

Ref	Page	Section	Current Section Title	Change	Rationale/Evidence/Comment (where appropriate)	New Page	New Section	New Section Title	Policy Change?
1	5	1.1	Scheme Objectives	Addition of objective: To create sustainable communities.		7	4	Scheme Objectives	
2	8	1.4	Rural Lettings Policy	All vacancies in rural areas to be subject to rural allocations policy and not half as current policy mandates.	Further protects the interests of rural communities.	8	6.1	Rural Allocations Criteria	✓
3	36	Appendix 1	Criteria for Rural Allocations Policy	Redefine the criteria to establish rural connection to: i. Lived in the Parish continually for at least 3 years prior to the date of selection for an offer. ii. Been in continuous full- or part-time work (excluding seasonal work) in the parish for at least the last 3 years prior to the date of selection for an offer (part-time work means a minimum of 16 hours per week). iii. Lived continuously in the parish for at least 3 years prior to being accepted as homeless but have been placed in temporary accommodation outside of the parish for up to 2 years.	Current criteria requires an applicant to have lived in the parish for 10 years or more, lived or worked in the parish continually for 5 years or lived continuously in the parish for at least 3 years prior to being accepted as homeless but have been placed in temporary accommodation outside of the parish for up to 2 years). The proposed changes are more in keeping with Section 106 templates and statutory homelessness legislation.	8	6.1	Rural Allocations Criteria	✓
4			New	Allow applicants who meet the rural allocation criteria to apply for properties in corresponding rural area with one bedroom more than they require. Applicants who do not have the rural connection will be required to meet the maximum bedroom requirements unless there are no other suitable applicants.	Further protects the interests of rural communities. Example from Councillor in former Alnwick districts whose constituents have lived in a rural parish all their lives but could not apply for a 3 bed vacancy due to them only having a 2 bed need.	9	6.1	Rural Allocations Criteria	✓
5			New	New section to clarify that properties subject to Section 106 agreements allocated through Northumberland Homefinder will be allocated as per the s106 agreement and not as per the CAP.	4 new developments advertised through Northumberland Homefinder subject to s106 since launch.	9	6.2	Section 106 Agreements	✓
6	8 and 30	1.5 and 4.9	Advice, Assistance and Support and Support for Vulnerable Applicants	Section reworded to be more inclusive and make reference to Northumberland Homefinder Access and Support strategy. Section expanded to amalgamate separate section which says much the same thing.		9	7	Advice Assistance and Support	

7	11	2.3	Applicants not Eligible due to Unacceptable Behaviour.	Section expanded to include the statement "Any applicant considered to be ineligible will be advised in writing of the reasons for ineligibility, what the applicant must do to improve the behaviour that would be sufficient to consider him or her to be eligible and the timeframe in which a new application may be considered."	Additional clarity for applicants and officers.	14	14	Applicants not Eligible due to Unacceptable Behaviour	
8			Various throughout document	Rename Band 3 "no housing need" as Band 3 "adequately housed".	Verbal feedback from applicants indicates dislike of the terminology "no housing need".			Various throughout document	
9	19	3.8	Band P	Remove requirement for a panel of 2 officers, one of whom must be senior, to determine Band P award.	Feedback from partners is that this is unsustainable resource-wise and unnecessary given the expertise of the Officers involved in assessing.	20	26.1	Band P	
10	20	P.5	Band P Medical	Amalgamate Band P medical and Band P welfare into 1 inclusive band.	No amendment to the criteria for the band being awarded. Housing Act classes medical and welfare as one reasonable preference group, not two separate ones.	21	P.5	People who need to move on medical, welfare or hardship grounds	
11	21	P.6	Band P Welfare	As above	As above	22	P.6	People who need to move on medical, welfare or hardship grounds	
12	22	B1.3	Band 1 Medical	Clarity provided on difference between Band P medical/welfare and Band 1 medical welfare, namely the description of the degree of the medical/welfare issue is described as serious, as opposed to severe (as per Band P).	No amendment to the criteria for the band being awarded.	22	B1.3	Medium medical/welfare need	
13	22	B1.4	People who need to move on medium welfare grounds	Amalgamate into Band 1 Medical.	No amendment to the criteria for the band being awarded.	23	B1.3	Medium medical/welfare need	
14	22	B1.5	People living in severe overcrowded conditions	Amended to allow the award to be based on current, and not future, living situation. Current policy would never allow a single person household to be assessed as being severely overcrowded, even if their current living conditions were such.	Follows concept of statutory overcrowding legislation and as advised by legal team.	23	B1.4	People living in severe overcrowded conditions	✓

15	23	B1.9	People who need to move to avoid medium hardship	Inclusion of a caveat that allows for the priority award to be tied to a specific location in order to ensure that applicants move to the locality associated with relieving hardship	Provides clarity for applicants and landlords who cite examples of applicants being awarded Band 1 to provide support for elderly relative but then bidding for properties that were not in the same locality as said relative.	24	B1.8	People who need to move to avoid medium hardship	✓
16	23	B2.2 and B2.3	People who need to move on medical grounds/People who need to move on welfare	Amalgamated in their entirety	No amendment to the criteria for the band being awarded. Housing Act classes medical and welfare as one reasonable preference group, not two separate ones.	24	B2.2	People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds	
17	24	B2.5	Overcrowding	As point 14		24	B2.4	Overcrowding	
18	24	B2.6	People who need to move to avoid hardship	Amendment to process by which Band 2 for financial hardship is awarded. Housing Officers are not qualified to judge financial hardship therefore the policy is amended to ensure that a financial statement is prepared by a recognised professional agency and that the ensuing action plan specifically identifies that rehousing would alleviate the financial hardship.	Band 2 will still be awarded for financial hardship where a qualified agent identifies that hardship exists.	25	B2.5	Hardship	
19	24	B2.6	People who need to move to avoid hardship	Removal of Band 2 qualifying criteria that allows the award where there is a "relationship breakdown where there is shared parental responsibility."	Deemed by partner landlords as superfluous. Both households may be adequately housed. Where they are not, the policy caters elsewhere.	25	B2.5	Hardship	✓
20	24	B2.7	Key worker	Duplicate of B2.8.	Formatting error.	25	B2.6	Key workers	
21	24	B2.9	People in tied accommodation	Remove band.	Awards Band 2 whether notice has been served or not. Would technically allow a tied tenant to be active in a property search whilst adequately housed. Policy already caters for a situation where a tied tenant has been served notice and awards them Band 1				✓
22				New section which defines how bedroom calculations are arrived at.	Not previously specified.	27	29	Bedroom Calculations	

23				Reduce upper age for children of same sex sharing a bedroom from 15 to 13. The criteria for calculating overcrowding will not change.	Feedback from service user and stakeholder groups is that 15 is too high an age for children sharing. Partners in the scheme believe that lowering the age to 13 would be a balance between reacting to that feedback without creating high demand for stock that is not available in abundance.	27	29	Bedroom Calculations	✓
24				Allow applicants with a 3+ bedroom need to, on request, under occupy by 1 bedroom.	The current policy does not cater for households making their own decision about allowing household members (siblings) to share. Provision is made to prevent applicants using this to increase their priority award.	27	29	Bedroom Calculations	✓
25	26	3.142	Household Criteria	Remove "...unless that person is the applicant or joint applicant" from the statement "A child is a person aged under 16 unless that person is the applicant or joint applicant."	Contradictory as a child under 16 would never be an applicant or joint applicant.	28	31	Definitions of a Household	
26	25	3.13	Under occupation	Section removed and explanation now contained within explanation of relevant band (B1.6)	Duplication				
27	25	3.14	For which type of property can an applicant be considered?	Reworded		27	Part 4	Property Eligibility	
28	26	3.141	Financial Hardship	Remove section	Duplication of explanation of band 2 Hardship	25	B2.5	Hardship	
29	26	3.143	Property Letting Criteria	Remove section	Duplication - now all documented in Part 4 of the policy.	27	Part 4	Property Eligibility	
30	28	4	The Northumberland Homefinder Choice Based Lettings Scheme	Renamed		30	Part 5	Allocations	
31	28	4.1 4.2 4.3 4.4	Advertising, Placing a bid, available property adverts, bid cycle	Reworded	Procedural as opposed to policy	30	33 34	Advertising properties/Placing a bid	

32			New	Restrict bids to 3 per applicant per cycle.	Current policy does not stipulate although procedurally applicants are allowed unlimited bids per cycle. 80% of applicants place between 1 and 3 bids each week, with a further 10% placing between 1 and 5 bids per week. On average, less than 1% of applicants place 6 or more bids. From an administrative perspective, unlimited bids can cause delays to the allocations process and can increase the refusal rate. Partners have seen shortlists of applicants exhausted, which in turn can increase their void times. In consultation 67% agreed bids should be restricted to 3 per cycle against 33% who said bids should be restricted to 5 per cycle.	30	34	Placing a bid	✓
33	29	4.5	Shortlisting and Selection	Reworded		31	35	Shortlisting and Selection	
34	29	4.6	Viewing properties and receiving offers	Reworded			36 37 38	Verification of Circumstances on Offer/Viewings/Time allowed for Accepting an Offer	
35	30	4.8	Feedback	Removed	Duplication. Now in Advertising section	30	33	Advertising properties	
36	30	4.9 4.10	Support for Vulnerable Applicants/Information Advice and Assistance	Amalgamated with previous advice and support section.	Covered earlier in policy	10	7.1	Support for Vulnerable Applicants	
37	32	4.15	Property of the Week	Increase requirement to have advertised property twice (was just once) without success before bedroom calculations are reduced by 1 bedroom max. Allow partner landlords to advertise similar property in same location at the reduced eligibility criteria immediately, within a 3 month rolling period.	Allows partner landlords flexibility with their difficult to let properties. Increases chance of rehousing an applicant and ensures void will be filled.	32	40	Difficult to Let Properties	✓
34			Acknowledgements	Remove	Not relevant. Legal Framework in body of policy.				
36			Appendix 1	Remove section "Criteria for a Rural Allocation Policy"	Now in main body of text as per ref 3	8	6.1	Rural Allocations Criteria	

37	38	4.2	Appendix 2	Remove Notification and Review	Duplication. Now section in its own right in main body of policy.	10	8	Notification of Decisions and the Right to a Statutory Review of a Decision	
38	39	4.5	Appendix 2	4.5 General application reworded to remove contradictions within the same paragraph (re housing debt that will be considered when excluding for unacceptable behaviour).	Current guidance is contradictory	35	Appendix 3 section 2	General application	
39	39	4.5 - 4.10	Appendix 2	Remove sections which provide procedural advice on how eligibility assessments will be undertaken	Not pertinent to policy document.				
40	51	Appendix 3	Suitable Accommodation	Now positioned in main body of policy		27	30	Suitable Accommodation	