

Consultation – Review of Homeseekerplus Draft Policy

The Homeseekerplus Partnership consists of six local authorities within Gloucestershire - together with West Oxfordshire District Council - who work in partnership with social housing landlords (including Stroud District Council) to provide affordable homes for people to rent. Properties from these housing providers are advertised - and allocated - through the Homeseekerplus website in accordance with the Homeseekerplus Policy.

The purpose of the Homeseekerplus Policy is to explain who is eligible to apply for affordable housing and how their housing needs will be assessed. This assessment must be in line with relevant legislation and the statutory code of guidance on the allocation of accommodation, as these set out how applications will be assessed in a fair and transparent way based on housing need.

Following the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act (when minor tweaks were made in line with the new legislation) it was considered timely to conduct a full review of the current Homeseekerplus Policy. This will ensure that the policy reflects the aims of recent legislative changes and that clarification is added to enable the policy to be applied more consistently throughout the partnership.

Key changes to the revised draft include:

- Wording to reflect changes to legislation and guidance covering care leavers, members of the armed forces, and protections afforded by the Equality Act 2010 together with changes to eligibility and data protection.
- Greater definition of what is meant by local connection for the purpose of clarity
- More detail on what is meant by verification of an application
- Banding award for Medical and Welfare now split into two independent bands and a definition of what is meant by 'global banding'

The consultation began on Monday 1 February 2021 and will run for eight weeks, ending on the 29th March 2021. To view the revised draft policy and to take part in the consultation exercise please click here:

<https://tinyurl.com/homeseekerplus>

I will also circulate this link to you separately by way of email and to all Parish and Town Councils, and key internal and external stakeholders.