

HOUSING AND ECONOMY

**APPLYING
FOR
HOUSING**

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HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Contents

Section 1

Introduction

Section 2

The Housing Register

Section 3

Housing Options

Section 4

Applying for Council housing

Section 5

The Banding Scheme

Section 6

Assessing your application

Section 7

Management Moves

Section 8

Exclusions

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Section 1 - Introduction

We have produced this booklet to give information for people who are looking for rehousing in Wrexham County Borough.

It gives advice on how to apply for Council housing, how we allocate housing and the other housing options available.

More detailed information is available by downloading a copy of the Council's Allocations Policy from our website or by visiting your Local Housing Office.

This booklet is produced in English and Welsh. If you would like a copy in another language or format, please contact your Local Housing Office, Housing and Economy Department at Ruthin Road, Wrexham or by emailing:- housing@wrexham.gov.uk

Local Housing Offices

Broughton Estate Office, 27 Derby Road, Brynteg, Wrexham, LL11 6LW. Tel. 01978 722020

Caia Estate Office, 7 Churchill Drive, Wrexham, LL13 9HN. Tel. 01978 317040

Gwersyllt Estate Office, 2 Wheatsheaf Lane, Gwersyllt, Wrexham, LL11 4EU. Tel. 01978 722100.

Plas Madoc Estate Office, 50 Peris, Plas Madoc, Wrexham, LL14 3LF. Tel. 01978 813000.

Rhos Estate Office, Stiwt Arts Trust, Broad Street, Rhos, Wrexham, LL14 1RB. Tel. 01978 832900.

Wrexham Central Estate Office, Contact Wrexham, 16 Lord Street, Wrexham, LL11 1LG. Tel. 01978 292062.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Homelessness:- 01978 292947

Out of hours:- 01978 264240

By telephone only:- Housing Services 01978 298993.

Email:- housing@wrexham.gov.uk

Website:- www.wrexham.gov.uk/housing

Section 2 – The Housing Register

Who can apply for housing?

Anyone aged 16 or over can apply for Council housing but you do have to be eligible for Council Housing to be accepted onto the Housing Register.

Certain classes of people from abroad cannot be considered for Council Housing. These are:-

- People who are subject to Immigration Control.
- People who have no recourse to public funds.
- People who are not habitually resident in the UK, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland.

We also have an Exclusions Policy. This means that if you or any member of your household has been guilty of serious anti-social behaviour, you may be excluded from the Council Housing Register.

If you would like more information regarding our Exclusions Policy, please visit your Local Housing Office, Housing and Economy Department, Ruthin Road, Wrexham or by visiting the Applying for Housing pages of the Council's website:- www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/council/Housing/housing_applying/eligibility.htm

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Can I apply with someone else?

If you and your partner are both eligible for Council housing, we will accept an application from both of you. We call this a “joint application”.

If you do submit a joint application, please remember that:-

- You will both be responsible for paying the rent and keeping to the Council’s Tenancy Agreement. If one of you breaks any Tenancy Conditions we can take legal action against both of you.
- You will both be liable for paying the rent and keeping to the Tenancy Conditions even if one of you no longer lives there. A joint tenancy only ends if one party obtains a Court Order, or gives Notice to Terminate the Tenancy.
- If either of you choose to end the tenancy, it will end for both parties. We will work with any remaining joint tenants to try to reach an agreeable outcome but we cannot guarantee that you will be re-housed or that you will be able to stay in the property if, for example, it is too big for your needs.

I am already a Council Tenant

If you are already a Council tenant, you can apply to move to another property, provided you have not broken any of the conditions of your tenancy (e.g. engaged in serious anti-social behaviour). We call this a “transfer”.

If you do apply for re-housing and there are issues with your current tenancy we will write to you to let you know what the problems are and what action you need to take.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

I want to change my tenancy?

If you don't want to move from your current home but you do want to change your tenancy (e.g. you want to succeed to a tenancy, or have a joint tenancy with your spouse, civil partner or partner), please contact us.

These requests are dealt with differently and you do not need to fill out a Housing Application Form.

Section 3 - Housing Options

We try to give applicants choice about the type of housing they want to be considered for and its location.

However, due to demand, it is not always possible to meet everyone's needs and aspirations.

Depending on your personal circumstances, you may also be able to consider other housing options such as:-

- Housing Association Accommodation
- Mutual Exchanges
- Affordable Home Ownership
- Shared Ownership/ Shared Equity
- Low Cost Home Ownership
- Intermediate Renting
- Private Renting

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Nominations to Housing Associations

When you apply for Council Housing, you can also ask to be considered for a nomination to one of the Housing Associations that have properties in Wrexham County Borough.

We use the same criteria for selecting applicants for nomination that we use for allocating Council properties.

As we cannot help everyone who applies for housing, requesting a nomination to a Housing Association may increase your chances of re-housing.

Applying to Housing Associations

You can also make an application for housing directly to a Housing Association.

They operate their own Waiting Lists. Making an application to them will not affect your application for Council Housing in any way.

Housing Associations with Properties in Wrexham

Clwyd Alyn Housing Association, 72 Ffordd William Morgan, St. Asaph Business Park, St. Asaph, Denbighshire, LL17 0JD.
Tel. 0800 1835757
www.pennafgroup.co.uk/

Wales & West Housing, Tŷ Draig, St David's Park, Ewloe, Deeside, CH5 3DT. Tel. 0800 052 2526
www.wwha.co.uk/Pages/ContactUs.aspx

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Grŵp Cynefin, 54 Stryd y Dyffryn, Denbigh, LL16 3BW.

Tel. 0300 111 2122

www.grwpcynefin.org/en/

Hafan Cymru, Wrexham Office, Midland Bank Chambers,
High Street, Ruabon, Wrexham, LL14 6AA.

Tel. 01978 823077

www.hafancymru.co.uk/

Habinteg Housing Association, Ground Floor, Beech House,
Woodland Park, Bradford Road, Chain Bar, Bradford, BD19 6BW.

Tel. 0300 365 3100.

www.habinteg.org.uk/main.cfm

Abbeyfield Society, St. Peter's House, 2 Bricket Road, St. Albans,
Herts., AL1 3JW.

Tel. 01727 857536

www.abbeyfield.com/

North Wales Housing Association, Plas Blodwel, Llandudno
Junction, Conwy, LL31 9HL.

Tel. 01492 563287

www.nwha.org.uk/

First Choice Housing Association, Avon House, 19 Stanwell
Road, Penarth, Vale of Glamorgan, CF64 2EZ.

Tel. 029 2070 3758

www.fcha.org.uk/index.html

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Local Lettings Agency

Wrexham County Borough Council may be able to offer you accommodation via its Local Lettings Agency. The Local Lettings Agency works with landlords in Wrexham County Borough and aims to provide a range of accommodation for those who may not be able to access accommodation via the private rented sector, for reasons, such as having a low income.

Further information:-

For further information, please contact Wrexham County Borough Council's Housing Solutions Team (Tel. 01978 292947) or email locallettings@wrexham.gov.uk

Mutual Exchanges

Applying for a mutual exchange is another way to increase your chances of moving to a more suitable home.

If you are already a secure tenant of Wrexham County Borough Council you can also apply to swap houses with another tenant of any Council or Housing Association. This is called a mutual exchange.

Wrexham County Borough Council has joined Homeswapper, this is a national service. You can register online and look for Council or Housing Association tenants who want to swap homes.

If you are interested in applying for a mutual exchange please go to: - <http://www.homeswapper.co.uk/>, where you can find further information and register your details.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

If you don't have internet access we can help you to register. Just contact your local Housing Office or Housing and Economy Department, Ruthin Road, Wrexham.

Affordable Home Ownership

If you are in work, on a low income and are unable to afford to buy or privately rent a home on the open market, renting from the Council might not be your only option.

You might still be able to buy a property through one of the Council's Affordable Home Ownership Schemes.

Currently we operate the following schemes: -

- Affordable Home Ownership
- Shared Ownership
- Renting from a Housing Association (RSL)

To find out if you are eligible for these schemes and to get further details please contact:-

Strategy & Development Team, Housing and Economy -
01978 298993 or by visiting the Council's website.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Section 4 - Applying for Council Housing

To apply for Council Housing, you must fully complete a Housing Application Form and supply all the information we need. If you do not fully complete your form we will return it to you. This will delay your form being registered.

You must also provide us with correct and up to date documentation to support your application and as proof of your housing need.

We check the information you provide. If you supply false or misleading information, this will delay your application being registered and we may withdraw any offer of accommodation we make to you.

You should also be aware that it is a criminal offence to obtain a tenancy based on false or misleading information.

If you have health or welfare issues that you think we should take into account, you must complete a Special Needs & Medical Assessment Form and provide any relevant information. We will then consider this when processing your application and prioritising it.

Please ask at your local Estate Office for a Special Needs & Medical Assessment Form when you apply for housing, or contact Housing and Economy Department, Ruthin Road, Wrexham (01978) 298993.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Dealing with your application

We aim to process fully completed applications within 20 working days of receiving them.

You will be notified by letter when your application has been registered. The letter will tell you:-

- Your application reference number
- The area you have requested as your first choice
- The date you applied
- Your priority banding

Every 6 months we will contact you to ask you to renew your application. This is to make sure the information we hold is correct and that you still want to be considered for housing. It is important that you renew your application. If you do not, your application will be cancelled and taken off the Housing Register. If you decide at a later date that you want to remain on the Housing Register, or reapply at a later date, we will not reinstate your application. We will use the date when you re-apply to prioritise your application.

We may also cancel your application if:-

- You or someone acting on your behalf, with your permission asks us to.
- You are re-housed.
- You give false or misleading information.
- We decide to exclude you from the Housing Register due to serious unacceptable behaviour
- Your Immigration Status changes and you are no longer eligible for housing.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

What if my circumstances change?

If your circumstances change, you must let us know immediately. It could mean that your priority banding alters. A change in your circumstances can include a change of address or a member of your family leaving or joining your household.

If we make you an offer of accommodation based on out of date information, we may withdraw the offer.

Can my application be placed in a different band after I apply?

If your circumstances change, your application may be placed into a different band.

Depending on the change, your application could be placed in a higher or lower band.

If your application is moved into a higher band, we will use the date your circumstances change to prioritise your application. We do this because we recognise that people have already been waiting in the higher band with a need to move for a longer period of time.

If your application stays in the same band or it is moved to a lower one, your date of application will not change.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Can I choose where I live?

General Needs Housing

However, please remember that to make best use of our housing stock; we aim to allocate properties to the applicants who need accommodation of that size. In some areas, where there are more vacancies and lower demand, we may be able to offer you a property that is bigger than you need. However, in areas where fewer properties become empty or there is very high demand, this will not be possible.

Please remember, that if you think you will be able to claim Housing Benefit, or if you already claim it, you may not receive enough Housing Benefit to cover the full cost of the rent, if the property is bigger than Government regulations say you need.

Please refer to the information in the following table and use it as guidance.

Household Type	Property Type
Single Applicant(s)	Bedsit 1 bedroom flat 1 bedroom house
Single Applicant(s) with access to children	1 bedroom flat 1 bedroom house 2 bedroom flat
Applicant and partner without children/ or with access to children	1 bedroom flat 1 bedroom maisonette 1 bedroom house 2 bedroom flat
Applicant(s) with 1 child, or non- dependent or households expecting their first child	2 bedroom flat 2 bedroom maisonette 2 bedroom house
Applicant(s) with 2 or 3 children or non-dependents	2/3 bedroom flat 2/3 bedroom maisonette 2/3 bedroom house 4 bedroom house (depending on the age of the children)
Applicant(s) with 4 or more children or non-dependents	3/4 bedroom flat 3/4 bedroom maisonette 3/4 bedroom house House with 5+ bedrooms
Single person/ couple over 60	1/2 bedroom accommodation that has been classed as being suitable for older persons.
Households with a physically disabled family member, requiring level access, or an adapted property, depending on the nature of any disability or illness and supported by Health & Social Care needs.	Adapted properties suitable for their needs, or properties that are suitable for adaptation. This may include properties suitable for older people, sheltered accommodation, bungalows or ground floor accommodation

In addition to general needs housing, we also have accommodation suitable for applicants with more specific housing needs.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Sheltered Accommodation

This is accommodation that is normally let to applicants who are:-

- over 60 years of age.
- have a partner aged 60 or over.
- are between 55 and 60 years of age and have a need for this type of accommodation.

The Council has a number of sheltered units at various locations in the County Borough. This accommodation benefits from the support of a resident or non-resident warden and a community alarm system. All residents receive a warden visit and complete a Support Plan.

Some of the units have been purpose built, or have been adapted to help meet the needs of applicants with mobility problems. Please contact your local Housing Office for further details.

Supported Housing

We sponsor a variety of projects. They involve working with partners to support vulnerable people and improve their well-being.

A list of the projects we currently sponsor is available on request from Housing and Economy Department, Ruthin Road, Wrexham.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Adapted Properties

We have a number of properties that have been adapted to meet the needs of applicants who have a need for this type of accommodation.

We try to allocate these properties to applicants who have been assessed as needing adapted housing. We do this, by working with other Council departments, specialist housing staff and local Housing Associations.

For more information, please contact your local Estate Office.

Local Lettings Policies

In some areas, where there are particular management issues, we consider implementing Local Lettings Policies.

We use these policies to prioritise certain households that can be considered for housing in certain areas or streets.

We currently have the following Local Lettings Policies in place:-

- A support scheme for people with learning disabilities
- Properties suitable for applicants aged 30 or over
- Properties suitable for applicants aged 50 or over

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Making you an offer

Offers of accommodation are usually made to the applicant in the highest band that has been waiting the longest for the type of property that becomes empty, provided that it is in the area the person is asking to live in and they have a connection with the Community and/ or Wrexham County Borough.

Offers of accommodation will be made in writing. The letter will tell you whether the property is ready for you, whether it is under repair, or if it is still occupied by the outgoing tenant. You will have 5 working days to reply, letting us know if you are accepting or refusing the offer.

If you accept the offer, we may be able to give you an idea of when the property is likely to be ready for you. Please contact the Local Housing Office that has made you the offer for further details of availability.

Refusing an offer

If you decide to refuse the offer, you must tell us the exact reasons for refusing.

Applicants will only be made 2 offers of accommodation. If both are refused and we think that your reasons for refusing are not reasonable, we will reduce your preference for housing. This will mean that it could be a considerable period of time before you receive another offer of accommodation.

The exception will be applicants who are made an offer under homelessness legislation and all applicants in Band 1. We will make 1 offer of suitable alternative accommodation.

You do have the right to ask for a review of any decision regarding the reasonableness of an offer.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

The Involvement of Local Members

Local Members have a role to play in the lettings process. They advise and represent their local communities and ensure we implement this policy in a fair and consistent way.

Local Members can:-

- Make representations on behalf of their constituents to make sure that all the facts of their case are considered.
- Receive notification of vacancies in their wards when they are allocated.
- Receive regular updated information regarding the Council's housing stock, lettings and the number of applicants registered for housing.
- Be involved in future policy reviews to make sure it is achieving its aims.

Local Members cannot:-

- Be directly involved in the allocation of properties to applicants who live in their ward.
- Be involved in the allocation of properties in their ward.

Your Rights

You have the right to:-

- Be notified and request a review of any decision regarding eligibility to join the Housing Register and the grounds for making that decision.
- To be informed on request and request a review, of any facts the Council has used to make its decision.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

- Receive information about how their application will be processed and what priority their application has been given.
- To receive information on the likely availability of appropriate accommodation.

Reviews

You can request a review of any decision that is made in the way your application has been processed, including:-

- Any decision to reduce preference
- The banding awarded to an application
- Any decision to exclude your application

Any request for a review must be made within 28 calendar days of being notified of the original decision.

Reviews will be carried out by an Officer who has not been involved in the original decision making process.

Requests should be made to:-

The Head of Housing and Economy
Ruthin Road
Wrexham
LL13 7TU

You will be notified of the outcome within 20 working days of receiving your request.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Appealing

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of any review, the way this policy has been followed or the way we have interpreted housing law, you can make a further appeal.

Any request for an appeal must be made within 28 calendar days of being notified of the original decision.

Requests should be made to:-

The Head of Housing and Economy
Ruthin Road
Wrexham
LL13 7TU

You will be notified of the outcome within 14 calendar days of receiving your request.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Section 5 - The Banding Scheme

With the exception of Management Moves, which are explained at Section 7 of this booklet, we use a Banding Scheme to prioritise applicants for housing.

We place applicants in one of the priority bands, depending on their circumstances.

We then allocate a vacant property to the applicant in the highest band who has been waiting the longest for the type of property that has become available in that area.

Applicants are only placed in Bands 1, 2 or 3 if they have a local connection with Wrexham County Borough.

**HOUSING AND ECONOMY
APPLYING FOR HOUSING**

BAND 1

- Applicants with a Borough Connection, who have been assessed as having a critical medical or welfare need.
- Applicants who are tenants of Wrexham County Borough Council who are at risk of financial hardship due to Welfare Reform, as they are under occupying their current home.
- Members of the Armed Forces who are leaving the service
- Applicants who are tenants of Wrexham County Borough Council who are occupying an adapted property for which they have no need.
- Applicants who are leaving the care of Wrexham County Borough.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

BAND 2

- Applicants who are unintentionally homeless and the Council has a duty to secure accommodation for them (s.75 Housing (Wales) Act 2014).
- Applicants who are unintentionally homeless and the Council has a duty to help them to secure accommodation (s.73 Housing (Wales) Act 2014).
- Applicants who have been assessed as being overcrowded.
- Applicants assessed as needing to move to a particular locality in the County Borough, where a failure to meet that need would cause hardship to themselves or others.
- Applicants assessed as having a serious medical need.
- Applicants who are tenants of the Council, or a Housing Association, who are under occupying their home but are at no risk of financial hardship due to the Spare Room Subsidy.
- Applicants who are living in a Council sponsored supported housing project and have been assessed as being ready to move on.
- Applicants assessed as being in financial hardship.
- Current social housing tenants who have been living in a flat, with 1 child or more aged less than 10 years old, for at least 2 consecutive years.

**HOUSING AND ECONOMY
APPLYING FOR HOUSING**

BAND 3

- Applicants who are sharing accommodation with another household.
- Applicants who are threatened with homelessness and the Council has a duty to help prevent them from becoming homeless (s.66 Housing (Wales) Act 2014).
- Applicants assessed as having a low level medical or welfare need.
- Current social housing tenants, who have been living in a flat with children aged less than 10 years old for less than 2 consecutive years.
- Applicants with children of the same sex who have been assessed as being overcrowded.

**HOUSING AND ECONOMY
APPLYING FOR HOUSING**

BAND 4

- Applicants who have no identified housing need.
- Owner Occupiers who have been assessed as being adequately housed.
- Applicants with no Borough or Community Connection, regardless of any housing need.
- Applicants who are assessed as being intentionally homeless.
- Applicants who have deliberately worsened their housing conditions.

**HOUSING AND ECONOMY
APPLYING FOR HOUSING**

BAND 5

- Applicants who have an outstanding housing related debt to Wrexham County Borough Council or another registered social landlord.
- Applicants who have breached the conditions of their Tenancy Agreement.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Section 6 - Assessing your Application

With the exception of Management Moves (please see Section 7 of this booklet), we use the following criteria to assess every application for housing.

Homelessness

Homelessness assessments are carried out by our Housing Solutions Team. They investigate and verify an applicant's individual circumstances.

If we decide you are unintentionally homeless and we have a duty to secure accommodation for you (s.75 Housing (Wales) Act 2014), your application will be placed in Band 2.

If we decide you are unintentionally homeless and we have a duty to help you secure accommodation (s.73 Housing (Wales) Act 2014), your application will be placed in Band 2.

If we decide that we have a duty to help prevent you from becoming homeless (s.66 Housing (Wales) Act 2014) your application will be placed in Band 3.

If we decide you are intentionally homeless your application will be placed in Band 4.

If you are found to be intentionally homeless, we will write to you and tell you. We will also let you know what you need to do to address any issues.

If you think that you are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, please contact our Housing Solutions Team, Contact Wrexham, 16 Lord Street, Wrexham, Tel:- 01978 292947 (out of hours 01978 264240).

<http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/council/Housing/homeless/index.htm>

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Medical & Welfare Grounds

If you have any medical or welfare needs that you think are affected by your housing, we will assess your application after considering any supporting evidence you supply from any agencies or professionals that work with you.

After assessing your application it will be placed in Band 1, 2 or 3, depending on whether we consider your need to be critical, serious or low.

Examples of critical need include:-

- Having a serious illness, disability or medical condition e.g. terminal illness, permanent disability or progressive condition and being completely unable to cope in their present accommodation. Re-housing is the only option.
- Being hospitalised and unable to return home as the property is totally unsuitable for the applicant's long-term needs by way of design or location and/or is unsuitable for adaptations.
- Being unable to access essential facilities in the property e.g. bath or WC, and the property cannot be adapted to meet the applicant's needs.
- Needing to move to provide support to a relative or person with serious illness, disability or medical condition and that person can only cope in their present accommodation with the applicant's support.
- Being due to leave local authority care and requiring own accommodation.
- Having a serious long term or chronic mental illness, that could be alleviated by re-housing.
- Having other urgent social care grounds for re-housing such as racial harassment, witness protection, tenancy enforcement issues, etc.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Examples of serious need include:-

- Having some difficulty in using facilities in the property and this could be alleviated by re-housing.
- Having serious health or social care problems that could be alleviated, if the applicant were re-housed near friends or family for support.
- The applicant provides support for a person with serious health or social care problems which could be alleviated if they lived nearer to the person they are supporting.
- Having a mental illness which could be alleviated by re-housing.
- Having other social care grounds for re-housing e.g. isolation, neighbour disputes which are having an adverse impact on health.

Examples of low need include:

- Having anxiety and / or mild depression
- Having a need to move to supply low level support for family members
- Having a physical illness which has a low impact on their ability to cope in their current home.

Overcrowding

When assessing if you are overcrowded, we class the following groups of applicants as needing a separate bedroom:-

- A couple (opposite or same sex)
- A single person aged 16 years or over
- A child aged 7 years old or over who would have to share with a person of the opposite sex.

These applicants are placed in Band 2.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

We also class the following applicants as needing a separate bedroom:-

- A child who would have to share with a person of the same sex, if the age difference is more than 6 years. We place these applicants in Band 3.

We will not assess you as being overcrowded if the situation can be alleviated by a change in your sleeping arrangements.

Under Occupation

If you are a tenant of Wrexham County Borough Council or another Registered Social Landlord and you need to move to another property because your home is too large, we will assess you as under occupying if:-

- You are a tenant of Wrexham County Borough Council under occupying your home by 1 or more bedrooms and you have been assessed as being at risk of financial hardship because of changes to the Welfare Benefit System. Your application will be placed in Band 1.
- You are a tenant of Wrexham County Borough Council or another Registered Social Landlord occupying your home but are not affected by the changes in the Welfare Benefit system. Your application will be placed in Band 2.

If you are requesting like for like accommodation (e.g. asking to be transferred from a 2 bed property to another 2 bed property), we will not assess you as being under occupied.

Unsatisfactory Housing

If you need to be re-housed because you have been assessed as living in unsatisfactory housing, due to disrepair, your application will be placed in Band 2.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

You will only be classed as living in unsatisfactory housing following an assessment by an Environmental Health Officer.

If you are a tenant of Wrexham County Borough Council your home will not be assessed as being in disrepair if we can remedy the situation for you.

Children in Flats

If you are a tenant of Wrexham County Borough Council, or another Social Landlord, and you have been living in a flat, with children under the age of 10, for at least 2 years your application will be placed in Band 2.

If you are a tenant of Wrexham County Borough Council, or another Social Landlord, and you have been living in a flat, with children under the age of 10, for less than 2 years your application will be placed in Band 3.

Sharing Accommodation

If you need to be re-housed because you are sharing accommodation, your application will be placed in Band 3, provided that there are no other issues, such as overcrowding.

Applicants Leaving the Armed Forces

If you are being discharged from the Armed Forces, we will place your application in Band 1, once you have provided official proof of your discharge.

If you are leaving the Armed Forces due to any medical condition or disability that you have sustained during service, your application will be placed in Band 1.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Local Connection

We will use the following criteria to assess whether you have a Local Connection.

If you do not have a Local Connection, your application will be placed in Band 4, regardless of any housing need:-

Borough Connection

An applicant will be assessed as having a Borough Connection if they have:

- Lived continually in the Borough for at least 3 years in the last 5 years of their own choice. An applicant will not establish a connection with the Borough by residing in a prison or bail hostel.
- Family members living in the Borough. For the purpose of this policy, a family member will be a mother, father, sister, brother, children, grandparents or any adult who acted as the applicant's parent and who has lived continually in the Borough for the last 5 years.
- Been in continual employment in the Borough area for at least 3 years in the last 5 years. This must be confirmed in a letter from your employer.
- Asylum seekers dispersed to Wrexham without any choice and granted refugee status will have a Borough connection at the point of application.
- Applicants living in refuge accommodation (e.g. women's refuge) in Wrexham County, will have a Borough connection at the point of application.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Community Connection

An applicant will be assessed as having a Community Connection if:-

- They have lived continually in the Community for at least 3 years in the last 5 years of their own choice.
- They have family associations within the Community. For the purpose of this policy, a family member will be a mother, father, sister, brother, children, grandparents or any adult who acted as the applicant's parent and they have lived continually in the Community for the last 5 years.
- Asylum seekers dispersed to Wrexham without any choice and granted refugee status will be granted a Community connection at the point of application.
- Applicants living in refuge accommodation (e.g. women's refuge) in Wrexham County, will have a Community connection at the point of application.

We realise however, that some communities have outgrown their County Council ward boundaries and it would be reasonable for an applicant to have a connection with more than one community.

In these circumstances we will consider awarding a connection for either community taking into account the needs and wishes of the applicant and the availability of suitable Council Housing stock in those areas. When deciding whether you have a connection we class the following as communities.

Community	Ward
Wrexham Town	Acton, Borrass Park, Brynyffynnon, Cartrefle, Erddig, Esclusham, Garden Village, Grosvenor, Hermitage, Little Acton, Maesydre, Offa, Queensway, Rhosnesni, Smithfield, Stansty, Whitegate Wynnstay
Broughton & Coedpoeth	Brymbo, Bryn Cefn, Coedpoeth, Gwenfro, Minera, New Broughton
Plas Madoc	Cefn, Llangollen Rural, Plas Madoc, Ruabon
Ceiriog Valley & Chirk	Chirk (North & South), Dyffryn Ceiriog
Gwersyllt & Llay	Gwersyllt (East & South), Gwersyllt (North), Gwersyllt West, Llay
Rhos	Johnstown, Pant, Penycae, Ponciau
North East	Gresford (East & West), Holt, Marford & Hoseley, Rossett
South East	Bronington, Marchwiel, Overton

Section 7 - Management Moves

There are occasions when we will make allocations outside of our published Lettings Policy. These are known as Management Moves.

A Management Move will only be awarded by Senior Officers after the individual circumstances of each case have been taken into consideration.

This policy outlines the circumstances when Management Moves may be awarded.

The following list is not exhaustive, as by their nature, Management Moves are situations which are the exception to the policy.

We aim to keep the number of Management Moves we carry out to a minimum, so that our published policy is seen as being as fair and transparent as possible.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Examples of when an applicant may be considered for a Management Move include:-

- Applicant left occupying a property following the death of a tenant

If a secure, introductory or demoted tenant dies and there is no other family member left in the property who has the right to succeed, a Management Move may be considered if:-

- The property was the only or principal home of the remaining family member at the time of the tenant's death and they would have qualified to succeed if a succession had not already taken place.
- The applicant has been living permanently with the tenant as a member of their family for a minimum of a year before the tenant died.
- The applicant has agreed to take over parental responsibility for the tenant's dependants and does not have any suitable alternative accommodation available.

Relationship Breakdown

If a sole or joint tenant gives notice to terminate a tenancy, we may grant the tenancy to the remaining occupier, provided that they have been living with the former tenant as a partner, or a member of their family, the property is their only or principal home and it is suitable for their needs.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

If joint tenants are married couples, civil partners or couples with children, Courts have the power to decide that a tenancy can be transferred to one or other of the parties, in instances of dispute. Staff will initially advise applicants to seek legal assistance in these circumstances.

Joint applicants should be aware that any Court Costs incurred in ending a joint tenancy may be the responsibility of the parties involved.

Exceptional Circumstances

Staff may also consider applying Management Moves in the following circumstances. This list is not exhaustive:-

- Social Services have carried out a statutory assessment and there is a child at risk in the household.
- Social Services have carried out a statutory assessment and there is an adult at risk in the household.
- The applicant is in Council tied accommodation and requires secure housing (e.g. retiring Council employee).
- An existing Council tenant has been placed in temporary accommodation following fire or flood which has made their home uninhabitable.
- Existing tenants of Wrexham County Borough Council who need to move because their home is scheduled for demolition, redevelopment or other major works.
- The housing of some individuals who fall within the MAPPA protocol. These allocations will be made in accordance with the separate MAPPA scheme.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

When deciding whether to award a Management Move, amongst other considerations, Senior Officers may consider the following:-

- Will granting the tenancy make best use of the housing stock?
- Has the applicant's behaviour caused the current sole or joint tenant to leave or flee the property? (e.g. have there been issues with financial/ domestic abuse)?
- Is the applicant eligible for an allocation?
- The circumstances of each individual case (the priority banding they would be awarded on the housing register, how long has the applicant been living with the tenant, is it reasonable for the applicant to continue to occupy the property in question?)
- Is the applicant covered by MAPPA protocol?

Section 8 - Wrexham County Borough Council's Exclusion Policy

Introduction

If an applicant or a member of the applicant's family has been guilty of 'unacceptable behaviour' at the time of application the Council will consider excluding the applicant from the Housing Register.

Receiving an Application

The Council must accept a completed application form. If there is information available or known, relating to previous or existing tenancies, held by the applicant (or family member) and this information has or could have resulted in the Council gaining an Outright Possession Order, we will consider exclusion.

The Council will aim to complete the process, including notification to the applicant, within a 6 week period. Due to the potentially sensitive nature of the process, applications to exclude will be the responsibility of Senior Housing staff. Applications will be registered and immediately suspended, pending the outcome of any decision to exclude.

The Council will inform an applicant in writing immediately, if they are being considered for exclusion. Applicants will be invited to attend an interview, to discuss the grounds for exclusion and the reasons for the application.

The Council will arrange and hold interviews no later than 14 days after the initial letter is sent.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

The Exclusion Process

When considering exclusion, the Council will follow Welsh Government guidance. The decision to exclude will be made by applying the 3 stage test set out in Welsh Government's Code of Guidance.

- a) Where there is evidence of unacceptable behaviour was it serious enough to have obtained an Outright Possession Order?
- b) Is / Was the behaviour serious enough to render the applicant or a household member unsuitable to be a tenant?
- c) We must be satisfied that the applicant is still unsuitable at the time of the application.

It is NOT necessary for the applicant to have been a Council tenant when the unacceptable behaviour occurred. The deciding factor is whether the Council would have been entitled to an outright Possession Order, if the applicant had been a secure tenant.

Applicants being considered for exclusion will be kept informed throughout the process.

Applicants have the right to ask the Council to review any decision made regarding eligibility to join the housing register.

An application for a review of a decision must be made within 21 days of receiving written notification of the Council's decision. Applicants must provide evidence of any change of circumstances or additional information which they feel should be taken into account.

HOUSING AND ECONOMY APPLYING FOR HOUSING

All requests will be considered by the Council and we will inform applicants, in writing, of the result of the review. Applicants have the right to re-apply for housing if they believe their behaviour or circumstances have changed. Applicants must provide proof of any changes.

Reasonableness

The Welsh Government Code of Guidance states that a policy of classing all applicants as unsuitable if they were previously evicted on one of the discretionary grounds as likely to be unlawful and that a housing authority must act reasonably. The Council will consider the personal circumstances of each applicant when deciding to exclude.

We will also consider any language, access or communication needs when contacting applicants and arranging interviews.

Investigation and Evidence Gathering

All decisions to proceed with exclusion will be based on the individual merits of each case, after gathering the appropriate evidence and making proper investigations.

Applicants will be notified in writing of the decision whether to proceed with exclusion or not.

The Council will always inform applicants if there is likely to be a possible delay in the process for requesting Exclusion.

Further details of the Council's Exclusions Policy are available by contacting your local Estate Office, Housing and Economy Department, Ruthin Road, Wrexham or by visiting the Council's website:- http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/council/Housing/housing_applying/exclusion.htm