

Consistent Assessment Policy



Working in Partnership with:



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Feb 2024	2.0	Section 4, pg. 20	Amendments to wording to reflect current civil penalty terminology	Richard Scholes
Feb 2024	2.0	Section 4, p20	Amendment to wording regarding debt thresholds	Richard Scholes
Feb 2024	2.0	Section 5, pg21	Amendment for clarity re advertising properties	Richard Scholes
Feb 2024	2.0	Section 6, pg22	Amendment for clarity around exceptional circumstances	Richard Scholes
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Feb 2024	2.0	Section 8, p26	Additional wording to provide clarity on eligibility for Sheltered Housing	Richard Scholes
Feb 2024	2.0	Section 9, p28-9	Ombudsman contact details updated	Richard Scholes
Feb 2024	2.0	Appendix 1	Updated to reflect current laws	Richard Scholes
Feb 2024	2.0	Appendix 2	Rehabilitation periods updated to reflect amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (ROA) made 28/10/2023	Richard Scholes
Feb 2024	2.0	Appendix 5	Addition of Privacy Notice	Richard Scholes
08/07/2025	3.0	Pg. 6	Addition of relevant Legislation	Richard Scholes
08/07/2025	3.0	Pg. 12	Addition of Care Leavers and Victims of Domestic Abuse as exempt from requiring Local Connection	Richard Scholes
08/07/2025	3.0	Pg. 13	Addition of Care Leavers and Victims of Domestic Abuse as exempt from requiring Local Connection	Richard Scholes
08/07/2025	3.0	Pg.13	Removal of Armed Forces serving within the last 5 years. Now exempt from requiring local connection	Richard Scholes

Amendment Notes

- Documents at draft status are to use letter designations to denote issue status: a, b, c etc.
- Documents at full issue status are to use number designations to denote issue status after full revision: 1.0, 2.0, 3.0, etc.
- For an amendment to a full issue document you are to use number designation to denote issue status: 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, etc.
- On full issue the draft amendment record should be deleted from the above table.
- Notification of the amendment must be sent to the person maintaining the Central Register.

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Policy

MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast is the Choice Based Lettings (CBL) scheme operating across the Fylde Coast region. The Consistent Assessment Policy underpins the CBL scheme and forms the principal element of the allocation scheme for each Fylde Coast Local Authority (Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre) and Registered Provider operating in the area.

Each Local Authority has a statutory duty to have a scheme in place that sets out how social housing will be allocated. This is formulated and regularly reviewed in consultation with Local Authority members, housing providers and the public. It takes into account the level and patterns of the demand for social housing, stock profile, vacancies which are likely to become available and also reflects agreed strategic priorities.

This Policy sets out how applicants to the *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* scheme will be assessed and priority awarded, ensuring a fair and efficient mechanism for the allocation of social rented homes across the Fylde Coast (including Council owned properties).

The Consistent Assessment Policy has been developed by the three Fylde Coast Local Authorities working in partnership with the following Registered Providers:

Blackpool Coastal Housing	Progress Housing Group
Great Places Housing Group	Places for People
Muir Group Housing Ltd	Regenda Group
For Housing	Jigsaw
Lumen	Community Gateway

In drafting this policy *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* partners have had regard to the Codes of Guidance issued by Central Government in addition to the following pieces of legislation:

- The Children's Act 2004.
- The Equalities Act 2010.
- Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation
- Housing Act 1996 (as amended)
- Localism Act 2011
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- The Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Victims of Domestic Abuse and Care Leavers) (England) Regulations 2025
- The Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Armed Forces) (England) Regulations 2012

Aims of the Scheme

Although *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* provides greater choice for applicants, the scheme in itself does not increase the number of properties available. Properties are advertised and applicants are encouraged to take an active part in the process by bidding on a property. The system is transparent and is expected to provide applicants with a realistic view of their prospects of securing accommodation.

The scheme's key objectives are to:

- Create a customer led choice based lettings scheme
- Widen the choice of housing

- Ensure the scheme is open, fair and accountable
- Increase understanding and satisfaction of the letting system
- Give new tenants a feeling of ownership of their property and community
- Help create sustainable communities
- Make more efficient use of the available housing stock
- Help tackle low demand and reduce void turnaround times
- Create a single point of access to all social housing on the Fylde Coast
- To meet the legal requirements for the allocation of social housing as set out in Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), the Localism Act (2011) and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

Registered Providers participating in the scheme are committed to advertising their available properties to applicants who have applied and are registered on the system. Adverts will include a description of the property and indicate which applicants are eligible to apply. Applicants can then apply for the property of their choice provided they meet the stated eligibility criteria.

Overview of MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast

To gain access to the *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* scheme, eligible applicants only have to register once. They are then able to bid for suitable properties as they are advertised by partner organisations.

To have access to social housing through *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast*, applicants must i) meet nationally defined eligibility criteria for social housing, ii) have a local connection, and iii) not have been excluded for any other reason (see section 3 for further details on eligibility).

While all homes are advertised through the *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* website, there are two different routes for allocating homes:

1. Homes reserved for applicants with housing need and eligible for a priority banding

A minimum of 50% of properties will be allocated exclusively to applicants who are in housing need and have been awarded a priority band. High demand properties, such as but not limited to 4+ bedrooms, Extra Care Housing and adapted stock will be reserved initially for those in housing need.

Properties will be advertised for a 5-7 day cycle, with the cycle starting as soon as the property becomes available, on any working day.

Applicants who are in housing need and in a priority band who express an interest in these properties will be shortlisted for homes in order of priority need for housing and the length of time the applicant has been in that band.

2. Homes open to all applicants registered on the system

A maximum of 50% of properties advertised will be made available to all applicants registered on the system - those in housing need and those who are not. Applicants expressing an interest in these properties will be shortlisted in order of when their bid was placed, with the preference given to the earliest bids.

In order to recognise and reward those who work and make a contribution to the community, 20% of lettings available to all applicants will prioritise people who meet the working households and community contribution criteria (see Appendix Three).

Properties will be advertised for a minimum of 2 days, and up to a maximum of 7 days to allow local people to bid, as soon as the property becomes available, on any working day.

Applicants who are in housing need will have access to housing through both routes. The Local Authorities will monitor the proportion of all homes that are allocated to applicants who are in housing need. The aim is to enable two thirds of all homes to be allocated to applicants eligible for a priority banding.

SECTION 2: APPLYING TO JOIN THE HOUSING REGISTER

Making an Application

Applicants aged 16+ can register an application by visiting the website www.myhomechoicefyldecoast.co.uk. Applicants should answer all questions in the form fully and accurately and be prepared to provide supporting evidence as required.

Applications will be assessed by an Assessing Partner based on the current address of the applicant.

All applicants eligible for social housing will be able to log onto the website immediately and bid on properties. Where applicants may be eligible for a priority banding, the Assessing Partner will aim to assess the housing application and allocate a priority band within 10 working days of submission.

For homelessness applications, further checks may be required. Applicants will be informed if this is the case.

Information Required

Applicants will be required to provide the following information:

- Contact details of the current landlord, tenancy type and if a formal Notice To Quit has been served.
- Address history for the last 3 years including landlord details and reason for leaving.
- Details of anyone on the application who has unspent criminal convictions. Details of the crime, date and length of sentence given and how long they served will be required. (See Appendix Two for further details).
- Details of action taken against anyone on the application for Anti-Social Behaviour including type of action e.g. court action or written warning or if an e.g. Community Protection Notice has been granted.

Please note, *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* will apply the suspension policy if appropriate (see section 4 for further details).

Documentation Requirements

The table below identifies potential verification needs and associated documentation required.

Verification Need:	Documents required (one of the following must be provided)
The identification of the applicant and households	Birth Certificate Passport Immigration status paperwork
Eligibility to register for social housing	Passport National Identity Paper Home Office documents Wage slips Proof of Housing Benefit/Universal Credit Proof of local connection
Proof of address and agreement terms, for example, tenancy agreement	Electoral Register entry Proof of current rent payments Utility bills Pension book Confirmation from employer or DWP Tenancy Agreement Full driving licence Council Tax or telephone bill (recent) Bank statement (recent)
Proof of childcare responsibilities (Children who have previously been in the care of another person, including ex-partner, must provide a combination of the evidence if a Residents Order is not available).	Child benefit or other benefits such as fostering allowance Residence Order Confirmation from Public Body (DWP, Social Services, Health & Education Authorities) Dependents birth certificate
Non-dependants verification for living with applicant	Confirmation from Social Services or other relevant statutory agency
Proof of pregnancy	Antenatal card/book Doctors letter MATB1
Threatened with eviction	Tenancy Agreement Valid Notice to Quit Court possession order

If an applicant is unable to provide the necessary documentation the case will be considered in light of individual circumstances by the relevant Partner Organisation. All offers are subject to verification.

Application Date and Effective Date

All applications will be given an 'Application Date' corresponding to the date the application was received for assessment.

Within each band, applicants order is listed by the 'Effective Date'. The 'Effective Date' is the date of application, or where an applicant's circumstances have changed and resulted in a higher band being awarded, the 'Effective Date' will be the date from which the higher band applies.

Online Security

Upon registration applicants will be issued with a registration number and memorable date to enable login for the service. Password resets can be requested via the *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* website. Password reset/reminder information will be sent to the main applicants e-mail address. For this reason it is important that all applicants provide their own e-mail address.

Pre-tenancy Checks

Once an offer of accommodation is made, individual landlords may undertake relevant verification of the applicant's identity, circumstances and housing conditions. This may be in the form of an online application, interview, home visit and/or telephone call.

Evidence of outstanding housing debts will be verified. Where applicants have indicated anti-social behaviour and 'unspent' convictions, relevant checks will be made.

Landlord references (current/previous) will be sought where the applicant has held a private or social housing tenant. A credit check may also be carried out.

All applicants may be required to provide the following documents:

- Proof of identity and residence for all persons included on the application, including but not limited to: passport, identity card, photo driving licence, birth certificate or written confirmation from a professional person or support agency
- Proof that they are still an eligible person
- Proof of current address
- Proof of income
- Other documentation as appropriate e.g. information from an Occupational therapist to demonstrate adaptations need.

Offers may be withdrawn from an applicant who does not participate in pre-tenancy checks within a reasonable timescale.

References

Applicants will be required to provide two references to the Partner Organisation once they have successfully bid for a property. One reference must be from a current or the most recent landlord and may include a staff reference from interim or supported accommodation.

References will also be considered from the following (this list is not exhaustive):

- Successful completion of a recognised tenancy training programme.
- Current/former employer.
- Teacher/College Lecturer.
- Person of standing in the community.

References will not be accepted from family or friends. Further landlord references may be requested as required. Partner Organisations will review applications with unsatisfactory references.

Advice and Information

The Fylde Coast Local Authorities provide free independent housing advice to residents in their district. Partner Organisations to the *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* scheme will ensure information and advice is available for applicants who need support to join or use the scheme, including a copy of the Consistent Assessment Policy.

False Information

Partner Organisations are committed to taking legal action against any applicant found to have gained a tenancy based on false information in their application form. (See section 4 – False Information for further details.

Data Sharing

Information provided in the application form will be made available to all partners of the Choice Based Lettings scheme. Supporting documentation may be scanned by relevant partners and electronically attached to the on-line application.

Data Protection

Information provided as part of the application process will be treated in the strictest confidence and held in accordance with current data protection legislation. Information will be held on a computerised database and will only be accessible by Partner Organisations. The data provided will be used to assess an applicant's eligibility for social housing and identify if there are additional support needs, enabling Registered Providers to rehouse applicants into appropriate accommodation. Where necessary, information will be shared with agencies providing housing related support.

Partner Organisations reserve the right to validate applicant information with appropriate organisations including the Police, Local Authorities, Employers, Probation Services, Former/Current Landlords, Banks and Building Societies, Health Professionals, Social Services and Credit Reference Agencies. Consent is sought via the Declaration on the application form.

Individuals are entitled to request details of their personal data held by: *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast*.

For more information on how to request your personal data please contact:
myhomechoice@bch.co.uk

Privacy Policy

EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force on 25 May 2018 replacing the Data Protection Act (1998), the *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* partnership is reviewing its procedures and the following privacy notice informs customers about why we ask for personal information and what it is used for.

A copy of the MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast Privacy Notice can be found at Appendix 5.

SECTION 3: ELIGIBILITY TO JOIN THE HOUSING REGISTER

Eligibility

Applicants aged 16 and over are eligible to apply to the *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* Housing Register unless they are in one of the excluded groups below (See section 8 for 16 & 17 year olds).

Ineligibility (Non qualifying persons)

There are a number of circumstances in which applicants will be ineligible from joining the Housing Register:

1. Persons from abroad who the Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government has deemed ineligible for an allocation of housing accommodation
2. A person who, although not subject to immigration control, are not habitually (permanently) resident in the Common Travel Area (which includes the UK, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and the Republic of Ireland.)

These exclusions do not apply to existing social housing tenants where accommodation was allocated by the Local Authority.

There are a number of other circumstances in which applicants will be ineligible from joining the Housing Register.

3. Existing social housing tenants who apply with no housing need and who do not have permanent employment within the Fylde Coast area. (See Appendix Three – Working Households)
4. Applicants with no local connection (other than those exempt due to having served in the armed forces in the last five years or who are currently serving, Care Leavers, victims of Domestic Abuse or and homeless applicants where a statutory duty to rehouse has been accepted by either Blackpool, Fylde or Wyre Council).
5. Households whose gross household income exceeds £60,000 pa
6. Applicants and households aged under 55 with savings exceeding £30,000
7. Households who have been evicted for Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) within the last five years
8. Households evicted from an Assured or Secure Tenancy from a Registered Provider, or evicted under section 8 of the Housing Act 1988 of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy from a private landlord.

There is a right of review for each decision made by *the MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* partners on a case by case basis, having regard for exceptional circumstances. (See section 11 – Requesting a Review for further details).

Local Connection

When deciding eligibility, applicants must be able to demonstrate they have a local connection by one of the following:

- Local residency – they have lived in the Fylde Coast area consecutively for the last three years (does not include those that have been placed in the area)
NB a specific borough connection will be applied when prioritising applicants for allocation – see Section 6)
- Permanent employment in the Fylde Coast area (see Appendix Three – Working Households)
- Close family association – has a parent, adult child, adult brother or sister who is living in the Fylde Coast area and has done so for the last 5 years
- Applicants who are serving in the Armed Forces and who are either employed or are resident in the Fylde Coast area
- Former Armed Forces personnel who had a previous residence in the Fylde Coast area as a result of a former posting to the area.
- Homeless applicants where there is a statutory duty to provide housing by Blackpool, Fylde or Wyre Council

SECTION 4: APPLICATION ASSESSMENT

Each application is assessed in line with criteria and will either be:

1. Identified as ‘no housing need’ (no banding) due to:

- Being adequately housed
- Not meeting criteria within the housing need bands
- Awaiting decision on a homeless application or further eligibility checks
- Being an armed forces personnel currently serving or have served in the last five years who cannot demonstrate local connection
- Being a victim of domestic abuse carried out by another person, who needs to move for reasons connected with that abuse, including from accommodation initially occupied on a temporary basis and cannot demonstrate a local connection
- An eligible child, a relevant child or a former relevant child who cannot demonstrate a local connection

2. In housing need and awarded a priority band. *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* uses a banding scheme to prioritise applications: A, B and C

Priority Bands

Applicants in housing need who qualify for a priority banding will be placed in one of three priority bands depending upon the information provided on their housing application:

Housing Need	Criteria for each band
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Band A	<p>Homeless applicants who Blackpool, Fylde or Wyre Council must provide with housing under a statutory duty (the “Main Housing Duty”)</p> <p><i>Or</i></p> <p>Applicants with a local connection and at least one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A vulnerable person , who faces imminent discharge from hospital or temporary residential care and for whom there is no suitable accommodation to return to ▪ Applicants in exceptional circumstances including those in immediate danger of violence (at discretion)
Band B	<p>Applicants with a local connection and one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Disrepair in current property with identified Category 1 hazard where the landlord has failed to take the required action. ▪ Existing social housing tenant of a Partner Organisation who requires the property to be demolished or vacated. ▪ Under occupancy of a property owned by a Partner Organisation (applicable after the start of a tenancy) ▪ Adapted property, owned by a Partner Organisation, no longer required

Band C

- Urgent medical or disability, exacerbated due to current property conditions, with a medical assessment supporting the applicants (including household members) need to be rehoused.
 - Armed forces personnel, currently serving or have served in the last 5 years (who meet at least one criteria from Band C)
 - Urgent social or welfare needs, for example:
 - Admission into residential care or hospital if applicant is not rehoused
 - A dependent (under 16) will be accommodated by the Local Authority unless the applicant is rehoused into a suitable property.
 - The need to give or receive essential care and support
 - At risk of serious harm in present accommodation, for example, domestic abuse, hate crime, anti-social behaviour or witnesses of crime.
 - Threatened with homelessness, or owed the initial (i.e. Prevention or Relief Duty) homelessness statutory duty by Blackpool, Fylde or Wyre Council.
 - Property unintentionally overcrowded and in need of at least two additional bedrooms.
 - Leaving Local Authority Care, with appropriate tenancy support, where there is a statutory duty under the Children Leaving Care Act 2000 to provide housing.
 - Rough Sleeping, threatened with or have a history of rough sleeping who are supported and referred by Blackpool, Fylde or Wyre Local Authority Housing Teams.
 - Leaving supported housing or rehabilitation accommodation and are ready for independent living with tenancy support (if required) in place.
- Applicants with a local connection and one of the following:
- Medical or disability conditions (with no detrimental impact) with a medical assessment supporting the applicants need to be rehoused.
 - Social or Welfare needs, for example, applicant requires to be rehoused to a particular area to avoid hardship to themselves or others.
 - Disrepair in current property with identified Category 2 hazard where the landlord has failed to take the required action.
 - Property unintentionally overcrowded and in need of one additional bedroom.
 - Homeless with no priority need and no statutory duty owed by Blackpool, Fylde or Wyre Council
 - In supported or rehabilitation accommodation and not ready for independent living and no tenancy support in place.

- Armed forces personnel currently serving or have served in the last five years.

Property sizes

The numbers of bedrooms which applicants need is determined by the size of the household and in line with DWP regulations. As there is a shortage of larger homes, applicants are advised to consider a property that has two living rooms where one can reasonably be used as a bedroom.

The number of bedrooms needed is calculated as one bedroom for:

- Every adult couple
- Any other person aged 16 or over
- Any two children of the same sex
- Any two children regardless of sex under age 10
- Any other child

Applicants will be permitted to bid for a property in accordance with their calculated need and also for properties with one bedroom more than their calculated need. But letting of properties that are larger than an applicant's calculated need will be subject to affordability and pre-tenancy checks.

Providers may advertise some properties that are in short supply, such as large houses, as only being available to applicants whose calculated need is the same as the size of the property.

Expectant Mothers

Consideration will be given for unborn children in terms of bedroom entitlement but priority will only be awarded according to the current household needs.

Following the birth, and receipt of a birth certificate/s, a re-assessment will be made. It is the applicant's responsibility to notify the assessing partner in order to update their circumstances.

Home Visits

In certain circumstances it may be necessary to carry out a home visit. Home visits can be used for, but not limited to:

- As part of application verification
- As part of pre-tenancy checks
- Where clarification is required

Applicants are expected to allow the visiting officer access to all parts of their home. If a *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* Partner Organisation is unable to complete a home visit the applicant may be removed from the scheme.

Relationship to Interested Parties

Partner organisations will apply relevant procedures to ensure there are no conflicts of interest.

False Information

It is a criminal offence for housing applicants to knowingly give false information or withhold information relevant to their application. An offence is also committed if an applicant allows a third party to provide false information on their behalf.

Ground 5 in schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1985 (as amended by s.146 of the 1996 Act) enables a housing authority to seek possession of a tenancy granted as a result of a false statement by the tenant or a person acting at the tenants instigations.

Applicants who have provided false or misleading information on their application will be suspended from the Housing Register.

Before a decision is made on whether an applicant is suspended from the Housing Register for this reason, applicants will be contacted and given the opportunity to provide details of mitigating circumstances within 8 weeks. If the information is not provided then a decision will be made based on the information available.

Applicants who are suspended from the Housing Register for this reason will be notified in writing.

All Partner Organisations are committed to taking legal action against applicants found to have gained a tenancy based on false information in their application form.

Notification of Change in Circumstances

Applicants are responsible for notifying *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* with changes to personal circumstances. Existing applicants will be reassessed and placed in the appropriate band. Where an applicant is awarded a higher priority band the 'Effective Date' will be the date *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* was notified of these changes.

In circumstances where a reassessment results in a lower priority band the 'Effective Date' will remain the same as the 'Application Date'.

Application Checks

Application details will be checked regularly. Applicants may receive a renewal letter requesting confirmation of their registered details and will be required to respond within 28 days. Applications will be cancelled if no response is received and will only be reinstated in exceptional circumstances.

Checks will be made at the time of a housing offer to ensure the property has been allocated appropriately. Housing offers will be withdrawn if an applicant's current housing situation differs from their registered details. An application may be suspended until appropriate documentation has been reviewed.

Applicants who fail to bid

MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast may contact applicants who have not taken part in the bidding process. Depending on their individual circumstances the application may be reassessed or cancelled; where necessary, additional support will be put in place.

Cancelling Applications

MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast will cancel applications under the following circumstances:

- At the request of an applicant
- An applicant does not respond to a renewal letter within the specified time limit
- The applicant has been housed by *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* partners
- An applicant completes a mutual exchange
- An applicant does not maintain their application through the renewal process, or where the applicant moves and does not provide a contact address
- The applicant has deceased
- Requested information has not been provided within the specified timescale.
- An applicant becomes ineligible for housing as defined by this policy.

Applicants can request a review should their application be cancelled - see section 11 for further details.

Where an applicant applies to re-join *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* their new date of application will correspond to the date they reapplied.

Suspensions

MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast may suspend applications from the Housing Register for a maximum of 5 years. Suspended applications will remain 'held' on the system and applicants will no longer be able to bid for properties.

Applicants will be notified in writing of the reasons for suspension, the timescale and details on how to appeal the decision.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to contact the Assessing Partner at the end of the suspension period to request a review of their application. The review will seek to establish if the reason for the suspension has been resolved satisfactorily, or if there is evidence of an improvement in the behaviour of the applicant(s) over a sustained period.

There is a right to review for each decision made by *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* partners on a case by case basis having regard for exceptional circumstances. (See section 9 – Requesting a Review/Appeal and section 3 for Ineligible Applicants)

Suspension Criteria

Suspension may apply where the applicants or any member of the household:

- Owes rent arrears or any other housing related debt, excluding Council Tax, to a landlord and has not made and maintained a satisfactory arrangement to repay the debt (see section 4 – Debt)
- Has deliberately or negligently caused damage to a property belonging to a Partner Organisation or any other landlord, whether they are the tenant of that property or not
- Has made false or misleading statements (see section 4 – false information)
- Has engaged in anti-social behaviour (whether or not they were at the time a tenant of a Local Housing Authority or Registered Provider) and has not maintained a satisfactory undertaking to address their behaviour (see section 4 - Anti Social Behaviour)
- Is a current tenant of a participating landlord of the MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast scheme (or another Registered Provider) and is, or has been, the subject of an action for breach of tenancy.
- Has been convicted of using their home, or allowing it to be used for immoral or illegal purposes (see Appendix Two – Convictions)

Other applications may be inactive on the system and therefore unable to bid:

- *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* is waiting for more information about an applicant's circumstances. (The application will remain held until all relevant information has been provided)
- Offenders in custody, the application will remain held until 28 days before their release date

Anti-Social Behaviour

The meaning of anti-social behaviour for the purpose of this policy encompasses a past action or activity on the part of an applicant but also an omission, failure to act, passivity or inactivity. This extends to any past or present member of the household.

Suspension will be considered for acts of anti-social behaviour that occurred within the last 2 years. Evidence of acts of anti-social behaviour include but are not limited to:

- Causing nuisance and annoyance to neighbours, visitors or the community
- Being violent towards a partner or family member
- Allowing the condition of a rented property to deteriorate
- Damaging/destroying or disposing of furniture provided by the landlord
- Paying money illegally to obtain a social housing tenancy.

Suspension will also be considered regardless of time of occurrence in the following circumstances:

- A current Probation risk assessment level of Medium or above
- A current Civil Injunction, Criminal Behaviour Order or Community Protection Notice is in place
- Conviction for a serious unspent criminal offence

Suspensions for cases of ASB will be between 12 months to 5 years. Partner Organisations may use Starter Tenancies or Introductory Tenancies to manage and reduce the risk of anti-social behaviour.

Debt

Where applicants have housing related arrears, such as rent arrears, an offer of accommodation will normally only be made where a repayment plan has first been agreed. For example, a payment plan may have a minimum of 12 consecutive payments or a large payment to reduce the debt value.

Applicants who have wilfully not paid their rent and accrued rent arrears when they had the available income to do so will be suspended from the housing waiting list.

Debt owed to private sector landlords (arrears and/or damage) will only be taken into account if an unsatisfactory reference is received from the former landlord.

Decisions on the terms of repayment plans and the length of suspensions taken by Partner Organisations will be reviewed by the Senior Officer Decision Panel which is made up of members from a range of Partner Organisations to ensure consistency.

SECTION 5: ADVERTISING AND APPLYING FOR PROPERTIES

When Properties will be Advertised

The Fylde Coast Local Authorities and Partner Organisations will advertise available properties on *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* website. Properties may be uploaded at any time. Customers will need to register their bids for properties that they are interested in.

Properties available to applicants will be advertised for 5-7 days. To allow applicants with a borough connection an opportunity to bid, properties may be advertised for up to 7 days. If by day 7 no applicant with a borough connection has bid the property may be offered to the first suitable applicant. The bidding cycle can end at any point between day 5 and 7 if an applicant with a borough connection places a successful bid.

-Property Descriptions

Properties advertised will carry a full description. As a minimum the description will include:

- Type of property
- Number of bedrooms
- Location of property
- Any adaptations (e.g. disabled facilities)
- Services provided (e.g. support, caretaker, cleaning)
- Heating type
- Energy Performance Certificate rating
- Rent charges and any service charges
- Eligibility criteria

Local Lettings

The partners have the discretion to apply local lettings policies where there are specific issues. Local lettings policies can also assist in the management of existing stock to help resolve issues such as child density, anti-social behaviour, mixed communities and worklessness. It should be noted that local lettings policies may be required on affordable new build sites. There may also be planning restrictions and local lettings policies which apply to specific properties such as a Section 106.

Applying (Bidding) For Properties

Under the *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* scheme applicants are required to actively engage with the process of obtaining a new home. Applicants are advised to bid regularly for properties they would be willing to accept. Letting properties in this way means applicants are considered for homes they express an interest in giving them a greater choice over property location and type.

Bids can be made by visiting the website www.myhomechoicefyldecoast.co.uk. Applicants should only bid for properties they are eligible for which meets their housing needs.

SECTION 6: ALLOCATING PROPERTIES

Selection Process

The demand for social housing exceeds supply. Therefore, it is necessary to prioritise applications on the Housing Register to ensure housing stock is allocated appropriately.

Properties Reserved for Applicants in housing need and with a priority banding

Shortlisting will be based on bids from applicants with a connection to the local borough and with the highest priority band. If bids are received from applicants in the same priority band, then the person with the longest Effective Date will be offered the property.

Where a property is adapted for use by a disabled person, it will be offered to the applicant with the highest priority band whose needs best match the facilities of the advertised property. If there are no bids from applicants with a connection to the local borough, Partner Organisations will give consideration to applicants from other Fylde Coast areas.

Discretion can be applied to this policy under exceptional circumstances.

For Properties Open to all Applicants:

Applicants expressing an interest in these properties will be shortlisted in order of connection to the local borough, and when the bid was placed, with preference given to the earliest bids. Any bids that do not meet the criteria may be bypassed.

Pre-tenancy Checks

Once an offer of accommodation is made, individual landlords will undertake relevant verification of household member's identity, circumstances and housing conditions. This may take the form of an online form, interview, home visit and/or telephone call.

Evidence of anti-social behaviour and outstanding housing debts will be checked and will include checks where applicants have indicated an 'unspent' conviction.

Landlord references (current/previous) will be sought where the applicant has held a private or social housing tenancy. A credit check may also be carried out.

All applicants and household members may be required to provide the following documents:

- Proof of identity and residence for all persons included on the application; acceptable proof of identity is:
 - i. Passport
 - ii. Identity card (issued to certain foreign nationals)
 - iii. Photo driving licence²
 - iv. Birth certificate
 - v. Or written confirmation from a professional person or support agency
- Proof that they are eligible for social housing
- Proof of current address
- Proof of income
- Other documentation as appropriate

Offers may be withdrawn from an applicant who does not participate in pre-tenancy checks within a reasonable timescale.

The applicant to be offered the property will be contacted to verify their circumstances. Providing the applicant is eligible and suitable for the property (and in case of applicants with a priority banding, that the applicant's priority has not changed), a provisional offer of the property will be made and a viewing arranged.

If the applicant refuses the property then it will be offered to the next applicant on the shortlist.

Refusal Following a Bid

MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast will offer assistance and guidance to all applicants to help them through the application, bidding, viewing and sign up process.

Where an applicant has successfully bid for a property and then refuses it, generally no penalty will apply. In most cases, the applicant will be free to bid again. However, if the applicant has been awarded priority banding, banding will be reviewed.

Where an applicant does not keep an appointment to view a property, or refuses it, the next highest-ranking bidder will normally be offered the property.

Feedback on Successful Bids

MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast will publish details on the number of bids received for each property and details of the successful applicant's band and Effective Date. This will help applicants determine their prospects of success in obtaining housing.

Withdrawal of Offers

An applicant dissatisfied with the withdrawal of an offer (or refusal to make an offer), may register a complaint following the relevant Partner Organisations complaints process. The property in question will not be 'held' whilst the review takes place and will be offered to the next successful applicant. If the original decision is not upheld, the applicant will be offered the next suitable property of their choice. In certain circumstances a Partner Organisation may make the applicant a Direct Offer.

SECTION 7: OTHER LETTING ARRANGEMENTS

Properties not Advertised

In exceptional circumstances *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* may allocate properties directly. Examples include:

- Tenants who need to be decanted
- Specially adapted properties
- Extra care vacancies
- Applicants who have succeeded a tenancy but need to move to alternative accommodation
- Emergency management transfers, where there is a severe risk of harm (*one offer in line with the policy will be made*)
- Multi Agency Public Protection Panel cases
- Homeless households owed a main duty by the Fylde Coast Local Authorities under S.193 of the Housing Act 1996 (Part VII) (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002). One offer, in line with the policy will be made.
- Witness protection cases where a referral has been received directly from the Home Office. Referrals received directly from the Police will be processed under the normal allocation policy.
- Assisting the Fylde Coast Local Authorities in relation to Homelessness Duties.

Refusals of Direct Lettings

Applicants are required to give their reasons for refusing a property. An investigation will take place to establish the reasonableness of the offer, if necessary, relevant officers/professionals will be consulted. Applicants will be informed in writing if the investigation concludes the property offer was reasonable. Impact to their rehousing application and the right to request a review will also be detailed (see section 9).

If the investigation concludes the property offer was unreasonable, it will be withdrawn with no consequences to the applicant.

Successions and Assignments

When an introductory or secure tenant has deceased, a member of the family living with them at the time of their death may have a right to succeed the tenancy. Where no family member has such succession rights but a member of the household has:

- a) Been living with the tenant for 12 months prior to the tenants death; or
- b) Accepted responsibility for the tenants dependants

then the social housing provider has discretion to grant an introductory tenancy to that person either in the same home or in suitable accommodation.

An introductory or secure tenant may be able to assign the tenancy to someone else so long as the tenancy has not already been passed on by assignment, or succession. It is usually assigned:

- By a court order following matrimonial /civil partnership breakdown or family proceedings; OR
- To a member of the tenant's family who would qualify to succeed the tenancy if the tenant had deceased.

Mutual Exchange

A mutual exchange is where two tenants with Secure and Assured tenancies are in agreement to swap their properties in their current condition, including tenancies. Written permission must be obtained from the landlord prior to an exchange.

Requests will be processed by the relevant Partner Organisation and in certain circumstances can be refused, for example, action is being taken to repossess the property (Suspended Possession Order or Notice of Seeking Possession) or properties will be under/over occupied.

Transfer Policy

Existing tenants of Partner Organisations have the right to apply for a transfer, subject to being in housing need/permanent employment, and any restrictions that apply to their tenancy. Applications for transfers will be processed in the same way as a new application. Tenants' housing needs will be assessed and awarded appropriate banding.

To qualify, tenants must allow access for property inspections, viewings and sign ups. Properties must also be left in a good state of repair and in decorative order. Tenants with rent arrears or other breaches of their tenancy agreement may be suspended from the scheme (see section 4- Suspensions)

Partner Organisation may need to carry out emergency or management moves. These properties will not be advertised but recorded on the system for auditing and reporting purposes. (See section 10 – Properties not Advertised)

Joint Tenancies

Where there is a joint tenancy, both tenants are jointly and individually responsible for ensuring the tenancy agreement is adhered to.

Both parties to a joint tenancy must individually qualify to join *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* and be eligible for an offer, or to bid on a property. If a joint tenancy is refused by a Partner Organisations, a clear reason will be provided to the applicants in writing. Applicants can request a review of the decision if required (see section 9 – Requesting a Review). When one of the joint tenants gives notice to the relevant Partner Organisation, discretion may be used when deciding to offer the property, or an alternative property, as sole tenancy to the other joint tenant.

In certain circumstances joint tenancies may be granted to more than two people.

SECTION 8: DEFINITIONS

Support in Accommodation

MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast Partner Organisations work closely with relevant health and social care bodies to identify opportunities to rehouse residents, in receipt of adequate care and support, into appropriate accommodation.

Where support packages are not immediately available, Partner Organisations reserve the right to withhold an offer of accommodation until appropriate arrangements are in place and agreed by the applicant.

The above is dependent on the availability of suitable and appropriate accommodation.

Supported Accommodation

Applicants residing in supported accommodation or rehabilitation will not be awarded priority Band B until they are ready for independent living and/or tenancy support is in place (if required).

Sheltered Housing or Independent Living

Sheltered Housing or Independent Living is normally for people aged 55+. These schemes are designed for applicants who are able to live independently (including those in receipt of a care package) but would benefit from the security of an alarm system and low level support from staff.

A single applicant or both joint applicants aged 55+ will automatically be eligible to bid for Sheltered / Independent Living properties. Consideration will be given to applicants aged below 55 with an illness, disability or vulnerability.

Sheltered applicants below state retirement age will need to demonstrate a need for sheltered housing prior to a property being allocated to them.

Sheltered Housing applicants will not be listed separately on the Housing Register, but will be assessed in accordance with their housing need and placed within the appropriate band.

Extra Care

Extra Care housing is a form of specialised housing for adults with 'higher' levels of care and support needs. These schemes are equipped with facilities and services to aid independent living. There are a small number of extra care schemes within the Fylde Coast Region.

Adapted Properties and Ground Floor Accommodation

Adapted properties are fitted with equipment to aid independent living for a person with an illness or disability. Applications will automatically be registered for suitably adapted properties in accordance with identified need and placed in the appropriate band. An Occupational Therapy assessment may be required prior to an offer being made.

Applicants with an illness or disability will automatically be considered for ground floor accommodation.

Allocations for these types of properties will be prioritised to those with the appropriate need.

16 & 17 year olds

MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast is open to applicants aged 16 and 17 years of age. An offer of a tenancy will usually be delayed until the age of 18 unless there is a statutory duty to house the applicant earlier. For example, the applicant is:

- Leaving care
- Pregnant or already has a child/children
- Homeless and owed a main duty under s.193 of the Housing Act 1996 (part VII) as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002
- Residing in supported accommodation and ready for independent living, as agreed by the support provider and where necessary appropriate tenancy support is in place

Applicants who fall in the above categories may need to provide details of a guarantor (professional person, parent or responsible adult) prior to being offered a tenancy.

Applicants will be considered for a tenancy on the condition they accept support to sustain their tenancy agreement.

Offenders

Offenders may apply to the Housing Register whilst in custody, or submit a change of address form if they are a current applicant prior to committal. The application will remain inactive but the applicant will accrue waiting time on the list. When the application is made live the original date of application will be the effective date.

Applications will remain inactive until 28 days prior to the offender being released from prison, unless any of the suspension criteria apply.

Offenders will be assessed in line with the service level agreement between Lancashire Probation Trust and each the Fylde Coast Local Authorities.

Rough Sleepers

Applicants who are rough sleeping, threatened with or have a history of rough sleeping will be awarded appropriate priority once their information has been verified. This is dependent on the applicant being supported and referred by the relevant Local Authority.

Mobile Homes/Caravans

Applicants will be considered to have a local connection if they live in a mobile home or caravan in the Fylde Coast area which is classed as their permanent residence and they meet other local connection criteria.

SECTION 9: APPEALING DECISIONS

Applicants can request a review of decisions made by *MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast* Partner Organisations for the following:

- Eligibility for entry on to the housing register
- Suspension or exclusion from the Housing Register
- The level of priority awarded
- Entitlement of the type and size of property required
- Removal of the applicant from the register other than at the applicants own request

Procedure

Requests for a review must be made within 21 days of the original notification and should include the applicant's reasons for believing the decision made was incorrect. It is at the discretion of Partner Organisations to extend the time if it considers it's reasonable to do so.

Requests can be made in the following ways and directed to the assessing Partner Organisation:

- In writing - by letter or email
- By telephone
- In person

How the Decision will be Reviewed

A senior officer of the Partner Organisation, not involved in the original decision, will review and determine if an error has occurred or deem it to be an exceptional circumstance. The decision will be based on known facts at the time of the review. The senior officer will request additional information if necessary.

Reviews will be responded to within eight weeks by the relevant Partner Organisation. Partner organisations have the discretion to extend the time if it considers it reasonable to do so.

Applicants will receive a letter providing the outcome of their review/appeal and where necessary, detail further actions to be taken with their application.

An applicant has the right to complain to the appropriate Ombudsman if they feel that they have been unfairly treated as a result of maladministration. Contact Details:

Local Government Ombudsman
PO Box 4771
Coventry
CV4 0EH

Housing Ombudsman Service
PO Box 152
Liverpool
L33 7WQ

Complaints

Applicants with a complaint regarding the withdrawal/refusal to make an offer should follow the Partner Organisations complaints process – see section 6 for further details. Applicants can also seek independent legal advice through a solicitor or the Citizens Advice Bureau

SECTION 10: MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE SCHEME

A number of outcomes within the scheme will be monitored on a regular basis to ensure the system is operating effectively.

Policy Review

MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast's Consistent Assessment Policy will be regularly reviewed. Minor changes which do not significantly affect the spirit of the policy will be approved by a majority agreement amongst the partners.

Customers and relevant partners will be consulted on major changes to the policy. Approval will then be gained through the appropriate governance arrangements including Council members and RSL board members.

Unless there is a statutory requirement, Partner Organisations have the right to use discretion when allocating properties. There may be circumstances where a Partner Organisations decision supersedes this policy.

Equal Opportunities Statement

MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast is committed to promoting equality, combating discrimination and promoting good community relations and will ensure that discrimination does not take place in the allocation of properties and services it provides.

There is a commitment to:

- Ensure our services and how they are delivered meet the diverse needs of local residents.
- Ensure our buildings are as accessible as possible.
- Provide information about our services in accessible formats, such as, large print, Braille or alternative languages.
- Promote inclusive communities that have a shared sense of belonging and pride in the Fylde Coast
- Challenge unfairness and discrimination
- Engage with the diverse communities of the Fylde Coast to ensure their needs are identified and met
- Value the important contribution the community and voluntary sector make to the Fylde Coast Region
- Work in partnership to share good practice and promote a consistent approach
- Value and train staff to deliver services fairly, efficiently and effectively
- Actively seek feedback to continually develop and improve our approach

MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast will regularly review its practices, policies, staff training and monitoring arrangements to ensure applicants are treated fairly regardless of their gender, age, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief or sexual orientation.

Partner Organisations have adopted corporate policies and action plans aimed at promoting equality and valuing diversity. Further local policies and action plans may be developed to address the needs of disadvantaged and under-represented groups.

Partner Organisations will conduct regular monitoring to ensure no group is unfairly disadvantaged.

Appendix 1: Qualifying persons and immigration chart.

The following classes of persons, subject to satisfying a habitual residency test, will be eligible to join this Scheme:

- British citizens (constituting the nations of England, Scotland and Wales).
- Commonwealth citizens with a right of abode in the UK immediately before 01 January 1983 who have remained commonwealth citizens throughout (excluding non-British citizens from Pakistan and South Africa, but inclusive of citizens from Gambia and Zimbabwe).
- Irish citizens (constituting the nations of Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland)
- EEA Nationals (other than those from Ireland) and their family members, who a. have acquired limited leave to enter and remain in the UK. b. were frontier working before 31 December 2020, or c. are lawfully residing in the UK by 31 December 2020, but still have to apply to, or acquire status under the EU Settlement Scheme before the deadline of 30 June 2021, and are covered by the “Grace Period statutory instrument”.
- Persons exempt from immigration control (e.g. diplomats and their family members based in the UK and some military personnel).
- Persons granted refugee status by the UK Government.
- Persons granted exceptional or limited leave to enter or remain in the UK with condition that they and any dependents have resource to public funds (e.g. humanitarian or compassionate circumstances).
- Persons with current leave to enter or remain in the UK with no condition or limitation, and who are habitually resident in the UK, The Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland (defined as the Common Travel Area) (a person whose maintenance and accommodation is being sponsored must be resident in the Common Travel Area for five years since date of entry or date of sponsorship, unless the sponsor has died).
- Persons who have humanitarian protection granted under the Immigration Rules (e.g. a person whose asylum application has failed, but they face real risk of harm if they returned to their state of origin).
- Persons who moved to the UK as child seeking asylum and have been given limited leave to remain.
- Persons who have limited permission to enter or remain in the UK, from November 2018 onwards, due to Calais leave.
- Persons who have limited permission to enter or remain in the UK as the family member of a ‘relevant persons of Northern Ireland’.
- Persons who have leave to enter or remain in the UK under Appendix Hong Kong British National (Overseas) of the Immigration Rules, and your leave is 19 Property Pool Plus Housing Allocation Scheme Procedure not subject to a condition requiring you to maintain and accommodate yourself or any person dependent upon you.
- Persons who are a relevant Afghan citizen, such as one who has worked for the UK government in Afghanistan.
- Persons who have permission to enter or remain in the UK and left Afghanistan in connection with the collapse of the Afghan government which took place on 15 August 2021 and are allowed to claim housing and welfare assistance from the state.
- Persons who are currently living in the UK and previously was living in Ukraine before 1 January 2022 and left as a result of the Russian invasion which took place on 24 February 2022 and have arrived in the UK under the Ukraine family scheme or the Homes for Ukraine scheme and have been granted leave to remain.
- Persons who have been granted limited leave to remain due to being a victim of human trafficking or slavery.
- Persons who were living in Sudan before 15 April 2023 and left as a result of conflict that commenced on 15 April 2023 and have been granted leave to remain and are allowed to

claim housing and welfare assistance from the state and do not have a person that will sponsor your stay in the UK.

EEA Nationals means nationals of any of the EU member states, and nationals of Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein and Switzerland.

Eligibility provisions do not apply to Applicants who are already secure or fixed-term tenants (let at social rent or affordable rent) of Registered Providers seeking to transfer.

Even when an Applicant is eligible for an allocation of social rented housing, only those who are habitually resident in the United Kingdom, Ireland, the Isle of Mann or the Channel Islands, will be eligible for an allocation (except persons which exempt from the requirement to be habitually resident, as defined in law or statutory guidance).

If it is apparent that an Applicant came to live in the UK during the previous two years, the following tests will be carried out to confirm if an Applicant is habitually resident:

- The degree of permanence in the person's residence in the United Kingdom of Great Britain & Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Isle of Man or the Channel Islands.
- The association between a person and their place of residence.
- Why a person has come to live in the UK.
- Whether a person is joining family or friends in the UK
- Whether a person has accumulated a continuous period of residence prior to making their application.
- The length of residence in another country 20 Property Pool Plus Housing Allocation Scheme Procedure
- Visits abroad for holidays or to visit relatives and other temporary periods of absence will be disregarded.
- A person's future intentions, employment prospects and centre of interest
- Exemptions from the habitual residence test include EEA nationals and their family members who are workers or self-employed, or have certain permanent rights of residence, or have been removed from another country to the UK.

Applicants who are subject to immigration control or are an ineligible person from abroad will not be eligible for an allocation of social rented housing.

The following classes of person will not be eligible to join the Scheme:

- Persons not habitually resident in the Common Travel Area
- EEA nationals whose only right to reside in the UK is:
 - a) Derived from their status as a jobseeker (or their status as a family member of a jobseeker)
 - b) An initial right of residence for 3 months.
 - c) Derivative right of residence because the person is the primary carer of a British citizen.
 - d) Right to reside as a result of the person's deportation, expulsion or other removal by compulsion of law from another country to the UK (including EEA nationals exercising EU Treaty rights, who were previously settled in the UK prior to deportation).
- Persons whose only right to reside in the UK is an initial right for no more than 3 months, including those who would become an unreasonable burden on the social assistance system of the UK.
- Persons who are excluded by section 115 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 to entitlement to universal credit under Part 1 of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 or to housing benefit.

Where there is any uncertainty about an Applicant's immigration status, the local authority shall contact the Home Office. Before doing so, Applicants will be advised that such inquiries will be made in order to comply with data protection legislation. Confirmation of the immigration status of an Applicant from abroad will be obtained, where necessary, from the Home Office by emailing EvidenceandEnquiry@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

The Local Authority is not subject to the duty arising from the Immigration Act 2014, part 3, chapter 1, to carry-out a 'right to rent' check on each letting. The local authority will only perform checks on the eligibility of any Applicant, as per this section of this Scheme.

Appendix 2: How a conviction becomes spent.

Relevant rehabilitation periods:

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (ROA), eligible convictions or cautions become 'spent' after a specified period of time, known as the 'rehabilitation period'.

The rehabilitation periods depend on:

- the sentence given or disposal administered as a result of a conviction
- the age of the individual on the date they are convicted

The table below shows the rehabilitation periods for the most common sentences and disposals.

Sentence or disposal	Rehabilitation period if aged 18 or over	Rehabilitation period if aged under 18
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence of imprisonment for life • Sentence of imprisonment, youth custody, detention in a young offender institution or corrective training of over four years for a schedule 18 offence • Sentence of preventive detention • Sentence of detention at His Majesty's pleasure • Sentence of custody for life • Public protection sentences* (imprisonment for public protection, detention for public protection, extended sentences of imprisonment or detention for public protection and extended determinate sentences for dangerous offenders) <p>*A public protection sentence (the provisions for which are set out in Part 12 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 and Part 8 of the Armed Forces Act 2006 means a sentence of imprisonment or detention, as detailed above, imposed for specified sexual and violent offences.</p>	Never spent – so will always need to be disclosed.	Never spent – so will always need to be disclosed.
A custodial sentence of more than 4 years (not for a schedule 18 offence)	7 years	42 months
A custodial sentence* of 1 year to 4 years	4 years	2 years
A custodial sentence of 1 year or less	12 months	6 months
Other Punishments		
Removal from His Majesty's service	12 months	6 months
A sentence of service detention	12 months	6 months
Driving endorsements	5 years	2 years 6 months

Driving disqualification	When the period of disqualification has passed	When the period of disqualification has passed
Simple caution, youth caution	Spent immediately	Spent immediately
Conditional caution, youth conditional caution, diversionary caution**	3 months or when caution ceases to have effect if earlier	3 months or when caution ceases to have effect if earlier
A fine	12 months (from date of conviction)	12 months (from date of conviction)
A compensation order	The date on which the payment is made in full	The date on which the payment is made in full
Absolute discharge	Spent immediately	Spent immediately
Relevant orders*** (orders that impose a disqualification, disability, prohibition or other penalty)	The end date given by the order or, if no date given, 2 years from the date of conviction - unless the order states 'unlimited', 'indefinitely' or 'until further order' as in these cases it will remain unspent	The end date given by the order or, if no date given, 2 years from the date of conviction - unless the order states 'unlimited', 'indefinitely' or 'until further order' as in these cases it will remain unspent

*Suspended custodial sentences are treated the same as custodial sentences for this purpose. It will be the length of the sentence imposed by the court, not the period it is suspended for that dictates when it will become spent.

**Diversionary cautions and community cautions were introduced under the PCSC Act 2022 and are due to come into force in 2024.

***Relevant orders include:

1. community and youth rehabilitation orders,
2. conditional discharge orders,
3. hospital orders,
4. bind overs,
5. referral orders,
6. care orders, and
7. earlier statutory orders and
8. any order imposing a disqualification, disability, prohibition, penalty, requirement or restriction, or is otherwise intended to regulate the behaviour of the person convicted.

APPENDIX 3: DEFINITION OF WORKING HOUSEHOLDS AND COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION

Working Households

Households where at least one applicant is in employment. For the purpose of this policy employment is described as;

- Over 16 hours per week (unless the remuneration is substantial)
- The main place of work is within the Fylde Coast area
- Offers of employment should be regular, intend to last for more than 12 months and there is a genuine intention to take up the offer of work

Appropriate evidence is provided which may include contract of employment, wage/salary slips, formal offer letter and tax and benefits information.

For applicants working outside the Fylde Coast, evidence will be required that their employment will continue.

It should be noted that this must be confirmed at point of application and evidenced at point of offer.

Community Contribution

Households where at least one applicant is undertaking voluntary work. For the purposes of policy, voluntary work (community contribution) is described as:

- Choosing to give your time to benefit others without being paid. For example, completing voluntary work in a charity, voluntary organisation or community group, public sector organisation (local council), a social enterprise or a local business
- The voluntary work must have been held for a minimum of 6 months prior to the application for the award in order to be eligible.

It is not volunteering if you help out a family member, are given money apart from expenses, or are under contract to do it (this does not include any volunteer agreement you may have).

It should be noted that this must be confirmed at application and evidenced at point of offer.

Exemptions

May include people who are able to demonstrate they are unable to work due to disability, age or gender.

Appendix 4: Armed Forces Personnel

References to “Armed Forces Personnel” include persons who meet the following criteria:

- i. is currently serving in the regular forces
- ii. formerly served in the regular forces within five years of the date of their application for an allocation of housing
- iii. 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 service
- iv. is serving or has served in the reserve forces within five years of their application for an allocation of housing and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person’s service.

The regular forces and the reserve forces are defined by section 374 of the Armed Forces Act 2006(2) as follows:

- “the regular forces” means the Royal Navy, the Royal Marines, the regular army or the Royal Air Force
- “the reserve forces” means the Royal Fleet Reserve, the Royal Naval Reserve, the Royal Marines Reserve, the Army Reserve, the Territorial Army, the Royal Air Force Reserve or the Royal Auxiliary Air Force

Appendix 5: MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast Privacy Policy

Your Personal Data

Who we are:

The MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast website is operated as a partnership between:

- Blackpool Council
- Wyre Council
- Fylde Council
- Progress Housing Group
- Regenda Homes
- Blackpool Coastal Housing
- Great Places
- Muir Group
- Places For People
- For Housing
- Community Gateway
- Lumen

The local authorities and housing associations are regarded as partner organisations to the MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast housing allocation and housing register scheme.

Your privacy is important to us. We aim for full transparency on how we gather, use, and share your personal information in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation.

If you have any concerns about how the MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast partners are handling your personal data, these can be raised with the relevant partners Data Protection Officer:

If you:

- Fill in the MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast housing application form
- Bid for a home online
- Complete a mutual exchange application
- Contact us in any way

The information you provide will be recorded, held, organised and used as part of the rehousing or advice process by the relevant MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast partner.

The online rehousing registration form is used to:

- Start your rehousing registration;
- Assess the type of property you would be suitable for;
- Help decide your level of rehousing priority.
- Ensure that we meet all our legal and statutory duties such as those that apply under the Equality Act 2010 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

What information do we collect about you?

We hold personal data such as your household's names, dates of birth, contact details and records of any transactions such as payments or requests for information as well as sensitive personal data provided such as gender; ethnicity; religion or other beliefs, sexual orientation, and medical history.

The information will go to the relevant MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast partner. The partner will use it as an application to register you for rehousing.

The information will be held securely and treated confidentially. You have the legal right to see your rehousing application file. Contact the relevant partner for information about how to do this.

Your personal information will be treated as confidential but it may be shared with other Council services in order to ensure our records are accurate and up-to-date, and to improve the standard of the services we deliver. We will only use your information in ways which are permitted by the General Data Protection Regulation and the current UK Data Protection law.

We have a Data Protection regime in place to oversee the effective and secure processing of your personal data. More information on this framework can be found on our Partner's websites. The Council partners have a duty to protect the public funds it administers, and may use information held about you for all lawful purposes, including but not limited to the prevention and detection of crime including fraud and money laundering.

The Council partners may also use your information for the purpose of performing any of its statutory enforcement duties. It will make any disclosures required by law and may also share your information with other bodies responsible for detecting/preventing crime including fraud or auditing/administering public funds.

The MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast partners may use data from the website to help build statistical information about rehousing needs and demands - this statistical information will not describe individual cases or list individual applicants.

The MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast partners will only disclose the information you give to certain relevant people or organisations as part of the rehousing process – such as other

MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast landlords; other registered social landlords, health authorities; the probation service and other housing authorities.

We share your information with the local authorities and registered social landlords who process and administer your application for access to the housing register and eligibility for social housing.

Your information may be shared with other registered social landlords who advertise available social housing for rent for the purpose of allocating a property or specialist agencies who may need to assess the suitability of a property allocation. Participating Landlords are registered social landlords, the information shared will be relevant in the allocation of social housing and/or where you have expressed an interest in a property (known as and referred to as bidding).

If we need to talk to other people or organisations about the information, we will get your permission first. You can give or deny this permission. However we may not be able to fully assess your circumstances if we cannot access certain information.

Where third parties such as elected members, MP's or an agency helping you want information about your case, a consent notice signed by you giving permission for us to disclose certain information will be needed.

We keep our privacy notice under regular review and this will help ensure that you are always aware of what information we collect and how we use it.

There is also information about your computer hardware and software that is automatically collected by the MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast website. This information can include: your IP address, browser type, domain names, access times and referring website addresses. This information is used by the MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast partnership for the operation of the service, to maintain quality of the service, and to provide general statistics regarding use of the MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast website.

We will not disclose your personal information to third parties for marketing purposes.

What are your rights?

You have the right to:

- Request a copy of your information (known as a subject access request)
- Request rectification or erasure of your information,
- Request a restriction on the processing of your information, and,
- Object to processing of your information,
- Complain to the Information Commissioner's Office about the way the Council processes your information.
- Set your browser to remove or reject cookies before using the MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast website

If you require further information about the use of your data or would like to exercise any of the above rights, please contact the relevant Partner.

The contact details for each Partner can be found on our "Partner Information" page.

Transferring information overseas

We do not transfer any information outside of the EEA.

How long we keep your information

We will keep your information for as long as it is required by us or other regulatory bodies in order to comply with legal and regulatory requirements or for other operational reasons. In most cases this will be a minimum of six years.

Website information

The MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast partnership encourages you to review the privacy statements of websites you choose to link to from MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast.co.uk so that you can understand how those websites collect, use and share your information. The MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast partnership is not responsible for the privacy statements or other content on web sites outside of the MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast family of Web sites.

Use of Cookies

The MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast website use "cookies" to help you personalise your online experience. A cookie is a text file that is placed on your hard disk by a Website via your web browser. Cookies cannot be used to run programs or deliver viruses to your computer. Cookies are uniquely assigned to you, and can only be read by a web server in the domain that issued the cookie to you.