to be:-

Date Stamp

- Considered for City of Durham Council housing.
- Considered for rented housing association accommodation in the City of Durham.
- Considered for a Mutual Exchange.

The Council's Allocation Policy sets out the basis on which it allocates Council housing and makes nominations to Housing Associations. The policy is based on five bands, ranging from Band A "Urgent Housing Need" to Band E "No Priority". Each band contains a set of criteria. Applications are assessed in terms of circumstances and placed in the highest band which their circumstances allow. Within each band applicants are ranked in order of the date their application was accepted into the band.

This form should be completed by the person who needs rehousing or by the 'head of the household' if the application is for a family. Please note that applications which contain more than one adult will generally be deemed to be joint applications and will need to be signed by all adults.

**Please complete the application in block capitals and make sure that you sign Section 16 and the back page.**

## SECTION 1 – YOUR DETAILS

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms (Please delete)

Surname.....

First name(s).....

Previous name(s) if applicable.....

Address.....

..... Postcode.....

Are you a current tenant of City of Durham Council? Yes  No

Contact Telephone number(s).....

Email address.....

If you want us to send letters to a different address write it here:-

.....  
.....

N.I. Number..... Date of Birth.....

## Eligibility

The law says we must ask the following questions about your nationality. Regrettably if you do not answer them City of Durham Council will NOT consider your application. The Council may contact the Home Office for further information. Please ✓ box.

Are you subject to immigration control or have come to live in the U.K. in the last five years? Yes  No

If yes to the above are you/them from a country inside the European Economic Area? Yes  No

Have you, or an adult you are applying with, been excluded from claiming any state benefits? Yes  No

## Ethnic Origin

What is the Ethnic Origin of the main Applicant:- Please ✓ one box only

### White

- British   
Irish   
Any other White background  (*please specify*)

### Mixed

- White and Black Caribbean   
White and Black African   
White and Asian   
Any other Mixed background  (*please specify*)

### Asian or Asian British

- Indian   
Pakistani   
Bangladeshi   
Any other Asian background  (*please specify*)

### Black or Black British

- Caribbean   
African   
Any other Black background  (*please specify*)

### Other Ethnic Groups

- Chinese   
Any other ethnic group  (*please specify*)

If you have indicated 'any other' in a category please specify below:-

.....

## Disability

A person with a disability is someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

Does the main applicant consider themselves to have a disability? Yes  No

<sup>2</sup> Do you consider yourself to be a person with a disability? Yes  No



## SECTION 2 – YOUR HOUSEHOLD

Please give details of everyone who needs housing with you, starting with your spouse, partner or any other adults and then any children.

### Person 2

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms *(Please delete)*

Surname.....

First name(s).....

Previous name(s) if applicable.....

N.I. Number..... Date of Birth.....

Relationship to applicant.....

Contact Telephone number(s).....

Do they live with you now? Yes  No

Are they a home owner? Yes  No

Are they a tenant? Yes  No

If a tenant, please give the landlords name and address.

.....  
.....

If they live elsewhere, why can they not live with you now?

.....

Where do they live now? - please state full address

.....

Do they visit under an access arrangement? Yes  No

*(If yes, please enclose confirmation of the arrangement, for example, proof of parental responsibility, or contact order).*

### Person 3

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms *(Please delete)*

Surname.....

First name(s).....

Previous name(s) if applicable.....

N.I. Number..... Date of Birth.....

Relationship to applicant.....

Contact Telephone number(s).....

Do they live with you now? Yes  No

Are they a home owner? Yes  No

Are they a tenant? Yes  No

If a tenant, please give the landlords name and address.

.....  
.....

If they live elsewhere, why can they not live with you now?

.....

Where do they live now? - please state full address

.....

Do they visit under an access arrangement? Yes  No

*(If yes, please enclose confirmation of the arrangement, for example, proof of parental responsibility, or contact order).*

**Person 4**

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms *(Please delete)*

Surname.....

First name(s).....

Previous name(s) if applicable.....

N.I. Number..... Date of Birth.....

Relationship to applicant.....

Contact Telephone number(s).....

Do they live with you now? Yes  No

Are they a home owner? Yes  No

Are they a tenant? Yes  No

If a tenant, please give the landlords name and address.

.....

.....

If they live elsewhere, why can they not live with you now?

.....

Where do they live now? - please state full address

.....

Do they visit under an access arrangement? Yes  No

*(If yes, please enclose confirmation of the arrangement, for example, proof of parental responsibility, or contact order).*

**Person 5**

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms *(Please delete)*

Surname.....

First name(s).....

Previous name(s) if applicable.....

N.I. Number..... Date of Birth.....

Relationship to applicant.....

Contact Telephone number(s).....

Do they live with you now? Yes  No

Are they a home owner? Yes  No

Are they a tenant? Yes  No

If a tenant, please give the landlords name and address.

.....

.....  
If they live elsewhere, why can they not live with you now?  
.....

Where do they live now? - please state full address  
.....

Do they visit under an access arrangement? Yes  No

*(If yes, please enclose confirmation of the arrangement, for example, proof of parental responsibility, or contact order).*

**Person 6**

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms *(Please delete)*

Surname.....

First name(s).....

Previous name(s) if applicable.....

N.I. Number..... Date of Birth.....

Relationship to applicant.....

Contact Telephone number(s).....

Do they live with you now? Yes  No

Are they a home owner? Yes  No

Are they a tenant? Yes  No

If a tenant, please give the landlords name and address.  
.....  
.....

.....  
If they live elsewhere, why can they not live with you now?  
.....

Where do they live now? - please state full address  
.....

Do they visit under an access arrangement? Yes  No

*(If yes, please enclose confirmation of the arrangement, for example, proof of parental responsibility, or contact order).*

**Person 7**

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms *(Please delete)*

Surname.....

First name(s).....

Previous name(s) if applicable.....

N.I. Number..... Date of Birth.....

Relationship to applicant.....

Contact Telephone number(s).....

Do they live with you now? Yes  No

Are they a home owner? Yes  No

Are they a tenant? Yes  No

If a tenant, please give the landlords name and address.

.....  
.....

If they live elsewhere, why can they not live with you now?

.....

Where do they live now? - please state full address

.....

### SECTION 3 – EXPECTED CHILD

Are you or any of the people to be re-housed with you expecting a baby? Yes  No

If yes what is the person's name? .....

When is the baby due?

A copy of the MATB1 certificate, issued at 20 weeks, must be submitted with this application, or as soon as possible afterwards. Without this proof, this section of your application cannot be considered.

Has the MATB1 been supplied? Yes  No

### SECTION 4 – YOUR HOUSING HISTORY

Starting with the most recent previous address, please tell us where you have lived in the last five years. If you are applying with any other adult, unless they have lived with you, we also need to know where they have lived in the last five years. Please note if you do not fully complete this part of the application, we will be unable to process it.

Please list **all** addresses where you, the **applicant**, have lived in the last 5 years. Start with your current address. **This section MUST be completed.**

Address	Name & Address of Landlord	Owner/Tenant/ Living-in	Date from	Date to	Reason for Leaving

Please list **all** addresses where the person named as **joint applicant** has lived in the last 5 years:

Address	Name & Address of Landlord	Owner/Tenant/ Living-in	Date from	Date to	Reason for Leaving

Have you or anyone who wishes to be re-housed with you ever had a Council Tenancy with the City of Durham Council?      Yes  No

If Yes, please give details (if not already listed above)

Address .....

Date from..... Date to.....

Address .....

Date from..... Date to.....

## SECTION 5 – YOUR PRESENT HOME

Are you a:- Please ✓ as appropriate

- Council tenant
- Private tenant
- Owner/Occupier
- Member of Armed forces
- Housing Association tenant
- Living with relatives
- Living in with friends
- Tied tenant
- Lodger
- Other

What type of accommodation do you occupy?

- House
- Flat
- Bungalow
- Hostel
- Supported Accommodation
- Rooms in a house
- Bedsit
- Maisonette

- B & B
- Caravan
- Hospital
- Prison
- Other *Please Specify* .....

Number of single bedrooms in current property that you have access to:-

Number of double bedrooms in current property that you have access to:-

What floor is your accommodation on?

Number of living rooms in current property:-

Is there a lift available? Yes  No

If you are in tied accommodation and have to leave, what date are you expected leave?

If you are currently in hospital, what is your expected date of discharge?

If you are currently in a hostel or supported accommodation, what date are you expected to leave? *(please provide a copy of your notice/tenancy agreement)*

If you are a member of the Armed Forces, what date did you become a member of the Armed Forces?

Is your date of discharge within the next 12 months? Yes  No

Have you provided confirmation of the Armed Forces discharge date? Yes  No   
*(Confirmation of the above must be provided, otherwise this part of your application will not be considered).*

Which of the following rooms or facilities are available to you and/or the people you want to be re-housed with?

Kitchen/cooking facilities Yes  No

Bathroom facilities Yes  No

Fixed inside toilet Yes  No

Are your toilet and bedroom on different floors? Yes  No

Do you or the people to be housed with you share any bedrooms with another person who will not be moving with you? Yes  No

*Please provide the information below for each bedroom (include details of all rooms classed as bedrooms for rent/council tax purposes)*

Size	Occupants	
<i>(Single or Double)</i>	<i>(List all the people who use the room for sleeping, this must include their full name and relationship to you, or advise what the room is used for).</i>	


**Please note:-** Whilst this information is of a personal nature, it is important we know these details to ensure that your application is placed in the correct band. This information may be verified by a visiting officer.

## SECTION 6 – YOUR REASONS FOR WANTING TO BE RE-HOUSED

Please give the main reason why you want to be re-housed.

Please ✓ one box only

- Permanently decanted from another property owned by City of Durham Council
- Left home country as refugee
- Being discharged from prison or from long stay hospital or other institution
- Leaving tied accommodation
- End of Assured shorthold tenancy
- Being legally evicted from current property
- Current property being repossessed
- Victim of domestic violence
- (Non-violent) relationship breakdown with partner
- Asked to leave by family or friends
- Suffering racial harassment
- Other problems with neighbours
- Current property unsuitable because of overcrowding
- Current property unsuitable because of ill health of disability
- Current property unsuitable because of poor condition
- Cannot afford rent or mortgage
- To move nearer to family/friends/school
- To move nearer to work
- To move to accommodation with support
- To move to independent accommodation
- Wish to buy a home
- Current property too large
- Other please specify.....

Do you, or a person who you would like to be re-housed with you, have medical needs which mean that your current home is not suitable for you?

Yes  No

*If you have said yes, please complete Section 8.*

Do you, or a person who would like to be re-housed with you, have social/welfare needs which mean that your current home is not suitable for you.

Yes  No

*If you have said yes, please complete Section 9.*

Medical and Social/Welfare needs are subject to an assessment.

Are you, or anyone who wants re-housing with you, subject to a civil or criminal ASBO? Yes  No

If you have said yes, please state name and give details/dates.

.....

.....

.....

## SECTION 7 - PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

Have you previously applied for accommodation with the city of Durham Council? Yes  No

If yes, have you recently been made offers of accommodation which you refused? Yes  No

If yes, please give details:

Date..... Address.....

Date..... Address.....

## SECTION 8 - MEDICAL NEEDS

### About your Current Home

Please ✓ appropriate boxes or write number in:-

STAIRS	None	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Straight	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Curved	<input type="checkbox"/>	
NO. OF EXTRA STEPS	Top	<input type="text"/>	
	Bottom	<input type="text"/>	
DOORWAYS	Wide	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Narrow	<input type="checkbox"/>	
PASSAGES	Wide	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Narrow	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ACCESS		Front	Back
	No. of steps	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	No. of steps in path	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Handrail	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Grab rails	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
BATHROOM	Upstairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Downstairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	
TOILET	Upstairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Downstairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
BATH	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		

What is the type of heating in your present home? Please ✓ box/es:-

Gas

Solid fuel

Electric

10 Other (give details) .....



**About the person with medical needs.**

**Person 1**

Name .....

Relationship to applicant .....

Date of birth .....

Please describe your illnesses or disabilities .....

Who is the family doctor (please give surgery address and Tel. No.)

.....

Have you ever seen an Occupational Therapist? Yes  No   
(If yes please supply name/place of work).

Have you contacted anyone else, i.e. Social Worker/Probation Officer/  
Health Officer about your housing situation? Yes  No

Who have you contacted? .....

Are you in receipt of any of the following?:- Please ✓ yes or no.

Attendance Allowance - High Yes  No

- Medium Yes  No

- Low Yes  No

Disability Living Allowance - High Yes  No

- Medium Yes  No

- Low Yes  No

Has your current home been adapted in any way to assist your disability?  
Please ✓ yes or no.

Ramped access Yes  No

Stairlift Yes  No

Level access shower Yes  No

Other (please give details) .....

Do you need a property with any special facilities? Yes  No   
If YES please give details.

Do you need space for specialist equipment? Yes  No

If YES is it for:- Please ✓ appropriate box/es.

Oxygen

Dialysis

Mobility scooter/wheelchair

Hospital beds

Other

Are you registered partially sighted? Yes  No

Are you registered blind? Yes  No

Do you have problems using your bathing facilities? Yes  No

Do you have problems getting to your toilet? Yes  No

If yes, are any of the following facilities required?

Please ✓ appropriate box/es.

Level/ramped access

Stairlift

Level access shower

Other (please specify) .....

Do you use a wheelchair?:- Yes  No

If yes, how often is the wheelchair used:-

Please ✓ appropriate box/es.

All the time

Occasionally

Outdoors only

Do you use a walking aid? Yes  No

If yes, do you use a:- Walking Stick(s)? Indoors

Outdoors

Both

Walking Frame? Indoors

Outdoors

Both

Elbow Crutches? Indoors

Outdoors

Both

Other? Inside

Outside

Both

Do you have problems climbing up and down stairs? Yes  No

If yes, do you have a stairlift? Yes  No

**Person 2**

Name .....

Relationship to applicant .....

Date of birth .....

Please describe your illnesses or disabilities .....

Who is the family doctor (please give surgery address and Tel. No.)

.....

.....

Have you ever seen an Occupational Therapist? Yes  No

(If yes please supply name/place of work).

Have you contacted anyone else, i.e. Social Worker/Probation Officer/  
Health Officer about your housing situation?

Yes  No

Who have you contacted?.....

Are you in receipt of any of the following?:- *Please ✓ yes or no.*

Attendance Allowance - High Yes  No

- Medium Yes  No

- Low Yes  No

Disability Living Allowance - High Yes  No

- Medium Yes  No

- Low Yes  No

Has your current home been adapted in any way to assist your disability?

*Please ✓ yes or no.*

Ramped access Yes  No

Stairlift Yes  No

Level access shower Yes  No

Other (*please give details*).....

Do you need a property with any special facilities? Yes  No

*If YES please give details.*

Do you need space for specialist equipment? Yes  No

*If YES is it for:- Please ✓ appropriate box/es.*

Oxygen

Dialysis

Mobility scooter/wheelchair

Hospital beds

Other

Are you registered partially sighted? Yes  No

Are you registered blind? Yes  No

Do you have problems using your bathing facilities? Yes  No

Do you have problems getting to your toilet? Yes  No

If yes, are any of the following facilities required?

*Please ✓ appropriate box/es.*

Level/ramped access

Stairlift

Level access shower

Other (*please specify*).....

Do you use a wheelchair?:- Yes  No

If yes, how often is the wheelchair used:-

*Please ✓ appropriate box/es.*

All the time

Occasionally

Outdoors only

Do you use a walking aid? Yes  No

If yes, do you use a:-

Walking Stick(s)?	Indoors	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Outdoors	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Both	<input type="checkbox"/>
Walking Frame?	Indoors	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Outdoors	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Both	<input type="checkbox"/>
Elbow Crutches?	Indoors	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Outdoors	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Both	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other?	Inside	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Outside	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Both	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you have problems climbing up and down stairs? Yes  No

If yes, do you have a stairlift? Yes  No

**Person 3**

Name .....

Relationship to applicant .....

Date of birth .....

Please describe your illnesses or disabilities.....

Who is the family doctor (*please give surgery address and Tel. No.*)

.....  
 .....

Have you ever seen an Occupational Therapist? Yes  No   
 (*If yes please supply name/place of work.*)

.....

Have you contacted anyone else, i.e. Social Worker/Probation Officer/  
 Health Officer about your housing situation? Yes  No

Who have you contacted? .....

Are you in receipt of any of the following?:- *Please ✓ yes or no.*

Attendance Allowance - High Yes  No

- Medium Yes  No

- Low Yes  No

Disability Living Allowance - High Yes  No

- Medium Yes  No

- Low Yes  No

Has your current home been adapted in any way to assist your disability?

Please ✓ yes or no.

Ramped access Yes  No

Stairlift Yes  No

Level access shower Yes  No

Other (please give details).....

Do you need a property with any special facilities? Yes  No

If YES please give details.

Do you need space for specialist equipment? Yes  No

If YES is it for:- Please ✓ appropriate box/es.

Oxygen

Dialysis

Mobility scooter/wheelchair

Hospital beds

Other

Are you registered partially sighted? Yes  No

Are you registered blind? Yes  No

Do you have problems using your bathing facilities? Yes  No

Do you have problems getting to your toilet? Yes  No

If yes, are any of the following facilities required?

Please ✓ appropriate box/es.

Level/ramped access

Stairlift

Level access shower

Other (please specify).....

Do you use a wheelchair?:- Yes  No

If yes, how often is the wheelchair used:-

Please ✓ appropriate box/es.

All the time

Occasionally

Outdoors only

Do you use a walking aid? Yes  No

If yes, do you use a:- Walking Stick(s)? Indoors

Outdoors

Both

Walking Frame? Indoors

Outdoors

Both

Elbow Crutches?

Indoors

Outdoors

Both

Other?

Inside

Outside

Both

Do you have problems climbing up and down stairs?

Yes  No

If yes, do you have a stairlift?

Yes  No

## SECTION 9 - SOCIAL/WELFARE NEEDS

Do you wish to be re-housed to:-

Please ✓ appropriate box/es.

Receive support

Give support

If so, state, who you wish to receive support from/give support to, how they are known to you and give addresses and state the reasons why you would like to be re-housed near them

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Are you in danger of losing your current home? Yes  No

Please give details below and enclose any documentation that you may have, i.e. a Notice to Quit:-

.....  
.....  
.....

Is your home in need of repair?

Yes  No  If yes please give details:-

.....  
.....  
.....

Is the reason you wish to be re-housed based on other social or welfare needs. If so, please describe the circumstances below:-

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

## SECTION 10 – FINANCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Do you or any other adult that wishes to be re-housed with you own any property which you do not live in?

Yes  No

What is the value?.....

If you have a mortgage on this property, how much do you owe?.....

Why do you not live there?.....

.....

Do you receive Housing or Council Tax benefits?

Yes  No

(1) **Tenancy Details Please complete this section if you are a lodger or you rent your current accommodation (other than a council property).**

Please give the name/address and contact telephone number of your current landlord.

Name.....

Address.....

.....

..... Postcode.....

Landlords telephone number.....

How often is the rent due?.....

How much is the rent?.....

Are you in arrears with your rent? Yes  No

Please be aware that the City of Durham Council may require a reference from your landlord, if you wish to supply this, please enclose it with the form, or the City of Durham may contact your landlord direct.

Has court action ever been taken against you or any member of your household for any of the following?:-

Rent Arrears Yes  No

Nuisance or harassment Yes  No

Damage to property Yes  No

Any other breach of tenancy Yes  No  Please specify

.....

(2) **Homeowner details Please only complete this section if you are a homeowner.**

Approximately how much is your home worth?.....

If you have a mortgage, approximately how much do you owe?.....

What are your monthly mortgage payments?.....

Are you in arrears? Yes  No

Has any legal action been taken against you as a result of your arrears? Yes  No

If yes, what action has been taken?

.....

## SECTION 11 - LOCAL CONNECTION

You need only complete this section if you currently do not live within the boundaries of the City of Durham.

Do you have a connection with the city? Yes  No

Is that connection Employment

If you have employment in the City of Durham, please state job title and give the name and address of your employer. (Provide confirmation from your employer).

Job title .....

Name of employer .....

Address of employer .....

..... Postcode .....

Is that connection Family  Please state name, address and relationship

.....

.....

Is that connection Special Circumstances  Please specify

.....

.....

Have you previously lived within the boundaries of City of Durham? Yes  No

Please state where and when:-

Address	Date from	Date to

## SECTION 12 - ANY OTHER INFORMATION

Please state below any other information that you may think will be relevant to your housing application:-

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



## SECTION 13 – YOUR DESIRED ACCOMMODATION

*Please note that you will usually only be considered for property types and sizes relating to your need, as per the allocations policy.*

What type of accommodation do you desire?

- Bedsit
- Flat (ground floor)
- Flat (upper floor)
- House
- Bungalow
- Disabled persons bungalow
- Sheltered Bedsit
- Sheltered Flat (ground floor)
- Sheltered Flat (upper floor)

What size of accommodation do you desire?

- 1 bedroom
- 2 bedroom
- 3 bedroom
- 4 bedroom
- 5 bedroom
  
- Would you like sheltered accommodation with an on-site warden (during office hours only?)  
*Please note that applications for sheltered accommodation will be subject to an assessment.*
- Would you like accommodation with City Care or Mobile Warden service?
- Would you be interested in renting a Housing Association property?
- Would you be interested in shared ownership/shared equity?
- Would you be interested in low cost home ownership?
- Would you be interested in a mutual exchange?

## SECTION 14 - WHERE DO YOU WANT TO LIVE?

Please ✓ up to a maximum of 10 localities:-

New Brancepeth

Meadowfield

Brandon

Langley Moor

*(Older Persons Accommodation only)*

Croxdale

Esh Winning

Ushaw Moor

Bearpark

Brasside

Framwellgate Moor

Nevilles Cross

*(1 house and 6 flats only)*

Pity Me

Witton Gilbert

Carrville

Claypath

Crossgate

Elvet

Gilesgate

Gilesgate Moor

Littleton

Pittington

Sherburn Road

West Rainton

Ludworth

Shadforth

Sherburn Hill

Sherburn Village  
*(including Grand View)*

Bowburn  
*(including Park Hill)*

Cassop

Coxhoe

Kelloe

Quarrington Hill

Shincliffe  
*(12 Housing Association bungalow  
for Older Persons only)*

## SECTION 15 - AUTHORITY FOR ANOTHER PERSON TO RECEIVE INFORMATION

In order to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 once you submit your housing application the City Council cannot disclose details of your application to any person other than you. This ensures that the information that you give the authority remains confidential.

If you would like a family member or friend to make enquiries on your behalf, you can complete the section below.

You may cancel this authorisation at any time in the future by notifying the City Council in writing.

Name of person authorised to receive information on my behalf

.....

Date of birth of person authorised (for security purposes only).....

Signed..... Date.....

# SECTION 16 - AUTHORISATION FOR A POLICE CHECK

Do you have any criminal convictions?

*(other than spent convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 – see guidance notes overleaf)*

(please ✓ the appropriate box) Yes

No

**This form MUST be signed in all circumstances, regardless of whether you have ticked Yes or No. Failure to do this may result in a delay in your application being processed.**

If yes please give details of any convictions:-

Name	Date of Conviction	Court of Conviction	Nature of Offence	Penalty

Applicant..... Joint Applicant .....

*(if applicable)*

Date of Birth.....

Place of Birth.....

Current Address.....

.....

.....

**Authorise**..... City of Durham Council

**Nominated Representative**.....*(Block Capitals)*

**Nominated Representative**.....*(Signature)*

To request/receive from the Police, information of any incidents, convictions, cautions or any other disposals of charges, regarding myself, in connection with my application for housing.

(Subject to the provisions of Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974).

Signed..... Signed.....

*(Applicant)*

*(Joint Applicant)*

Date..... Date.....

## Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

Spent convictions – Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 you are not obliged to disclose any offence resulting in one of the Sentences in the left-hand column below if the corresponding period in the right-hand column has elapsed:-

### Rehabilitation Periods:

<i>Sentence</i>	<i>Period</i>
Imprisonment exceeding 6 months but not exceeding 30 months	<b>10 Years</b>
Imprisonment not exceeding 6 months	<b>7 Years</b>
Fine or any other sentence not listed below	<b>5 Years</b>

*Note: These periods are subject to reduction by half for persons under 17*

### Rehabilitation periods for certain sentences confined to young offenders:

<i>Sentence</i>	<i>Period</i>
Borstal Training	<b>7 Years</b>
S.53 Detention exceeding 6 months but not exceeding 30 months	<b>5 Years</b>
S.53 Detention not exceeding 6 months	<b>3 Years</b>
Detention Care Order	<b>3 Years</b>

### Miscellaneous:

<i>Sentence</i>	<i>Period</i>
Absolute discharge	<b>6 Months</b>
Conditional discharge, binding over, Probation	<b>1 Year from the date of conviction or the date on which the order or requirement ceases – whichever ever is the longer</b>
Remand Home Order, Approved School Order, Attendance Centre Order	<b>1 Year from the date of conviction or when the order ceases to have effect – whichever is the longer</b>
Driving Disqualifications, Endorsements etc.	<b>The date on which the disqualification ceases</b>

### Sentences excluded from Rehabilitation:

Life Imprisonment  
Preventative Detention  
Sentence of imprisonment or correction exceeding 30 months

### Extension of Rehabilitation Periods:

Generally, where during a rehabilitation period applicable to a conviction a person commits a further offence, neither offence can be regarded as spent until both rehabilitation periods have elapsed.

Note: Professional legal advice should be obtained if you are in any doubt. It is an offence to make a false declaration

# **SECTION 17 – DATA PROTECTION**

## **Data Protection**

We will use the information you have provided to assess your need for housing. We may also need to contact other agencies for information about you. These could include:- the police, courts, probation, the benefits agency, other Council departments and your past and present landlords.

It is a criminal offence for applicants to knowingly or recklessly give false information; or knowingly withhold information. It can carry a fine of up to £5,000; and in separate civil proceedings can result in the loss of any accommodation allocated as a result of the Council relying on that false information. Information will be held on computer and is covered by the Data Protection Act 1998.

## **Data Protection Act 1998**

The information you have provided will be held by the Council on computerised and manual files within Housing Services. The data may be disclosed to other departments within the Council or other organisations, but only in order to ensure compliance with relevant legislation or for identification purposes or to prevent or detect fraud or a crime. If you wish to obtain a copy of the information the Council holds about you, you must apply in writing to the Chief Executive, City of Durham Council, 17 Claypath, Durham DH1 1RH. A fee will be payable. City of Durham Council is a registered Data Controller in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Signing the form indicates that you:-

- declare that all the information contained on the form is correct and complete
- consent to any investigations necessary to check information you have provided and to assess your housing needs
- authorise agencies from whom we request information to disclose information in relation to your application for housing
- agree to us obtaining Council Tax information relating to your application for housing for verification purposes
- understand that any information you have given may be shared with other sections within the Council and other organisations administering public funds for the purpose of preventing and detecting fraud.

## **Declaration**

This is my/our application for re-housing and I/we understand that legal action under the Housing Act 1996 may be taken against me/us if I/we obtain accommodation as a result of:-

- giving false or misleading information
- knowingly making a false statement
- withholding information the City Council reasonably need to process my/our housing application
- Failing to notify the Council of a change in my/our circumstances which may affect my/our housing application – (you must tell City of Durham Council of any changes relating to your housing application as soon as they occur).

Please check you have completed all sections of the form and sign below. We are not able to process your application unless you sign it. If this application is a joint application, all applicants should sign.

Applicant's Signature.....

Joint Applicant's/s' Signature/s.....

Date.....

Has this form been signed by someone other than the applicant? Yes   
No

If Yes, please tell us why.....

If Yes, what is the name of the person and what is their relationship to the applicant?  
.....  
.....

Please return the form to:-  
**City of Durham Council,**  
**Housing Services,**  
**17 Claypath,**  
**Durham,**  
**DH1 1RH.**

Following acceptance by the Council, applicants will receive an acknowledgement letter stating the band that they have been placed in. Persons who are not accepted will be contacted in writing explaining the reason for the decision and advising them of their right to appeal against the decision.

## **Housing Allocations Policy – a summary**

This document is a summary of the City of Durham Council's Allocations Policy.

It should help you to complete the application form for accommodation and advise you about how your application will be processed and how properties will be allocated to applicants.

The Policy is based on housing need and applicants are placed in bands as below:

**Band A Urgent Housing Need**

**Band B High Housing Need**

**Band C Medium Housing Need**

**Band D Low Housing Need**

**Band E No priority**

### **1. Eligibility**

The Council holds a Housing Register of applicants. This register is used to make allocations to housing stock owned by City of Durham Council and provide nominations to rented housing owned by Registered Social Landlords.

Any person over the age of 16 years may apply to be placed on the Housing Register.

Certain applicants may not be allowed access to the housing register due to conditions prescribed in legislation or in City Council Policies.

These include people who:

- are subject to immigration control
- are guilty of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make them unsuitable to be a tenant.

Examples of serious unacceptable behaviour include anti-social behaviour, domestic violence, racial harassment, intimidation, drug dealing or substantial rent arrears. Persons who are not accepted will be notified in writing explaining the reason for the decision and advising them of their right to appeal.

Some eligible applicants whose behaviour is not serious enough to make them unsuitable to be a tenant may, nevertheless, be guilty of unacceptable behaviour. These applicants will be accepted onto the Housing Register but their application will not be given preference for an offer of accommodation until their behaviour is no longer considered unacceptable. Unacceptable behaviour includes rent arrears or other breaches of tenancy. These applicants will also be advised in writing of this decision.

## 2. Choices of Area and Accommodation

### Choice of Area

Applicants may choose up to ten localities from the 33 available throughout the District, listed below.

Bearpark	Esh Winning	Pittington
Bowburn	Framwellgate Moor	Pity Me
Brandon	Gilesgate	Quarrington Hill
Brass de	Gilesgate Moor	Shadforth
Carrville	Kelloe	Sherburn Hill
Cassop	Langley Moor	Sherburn Road
Claypath	Littletown	Sherburn Village
Coxhoe	Ludworth	Shincliffe
Crossgate	Meadowfield	Ushaw Moor
Croxdale	Nevilles Cross	West Rainton
Elvet	New Brancepeth	Witton Gilbert

### Choice of Accommodation

Applicants may apply for a property type and size of their choice but properties will firstly be allocated only to those applicants who have a need for that type and size e.g. bungalows to those applicants over 60 years of age, properties adapted for people with disabilities to those applicants who have a specific need for the adaptations, properties of 2 or more bedrooms to households who require that number of bedrooms.

## 3. Processes involved in the Policy

### Application

Applicants may apply for accommodation by completing an application form which is available from all Cityinfo offices (see below for details) and returning it to one of these offices. From January 2008 applicants may also apply on-line via the City of Durham's Website.

### Initial assessment of application

On receipt of an application form applicants' circumstances will be assessed and applicants placed on the Housing Register in the highest band for which their circumstances qualify.

Within each band applicants are ranked in date order according to the date they were assessed as being in this category of need.

### Acknowledgement

Following acceptance by the Council applicants will receive an acknowledgement letter which states the band the applicant has been placed in.

### Annual Review of Housing Register

Twelve months after an application is accepted, and every twelve months thereafter, the applicant will be sent an Annual Review Form which must be completed and returned within twenty-eight days in order to remain on the Housing Register. If this form is not returned, the application will be removed from the Housing Register.



#### **4. Categories of people who may be given preference over other applicants**

The City Council has to ensure that, when allocating housing, reasonable preference is given to the following groups:

- people who are homeless;
- people owed a re-housing duty by the authority (for example where a demolition order or compulsory purchase order is made);
- people occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or else living in unsatisfactory housing conditions;
- people who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (including grounds relating to a disability); and
- people who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others)

The Allocations Policy also seeks to address particular priorities such as the need to reduce under-occupation of family housing; homelessness prevention and resettlement.

#### **5. Allocation**

Applications will be assessed according to need and placed in the appropriate band as outlined above.

Offers of accommodation will be made to the applicant who is ranked the highest in the highest band, who has chosen the locality and is eligible for the type and size of property available.

Applicants will be made a maximum of two offers of accommodation within their chosen locality(s).

Following two refusals of accommodation applications will be cancelled but the applicant may re-apply by completing a new application form.

In the case of Council or RSL tenants, an offer of accommodation will not be made if the applicant has not conducted their tenancy in a satisfactory manner e.g. has rent arrears/sundry debts (including rechargeable repairs) or is in breach of a condition of tenancy.

Also, if the Council or RSL has applied for a Court Hearing or there is a Court Order in force, an offer of accommodation will not be made and the application will be removed from the waiting list.

#### **6. Removal from the Housing Register**

Applicants will be removed from the Housing Register if any of the following occur:-

1. the applicant requests that they be removed from the Housing Register,
2. the applicant accepts an offer of accommodation,
3. the applicant refuses two offers of accommodation within their chosen locality(s),
4. the applicant ceases to be an eligible person,
5. the applicant becomes ineligible for an allocation on the basis of unacceptable behaviour,
6. the applicant fails to return their Annual Review Form.

## **7. Right to information**

Applicants have the right to certain general information, i.e.

- (a) information that will enable them to assess how their application is likely to be treated under the scheme and, in particular, whether they are likely to fall within the reasonable preference categories; and
- (b) information about whether accommodation appropriate to their needs is likely to be made available and, if so, how long it is likely to be before such accommodation becomes available.

The Council is prohibited under the Data Protection Act 1998 from divulging to other members of the public that a person is an applicant for social housing, unless they have the applicant's consent and therefore personal information about individual applicants will always be kept confidential.

## **8. Decisions and the right to a review of a decision**

Applicants are entitled to a review if:-

- The Council decides not to treat them as an eligible person and therefore they are not placed on the Housing Register.
- The Council accepts the applicant onto the Housing Register but does not give the applicant any preference for an offer of accommodation until their behaviour is no longer considered unacceptable.
- Their application is cancelled other than at their request.
- They do not agree with the Band which they have been placed in.

The review will be undertaken by an officer who was not involved in making the original decision and who is senior to the officer(s) involved in making the original decision.

## **9. Mutual Exchanges**

Secure tenants have the right to exchange their tenancies. Exchanges can be carried out with other tenants of the City of Durham or other local authorities or Registered Social Landlords (i.e. Housing Associations). This right is subject to the written consent of the landlord(s) but can be refused on certain grounds. If you wish to apply for an exchange you should complete a housing application form.

## **10. Homelessness**

If you are homeless or threatened with homelessness, you should contact Cityinfo at 17 Claypath or telephone 0191 301 8299 to make an appointment with the Homelessness Officer or the Homelessness Prevention Officer.