

Housing allocation scheme 2018

Summary



Introduction to the housing allocations scheme and how to apply



This document summarises the current housing allocations scheme that came into effect in January 2016. The scheme sets out who qualifies for inclusion on the housing register having applied and then it prioritises amongst those who do qualify.

The scheme was reviewed, which included a major public consultation, to make sure that we allocate housing to residents in Camden who are in the greatest housing need. The scheme also aims to help applicants make realistic decisions about their future housing prospects, by offering information on a range of housing options as well as encouraging strong, mixed and sustainable communities.

For easy reference a table summarising how points are allocated in the scheme can be found at the back of this document.

There may have been changes made to the full allocations scheme since the publishing of this document. A copy of Camden's full housing allocations scheme can be found at camden.gov.uk/housingallocation.

You can request a printed version with a small charge from:

Housing Needs Group, London Borough of Camden, Camden Town Hall, Judd Street, London WC1H 9JE

How to apply

To apply for our list for housing you will need to complete an online application at camden.gov.uk/housingallocation. Our website has lots of useful information about our housing allocations scheme and advice on how to apply.

Before you start the full application you will be asked a few questions to make sure that completing it is worthwhile. The full application should take no longer than 30 minutes.

To apply you will need to have all the addresses you have lived at with the dates you moved in and out over the last 7 years and full names and dates of birth of everyone you are including in your application.

Once you have completed the application form, you will be advised whether you qualify or not. If you do not qualify you can request a review of that decision. If you do qualify you will be contacted to explain what will happen next and to make further checks.

Who can't join the housing register



You will not qualify to join the housing register if you fall into one or more of the groups below:

- you are not entitled to access to assistance from public funds due to your immigration status
- you have not lived in the London Borough of Camden for five out of the last seven years
- your application for housing has 30 points or less
- you have significant rent arrears which have not been cleared or reduced to a period of ten weeks or less at the time of your application

- you or anyone included in your application have a high level of household savings or assets of £32,000 and over or you own your own home
- you or a member of your household has been involved in unacceptable behaviour, serious enough to make you an unsuitable tenant of the Council or other housing provider.

In some limited circumstances you will be able to join the housing register even if you fall into one of the groups above. Details of these exceptions can be found in the full housing allocation scheme.

The bedroom standard



We will assess the number of bedrooms your household needs using the bedroom standard below.

If you are a single person, you will be able to bid for a studio property. You will also be able to bid for one bedroom properties as well as studios if:

- you are aged 40 or over
- you are a Camden social housing tenant moving to another home and your current home is not a studio flat
- you have a medical or housing support reason as assessed by the Council's medical assessment officer (or equivalent).

For other households, we will assess your bedroom need using the Camden bedroom standard, following the steps below in order:

- Step 1** One bedroom for you, and partner/spouse (if any)
- Step 2** One bedroom for any additional adult couple
- Step 3** One bedroom for any two additional people of the same sex
- Step 4** One bedroom for any two additional people of the opposite sex aged nine and under
- Step 5** One bedroom for any additional person.

Some groups will be entitled to an additional bedroom (see the full allocations scheme for details).

How the points system works

The points system is divided into eight points groups which reflect the reasonable preference groups outlined in housing law (see section 1.5.1 on reasonable preference for more detail).

Group A1 – Homelessness

Threat of homelessness

You will be eligible for 50 points if you are homeless or threatened with homelessness. These points will be awarded for a period of up to 56 days prior to losing your accommodation and for four months afterwards.

During this period, you will be offered housing advice to help you decide how to best meet your housing needs. You will be eligible for these points if you have no accommodation you can reasonably occupy.

Main homelessness duty

You will be eligible for 100 points if you are owed the main homelessness duty under homelessness law. This means that you are:

- eligible for housing assistance, and
- you became homeless through no fault of your own (unintentionally homeless), and
- you are in one of the priority need groups, and
- you have a local connection to Camden or no local connection elsewhere.

Group A2 – Homeless prevention

You will be eligible for 100 points if:

- you are threatened with homelessness and you have accepted a private rented sector offer from the Council to help prevent your homelessness. These points will be awarded if you would normally be owed the main homelessness duty by the Council. You will be eligible for a further 100 points if your homelessness is prevented for at least six months.

- you are threatened with homelessness but the Council has negotiated for you to remain in your accommodation for at least 6 months. These points will be awarded if you would normally be owed the main homelessness duty by the Council. You will be eligible for a further 100 points if your homelessness is prevented for at least six months.
- You applied to the Council before it started to use its powers under the Localism Act (in February 2013) and you accept a tenancy in the private rented sector that ends the Council's main homelessness duty to your household – this is called a qualifying offer. You will be eligible for a further 100 points after you have lived in the private rented sector for six months.

Group B1 – Insanitary, unsuitable or overcrowded housing conditions

You will be eligible for 50 points if:

- you have to share facilities (including bath/shower, toilet and food storage/preparation area if you are not provided with meals) with other people who are not on your housing application and are not your lodgers and you have dependent children or a pregnant woman living as part of your household
- you are a private sector tenant renting a property where a move is desirable as your housing situation could seriously affect your health and wellbeing.

The Council will assess your case and determine that:

- there are significant hazards in your property, and/or
- your property is uninhabitable, and/or
- you are living in conditions that the Council should be able to improve through informal or formal enforcement activity.

You will be eligible for 300 points if:

- you are a private sector tenant renting a property and you have an urgent need to move because there is an immediate threat to your health and wellbeing.

We will assess your case and determine that:

- there are significant hazards in your property, and/or
- your property is uninhabitable, and/or
- your living conditions cannot be improved.

Overcrowded housing

There are three levels of points for overcrowding. You can only receive one award.

1. You will be eligible for 250 points if:

- you have two or more rooms which could be used as a bedroom less than your assessed bedroom need
- you have one or more dependent children and you live in a studio.

2. You will be eligible for 100 points if:

- you have one room which could be used as a bedroom less than your assessed bedroom need
- you are a single-person household and do not have access to a room of your own.

3. You will be eligible for 50 points if:

- your household consists of you and one or more other people who are not your partner or spouse, and
- you have sole use of the same number of rooms which could be used as bedrooms as your assessed bed need, and
- you have no access to any additional rooms (other than bathrooms, toilets and self-contained kitchens).

Group B2 – Under-occupation, essential repairs, regeneration or other improvement work

You can only be awarded points in one of the categories listed below. If you are eligible for points in more than one of these categories, you will be given the highest award of points.

Regeneration or redevelopment

You will be eligible for 600 points if:

- you are a Camden Council tenant and are required to leave your property because it has been identified for regeneration under a major redevelopment project agreed by the Director for Housing and Adult Social Care. You will be given the option to return to one of the newly built units which meets your household's assessed bedroom need where available. The Council may assist your adult sons and daughters to move into a property of their own through a direct offer if they have lived with you for at least 12 months as their sole home before the redevelopment work is approved to proceed.

Under-occupation

You will be eligible for 600 points if:

- you are living in accommodation in Camden which is larger than your household needs (under occupation). For housing association tenants, your landlord will need to agree to allow your current property to be let through the Council if you move into a Council property. The Council may help your sons and daughters to move into a property of their own through a direct offer if they have lived with you for at least 12 months as their sole home before you were awarded under-occupation points. Housing associations may have similar schemes to help with moving costs and your landlord will be able to give you further information.

Essential repairs

You will be eligible for 600 points if:

- you are a Camden Council tenant and your property has been assessed by the Council as needing essential repairs. We will award these points where we assess that repairs will be disruptive or where there are technical or safety

reasons to move you and where the works will take two months or longer. Where repairs will take less than two months, you will be eligible for temporary accommodation and the right to return to your current property. Where repairs will take longer than two months, you will be offered a choice between a temporary and a permanent move.

- Initially points for disrepair are awarded for 6 months only, though this can be extended in exceptional cases

Accessible housing

You will be eligible for 400 points if:

- you are living in accommodation that has been specially designed or adapted to be accessible and you no longer require the adaptations in the property.

Group C – Health and housing related needs

There are two levels of priority for housing and health related needs within this group. Your application will be assessed by the Council's medical assessment officer (or other authorised medical professional) to determine if you are eligible for health and housing related points.

To be assessed as eligible for housing and health related needs points, you must demonstrate that:

- your medical condition is being caused or made worse by your housing conditions, and
- your current property cannot be improved or adapted to meet your needs at a reasonable cost, and
- rehousing is likely to significantly improve your condition.

Category 1

You will be eligible for 500 points if your medical condition and housing circumstances are having a serious impact on your health and wellbeing and you are in urgent need of rehousing.

Category 2

You will be eligible for 150 points if your medical condition and housing circumstances are having a

serious impact on your health and wellbeing and rehousing would be desirable.

Group D – Harassment and violence

If you are fleeing severe harassment or violence and you are in urgent need of rehousing, you will be eligible for 600 points.

If you are fleeing harassment or violence and rehousing would be desirable, you will be eligible for 75 points.

Initially these points will be awarded for a six month period.

Group E – Additional support needs

If you are a Camden Council tenant who would benefit from a period of time in supported housing, or a similar scheme providing a high level of support, and you surrender your tenancy for this reason, you will be awarded 300 points where the following conditions are met:

- you are able to show that you have the skills and, if necessary, the support to sustain a successful tenancy
- an appropriate officer has agreed the points should be awarded
- the decision to award the points was made before the tenancy was surrendered
- you qualify for an allocation of housing.

If you are a young person aged up to 25, you are, or were previously, looked after by Camden Council and your care placement has recently ended or is coming to an end, you will be eligible for 200 points.

If you are a vulnerable person with support needs who is ready to move on to independent housing following a stay in hospital or a period of living in supported accommodation, you will be eligible for 50 points. Where you are ready to move on and also fall into one of the groups below, you will be eligible for 200 points:

- you are aged 65 or over and you are vulnerable because, for example, you have been accepted for sheltered housing, you have a category 2 medical priority or you have spent 10 or more years in a hostel or hospital
- you have complex and enduring mental health problems and

- you have a Care Programme Approach to plan, assess and review your particular needs
- you have a funded support package which goes beyond your housing related support needs
- your mobility needs cannot be met in the private rented sector where you have an assessment from the Council's medical assessment officer (or other authorised medical professional) showing you need level access or wheelchair accessible accommodation, or the Council has tried and been unable to find suitable accommodation for you and your household over the last six months.

Group F – Hardship and social needs

You will be eligible for points if you need to move for reasons related to fostering or special guardianship:

- you need larger or alternative accommodation to continue your role as a foster parent or adopter, you will be eligible for 150 points
- you are caring for one or more children in Camden under a Special Guardianship order and your housing conditions have been affected by this order (for example you are overcrowded), you will be eligible for 100 points

You will be eligible for points if you are experiencing hardship caused by one of the situations listed below and it would be alleviated by moving to alternative accommodation:

- if you need to move to give or receive long-term substantial care in Camden, you will be eligible for 100 points.
- if you are accessing specialist medical or support facilities in Camden, you will be eligible for 75 points
- if you are taking up an education or training opportunity in Camden that is not available elsewhere, you will be eligible for 75 points
- if you need to move to take up employment or an apprenticeship in Camden, you will be eligible for 75 points. You will only be eligible for these points if you:
 - are in, or under definite offer of, paid work or an apprenticeship, and
 - have signed, or been offered, a contract of employment or an apprenticeship agreement for a minimum period of 12 months, and

- work 24 hours per week on average, and
- are based for the majority (at least 60%) of the time in the London Borough of Camden, and
- earn the national minimum wage (currently £6.50 an hour for those aged 21 and over).

When assessing hardship or your need to move we will take into account where relevant:

- the nature of the work, study or specialist service, or care given
- distance, transport options, and costs
- personal and financial impact of a failure to move
- other personal factors, such as medical conditions and child care, financial and family life.

Group G – Transfers

If you are a current Camden Council tenant applying for a transfer and you qualify for inclusion on the register, you will be awarded 30 points.

Group H – Additional preference

If you are a current or former member of the armed forces and have been awarded points in groups A-H, you will be eligible for an additional 50 points.

Recognising waiting time

We want to recognise the time households spend on the housing register. To do this, every year we will give you five per cent of the points award you have on the anniversary of your application.

The 30 points awarded in Group G to Camden Council tenants applying for transfer will not be included in the calculation of waiting time points. Waiting time points awarded on previous anniversaries will also be excluded from the calculation.

Long-term residence

To recognise commitment to the borough and long-term residence, if you have lived in Camden for 10 out of the last 15 years, we will give you 10 per cent of the points award you have on the anniversary of your application (instead of the five percent award given to those without a long-term connection to the borough).

Right to request information or a review

We want you to know how we assess your housing application and how your points are awarded. We can provide you with information on whether you are likely to be housed and how long this might take.

You have the right to information on how we have assessed your case. If we decide that you are ineligible or do not qualify for housing, we will let you know in writing.

You have a right to request a review of any decision on your case. We have a two stage review procedure.

Stage 1 If you disagree with an officer's decision, you can ask them to reconsider it up to 21 days after we have issued the decision. The easy way to request a review is to search "appeal housing application" on camden.gov.uk. You can also phone or write to us. Within 14 days of receiving your reasons and any further information you provide, the officer will advise you of any change to their decision.

Stage 2 You can also request a review of the stage 1 decision. You must do so within 21 days of the decision being issued and should provide your reasons for disagreement in writing and send us any other information that you would like us to consider as part of the review. A reviewing officer, who was not involved in the original decision, will review the decision within 56 days of your request and let you know the outcome in writing.



Points system at a glance

Criteria	Points	Who is eligible?				
		Council tenants	Housing association tenants	Private sector tenants	Applicants owed the main homeless duty	Other applicants
Homelessness (A1) and homelessness prevention (A2): One award only						
Threat of homelessness	50 time-limited points awarded for up to 56 days prior to, and four months after, the loss of accommodation		✓	✓		✓
Household accepted as statutorily homeless	100 points				✓	
Homelessness prevention or qualifying offer in the private rented sector	100 points plus a further 100 points after six months			✓		✓
Qualifying offer in the private rented sector	100 points plus a further 100 points after six months			✓		✓

Insanitary, unsuitable or overcrowded housing (B1): All that apply						
Private rented accommodation – disrepair	Uninhabitable: 300 points; insanitary or in poor condition: 50 points			✓		
Sharing facilities where there are dependent children or pregnancy in household	50 points	✓	✓	✓		✓
Overcrowding	Dependent on the degree of overcrowding: 250, 100 or 50 points.	✓	✓	✓		✓

Criteria	Points	Who is eligible?				
		Council tenants	Housing association tenants	Private sector tenants	Applicants owed the main homeless duty	Other applicants
Under-occupation, essential repairs, regeneration or other improvement work (B2): One award only						
Decants / Community Investment Programme or other major development work	600 points	✓				
Under-occupation	600 points	✓	✓			
Essential repairs	600 points	✓				
Accessible housing	400 points	✓				

Health and housing (C): All that apply						
Urgent need to move (category 1)	500 points	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Need to move (category 2)	150 points					

Harassment and violence (D): One award only						
Urgent need to move	600 points	✓	✓	✓		✓
Need to move	75 points					

Additional support needs (E): One award only						
Move to supported accommodation (surrender tenancy)	300 points	✓				
Care leavers	200 points		✓	✓		✓
Move on from supported accommodation	200 points (particular vulnerable) 50 points		✓	✓		✓

Hardship, and social needs (F): One award only						
Fostering	150 points					
Special Guardianship	100 points					
Giving or receiving substantial care	100 points	✓	✓	✓		✓
Accessing medical or support services	75 points					
Employment or education	75 points					

Criteria	Points	Who is eligible?				
		Council tenants	Housing association tenants	Private sector tenants	Applicants owed the main homeless duty	Other applicants
Transfer (G)						
Current Camden Council tenants applying for a transfer who qualify to register	30 points	✓				

Additional preference (H)						
Current or former members of the armed forces and already receiving other points from Groups A to F above	50 points	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



If you have any queries regarding this summary,
please contact the Accommodation Placements
Team on **020 7974 4444** or email
housingneeds@camden.gov.uk

Housing Need Group, Camden Town Hall,
Judd Street, London WC1H 9JE.