

# Select Move Sub-Regional Choice Based Lettings Scheme

## Common Allocation Scheme 2018

### 1. Introduction and background

#### 1.1 Introduction

This document represents the social housing allocation scheme for

Chorley Borough Council  
Preston City Council  
South Ribble Borough Council

The following Registered Providers

Accent Foundation  
Chorley Community Housing  
Jigsaw Homes  
Onward Homes  
Great Places  
Your Housing Group  
Progress Housing Group  
Places for People  
Sage Housing

The Registered Providers will use this scheme to allocate a minimum of 75% of its true voids in a financial year, and each Provider may use their discretion to advertise and allocate the other 25% using alternative platforms. In order to allow the Local Authority to monitor the number and type of properties allocated within their area, Registered Providers will use the Select Move IT system as the reporting mechanism for recording all allocations regardless of which platform they have used.

When calculating the number of voids no account shall be taken of:

- Mutual Exchanges
- Successions
- Decants to facilitate major works or improvements, where the tenant will be returning

The properties advertised through this policy will be a cross section of the quality, location, size, and type of property owned or managed by the Registered Provider that becomes vacant throughout the year. RSLs will work with the relevant Local Authority if a more specific type and size of property is required in order for the Local Authority to more effectively discharge their duty.

Once the property is placed on Select Move the Registered Provider cannot advertise it on another platform until it has completed one full advertising cycle and

the shortlist exhausted. The Registered Provider can then advertise and allocate the property through any platform. The local authorities and housing associations listed above have signed a Memorandum of Understanding agreeing to this scheme under a partnership arrangement to operate the Select Move sub- regional choice based lettings scheme.

Registered Providers with housing in the Chorley, Preston and South Ribble areas who are not Select Move partners will be subject to local nomination agreements with local authorities to allocate properties.

## **1.2 Legal Framework**

Local authorities are required by the Housing Act 1996 to have a published allocation scheme and this document takes into account the requirements of the Act as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Localism Act 2011. The scheme incorporates the 2012 regulations concerning armed forces personnel and the 2015 Right to Move regulations and guidance and the Allocation Codes of Guidance 2012 & 2013. The policy has also been developed to remain compatible with other related legislation and guidance, the details of which can be found at Appendix G This scheme will be revised as necessary to incorporate any subsequent legislation and statutory guidance.

## **1.3 Governance**

The Memorandum of Understanding provides that the scheme is managed by a Steering Group that meets at least 6 times a year. An Operational Group meets at least 6 times a year which reports on operational and performance matters.

## **1.4 Select Move website**

A shared web based IT system, (the Select Move website) allows the partners to operate a common housing application form, housing register and allocations policy.

The Select Move website provides an online housing application form, with registered applicants able to place expressions of interest or bids for properties advertised on the website.

The website provides other services including self -service housing advice, a mutual exchange service, private rented and low cost home ownership information.

## **1.5 Policy Statement**

The aim of the scheme is to ensure that homes are allocated to eligible and qualifying applicants in a fair, consistent and accountable manner in accordance with legislation and guidance.

Homes will be allocated to applicants after taking into account the following: their housing needs and choices, their financial situation and ability to manage a tenancy, the local community and the locality whilst ensuring the best use of housing stock.

An allocation of housing is defined as the nomination of any person to be a secure, introductory assured or fixed term tenant provided by a Local Housing Authority or Registered Provider.

Allocations also include where a tenant is applying for a transfer from one Select Move partner to another. In this case the tenant must have complied with the terms of their tenancy to qualify to join the register.

## **1.6 Equality Statement**

The Partners are committed to equality of opportunity and anti-discrimination in relation to their service provision and seek to promote social inclusion. Applicants will not be discriminated against when seeking or accessing accommodation in accordance with the general equality duty set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Partners will ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to access the Select Move services (subject to eligibility legislation) and they will ensure that they are responsive to any special needs of service users.

## **1.7 Consultation**

Any significant changes to this policy will be approved by the relevant Board, Committee or portfolio holder for each participating local authority and by the relevant decision-making bodies of the Registered Providers as appropriate. Any significant changes will also be subject to consultation with relevant statutory and voluntary sector organisations and tenant representatives and applicants to the scheme. The Select Move Steering Group shall be responsible for determining whether any proposed changes are significant and should be the subject of consultation.

## **2. Applying to Select Move**

### **2.1 Who can apply to join Select Move?**

Housing legislation requires that applicants are assessed to determine whether by law they are eligible for an allocation of accommodation. If the applicant is eligible, their application is assessed against the Select Move qualifying criteria. The Select Move partner receiving the application will be responsible for investigating and determining the application, although transfer applications will be passed to the tenant's landlord for assessment. Applicants are notified in writing of the outcome of their application. Current tenants of the partners will need to have been a tenant for a minimum of 12 months before being allowed to join the register unless there are exceptional circumstances.

## 2.2 Eligibility Criteria

The Housing Act 1996 (as amended) states that the following types of household are not eligible for a housing allocation and therefore cannot join the Select Move scheme.

- Persons from abroad who the relevant Secretary of State has deemed ineligible for an allocation of social housing.
- Persons subject to immigration control.
- Other persons from abroad who are ineligible as a result of legislation.

Where there are two or more applicants and one or more is classed as ineligible a tenancy will only be granted to the eligible applicant(s).

## 2.3 Qualifying Criteria

An applicant will qualify to join the Select Move scheme if they are;

An eligible person and

Aged 16 or over. Persons aged 16 or 17 can qualify to join the scheme but will not be made an offer of accommodation without a relevant support package being in place that is agreed where necessary between the Local Authority and the Registered Provider.

All applicants must demonstrate that they have a local connection by meeting one of the following criteria. Local Connection will only be awarded to the specific area of Chorley, Preston and/or South Ribble where they can evidence that they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- The applicant must be able to demonstrate that they have lived 6 out of the last 12 months or 3 out of the last 5 years continuously in the specific Local Authority area.
- The applicant must be able to demonstrate that they have parents, children or adult siblings who currently permanently reside in the specific Local Authority area and have done so continuously for at least 5 years.
- The applicant is currently employed in the specific Local Authority area. Employment is work that is not temporary or seasonal, is for at least 16 hours per week and has been continual for at least 6 months and the applicant must be working at the point an offer of a tenancy is made. (banding is global)
- The applicant is currently making a positive community contribution or undertaken voluntary work in the specific Local Authority area for at least 10 hours per month over the last 12 months.
- The applicant needs to give or receive long term care, which is effective and genuine to another person who permanently resides within the specific Local Authority area and who could not otherwise manage without the care provided

and there is a need for the applicant to move into the area in order to facilitate the provision of such long term care.

- The applicant at the time of the application is serving in or has formerly served in the UK regular forces within the last 5 years.
- The applicant has recently ceased or will cease to be entitled to reside in accommodation provided by the UK Government following the death of that persons spouse or civil partner who has served in the UK regular forces and their death was attributable wholly or partly to that service.
- The applicant at the time of the application is serving in or has formerly served in the reserve forces and who is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable wholly or partly to that service.
- Applicants/households that cannot demonstrate a local connection but have an exception welfare need will be accepted on to the scheme e.g. harassment, domestic abuse, witness protection etc.
- Applicants under the Right to Move Regulations i.e. social tenants moving into the area to take up employment. See Appendix E.

### **3. Non- Qualifying Criteria**

Applicants/household will not qualify to join the Select Move scheme if one of the following applies:

#### **3.1 Financial circumstances**

The applicant/household is a current tenant of a Registered Provider and has any outstanding housing related debt.

The applicant/household have a housing related debt such as rent arrears, repairs recharges, leasehold service charges and/or sundry debts of £1000.01 or more that can be proven by a social and/or private landlord. Applicants/household with housing related debts of below £1000 will qualify provided that they have made and maintained a repayment plan in accordance with the criteria below:

- Housing related debt under £500, an agreed repayment plan must have been maintained for a minimum of 3 months before they can register.
- Housing related debt between £500.01 and £1000 an agreed repayment plan must have been maintained for a minimum of 6 months and the debt must be reduce to under £500 before they can register.
- Payments must be maintained under the plan before any offer of accommodation is made.

The applicant or household member is an owner occupier or has equity in a property (whether or not the property is located in the UK). Consideration of applications from owner occupiers will be given where the Local Authority has a statutory duty to assist e.g. homelessness or where the applicants housing needs can only be met by social housing e.g. sheltered housing required.

The applicant's household has a gross annual income (including benefit income) of £60,000 or more and/or have savings or assets greater than £30,000. These amounts will be reviewed annually.

The applicant's/household financial and personal circumstances are such that they do not qualify for charitable housing assistance from a partner Registered Provider that has charitable rules and objectives.

### **3.2 Support needs**

If the applicants care and support needs are assessed by a partner organisation as being such that an individual's specific needs cannot be met in general or sheltered accommodation they will not qualify for accommodation.

### **3.3 Unacceptable behaviour**

Certain behaviour and/or convictions of the applicant(s) or household member may result in them being disqualified from joining the scheme. Examples include where the applicant or household member has:

Unspent criminal convictions that make them unsuitable to be a tenant due to the threat or risk they pose. This will be determined by the information provided by probation, police intelligence and evidence available via the approved protocol.

Engaged in anti-social behaviour such that action has been taken, or could have been taken against that person such as a Civil Injunction, Criminal Behaviour Order, Community Protection Notice, Demotion Order or Possession Order.

Previously been evicted by a Select Move partner and the reasons for the eviction whether behavioural or financial are still considered a risk to the landlord. The applicant/household member has the right to appeal this decision. Appeals will be considered by the Registered Provider that carried out the eviction. Any further appeals will not be considered within 12 months.

Been convicted of using or allowing current or former accommodation to be used for illegal and/or immoral purposes.

Been responsible for neglecting, damaging or abandoning a previous property.

Been responsible for providing false information in connection with making a housing application and or obtaining a tenancy.

Been responsible for tenancy fraud.

When assessing whether the behaviour of the applicant or household member is serious enough to disqualify them from joining the scheme, the following matters will be considered by the Select Move partner assessing the application.

Has the applicant or household member behaved in such a way that they are considered to be unsuitable to be a tenant of a Select Move partner and at the time of the application is the applicant or household member still considered to be unsuitable to be a tenant of a Select Move partner by reason of their behaviour or the behaviour of any person named on the application and if the behaviour is serious enough to entitle a landlord to commence legal proceeding and/or the behaviour poses a serious risk to staff of any Select Move partner, tenants of a Select Move partner or the local community.

Partners will however consider the circumstances of each case individually and applicants/household members are entitled to present any mitigating circumstances and information for consideration. Consideration will also be given to those applicants/household members with housing related debt and/ or convictions where there is a statutory duty to assist by the Local Authority. These applicants will be required to demonstrate a commitment to reducing the debt and the maintenance of a repayment plan or improved behaviour or reduced risk.

### **3.4. Applicants who do not qualify**

An applicant who is eligible but does not qualify for accommodation under this scheme can apply to the partner landlord of their choice to be placed on the Open Property Register (OPR) for low demand properties. OPR properties are not subject to this scheme. Please see Appendix F for the OPR policy.

## **4. Application assessment**

### **4.1 Verification**

The registration process will involve verification checks and assessments carried out by the partners to the scheme at application and offer stage, and it will be the applicant's responsibility to provide any evidence that is requested. This can include;

Evidence of eligibility for all persons named on the application or added to the application and any of the following will be required as evidence for these persons current passport, current national identify card, photo driving licence, birth certificate and/or current benefit award letter dated within the last 3 months. Proof of child Benefit is required for children.

Affordability assessments will be undertaken on applicants and their households to determine ability to sustain a tenancy financially. If a tenancy is deemed to be unaffordable, Select Move Partners are committed to providing information/advice and sign posting to alternative options to support the applicant/household to obtain accommodation. The outcome of the affordability assessment will not prevent the application from being made active, however it may preclude an offer being made.

Evidence from the applicant that they have a local connection to at least one of the Local Authority areas of Chorley, Preston or South Ribble.

Obtaining references from the applicant/households current/former landlords.

Requesting information about the applicant/households current or former housing related debts.

Requesting information about the applicant/households current or previous anti-social behaviour.

Requesting information about an applicant/households offending history, for example from the Probation Service further to disclosure about offending.

Undertaking inspections of the current property to ensure that the conditions of the tenancy are being complied with and the details given on the application form are correct.

Evidence of successful completion of pre-tenancy training if a request has been made for the applicant to complete this training.

Until the verification checks have been completed and accepted as satisfactory by a partner to the scheme an applicant will not be able to register an expression of interest in a property.

## **4.2 Child Access**

If an applicant has access to children, they will need to provide evidence such as a copy of an access agreement, court order, custody or residence order or details of their ex-partner where appropriate. In some areas applicants may only be offered certain property types to make best use of the available housing stock and any offer must be an affordable option.

## **4.3 False or withheld information**

It is a criminal offence for any applicant to knowingly give false information or to withhold information relevant to their application. An offence may be committed if an applicant knowingly gives false information or knowingly withholds information which has reasonably been requested at any stage of the application process. An offence is also committed if the applicant allows a third party to provide false information on his or her behalf, or at his or her instigation. In these circumstances action may be taken with regard to the tenancy awarded and/or their application.

## **4.4 Change of circumstances**

Applicants are required to notify a partner immediately of any change in circumstances – for example:

A change of address for themselves or any person on the application;

Any additional person to be added to the application;

If any member of family or any other person on the application is no longer a party to the application.

Any other change that might affect eligibility, qualification, banding or effective date.

Where the applicant has not notified a partner of a change of circumstances and this would have affected eligibility, qualification, banding or effective date any other partner will be entitled to:

Withdraw an offer of accommodation  
Skip the application during any short listing process  
Close the application  
Put the application in pending until all relevant information is received.

#### **4.5 Deliberately worsening or changing circumstances**

Where an applicant has deliberately worsened or changed their circumstances to gain additional priority or gain a more favourable effective date or gain eligibility or qualification, they will be assessed on their circumstances before their situation changed.

Examples of these circumstances include:

An applicant has moved from suitable accommodation which was reasonable for them to continue to reside in to accommodation that is less suitable;

An owner –occupier who has unnecessarily transferred their home to another person within the last five years from the date of their application, unless such transfer was necessary in order for that person to continue to occupy their home

An applicant who has unnecessarily dispersed, transferred or deprived themselves of assets or money which could have been used to secure suitable accommodation within the last five years from the date of their application;

An applicant who has moved family members or other persons into their home from accommodation suitable for their needs such that the applicant's home is now unsuitable.

Priority will not be awarded to applicants who have moved into a property unless there has been a change in circumstances

#### **4.6 Priority**

Priority for accommodation will be awarded in accordance with the following criteria;

**Bedroom need.** Households whose minimum bedroom need matches the bedroom size of the property will be prioritised first.

**Banding.** The Select Move scheme operates with five bands A to E. Band A is the highest priority and band E being the lowest.

**Local connection.** Those with a local connection to the local authority area of the advertised property will be given preference in each band.

Effective date. An effective date will be used to determine an applicant's position within the band after local connection has been taken into account.

Appendix A provides further detail of the shortlisting criteria.

#### 4.7 Determining the Effective Date

The following criteria will be used to determine the effective date;

For a new applicant the effective date will be the date the application is received by a Select Move partner.

If an applicant is subsequently awarded a higher band priority the banding date will be the date the higher band priority was awarded.

If an applicant is subsequently awarded a lower band the banding date will be the date the application was accepted onto the Select Move scheme – i.e. the original effective date.

If an applicant is given priority because they are moving on from supported housing the effective date will be the date they moved into the supported housing.

For qualifying and eligible current or former UK service personnel or their spouse or civil partner who are in urgent housing need (Band A – C) as determined by a local authority partner, the effective date will be backdated to equal their total period of service in the UK armed forces (or the service of spouse or civil partner).

Where the applicant becomes homeless unintentionally within 2 years of accepting a homeless duty private sector tenancy the effective date will be the date of the new application.

### 5. Global and local banding categories

Every application is awarded a local and global band, these may differ. The local band will reflect the priority awarded for housing within the applicant's local authority area only. The global band reflects the priority awarded across the partnership. Priority banding will only be awarded where an applicant's circumstances are different from when they took their tenancy.

#### 5.1 The banding scheme

<b>BAND A: Urgent Need Band</b>	
Medical/Welfare Grounds	
GLOBAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>An immediate life threatening or progressive condition which is seriously affected by the current housing and where re-housing would solve or alleviate that medical condition or make it significantly easier to manage.- To be agreed by a manager</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A member of the household seeking accommodation cannot be discharged from hospital or rehabilitation accommodation until suitable housing is provided and the household had settled accommodation in a Select Move partner's area prior to hospital admission.</li> </ul> <p>A member of the household is elderly, disabled or has a progressive illness and is likely to require admission to hospital or residential/nursing care in the immediate future and re-housing would enable that person to remain living at home. To be agreed by a manager</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The household seeking accommodation has welfare needs so severe that the protection of <b>vulnerable adults or children</b> is only possible if the household were to move to a new home and where the present circumstances could deteriorate to such an extent as to place household members at risk, or in need of residential care unless re-housing is offered.</li> </ul>
<p>Care Leavers</p> <p>GLOBAL</p>	<p>Care leavers who are threatened with homelessness and who will continue to be supported by their local Leaving Care Team assessed through the agreed protocol. Applicants are awarded this category in accordance with protocols between the Council's Housing and County Council Children Services Department. An applicant must be a former relevant child as defined by the Children Leaving Care Act 2002. They must have vulnerability and urgent housing need that is best met by the provision of long term settled housing.</p>
<p>To release an Adapted property</p> <p>GLOBAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where a partner tenant does not require a specially adapted property for disabled use, and there is demand for its use.</li> </ul>
<p>Exceptional need to move, determined by partners within the agreed procedures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreed in exceptional circumstances due to significant problems associated with the applicants' occupation of a dwelling in the social or private rented</li> </ul>

<p>Domestic Violence/MARAC, Racial, Homophobic or Transgender Harassment, witness or child protection, management transfers</p> <p>GLOBAL</p>	<p>sector and there is a high risk to the tenant or their family's safety if they remain in the dwelling/area. For social housing tenants transfers will be to properties of the same size and type where required, but locations or areas are likely to change. A list of cases that could qualify is detailed in the policy. See appendix D.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency need to move due to exceptional circumstances where there is high risk to the tenant or family's safety if they remain in the dwelling/area.</li> <li>• Urgent management transfer cases accepted by a participating landlord or waiting list cases accepted by a participating local authority.</li> <li>• Applicants who have been assessed by the LA as being owed the homelessness relief duty and who are vulnerable as a result of being victims of violence or harassment</li> <li>• Applicants who have been assessed by the LA as being unintentionally homeless and in priority need as a result of being victims of violence or harassment</li> </ul>
<p>Statutory overcrowded</p> <p>GLOBAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those that are statutory overcrowded as defined by the Housing Act 1985</li> </ul>
<p>Private Sector properties unsanitary or unfit.</p> <p>GLOBAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A private sector property either owned or rented where a statutory notice has been issued by the Environmental Health Department that an unfit property is to be demolished under the Housing Act 2004</li> <li>• They are a private sector tenant and the Council has decided that the property poses a Category 1 hazard under the Health and Safety Fitness Rating and the Council are satisfied that the problem cannot be resolved by the landlord within 6 months and as a result continuing to occupy the accommodation will pose a risk to the applicant's health. This includes a property that has severe damp, major structural defects including subsidence, flooding, collapse of the roof or have living conditions which are</li> </ul>

	a statutory nuisance, and there is no prospect of the problems being remedied within a 6 month time period.
Supported Accommodation  GLOBAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicants leaving supported accommodation and have been assessed by the support provider as ready for independent living via the approved route in each partner local authority and the resulting vacancy can be used by someone else who needs the support.</li> </ul>
Homeless households owed a full homeless duty under section 193(2) or 195(2) Housing Act 1996  LOCAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Statutory homeless cases accepted by local authorities within the scheme.</li> </ul>

<b>Band B:</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
Overcrowded GLOBAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An applicant who needs to move due to severe overcrowding – short by 2 or more bedrooms in accordance with the criteria in Appendix A Table 2 .</li> </ul>
Medical mobility cases / Medical grounds  GLOBAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An applicant who have an urgent need to move on medical grounds because their current home is having a severe adverse effect on the health of a member of the household. The household includes a child or young person with a long term disability or learning difficulty, who needs to access specialist education or training facilities and cannot do so from their present home. Supporting evidence must be provided.</li> </ul>
Essential Care  LOCAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The household includes a person who receives/provides or needs to receive/provide essential long term care to someone in any part of the Select Move area and they cannot deliver that care effectively from their current location.</li> <li>Approved foster carers and adopters who require larger accommodation on the recommendation of children’s services.</li> </ul>

<p>Applicants owed a prevention or relief duty – Band B priority to be awarded by the LA after a 3 month period with waiting time continued</p> <p>LOCAL</p>	<p>Applicants owed a Prevention or Relief duty who are engaging with the Local Authority and their personal housing plan and who are actively bidding</p>
<p>Applicants who are owed a relief duty by the LA and are entitled to accommodation under section 188 of the Housing Act - priority to be awarded immediately that the section 188 duty arises with waiting time continued</p> <p>LOCAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicants that the LA assess are owed a relief duty and are entitled to temporary accommodation</li> </ul>
<p>Right to Move Local</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing social tenants needing to move into the Select Move area for employment reasons see Appendix E</li> </ul>

<p><b>Band C</b></p>	
<p>Applicants who are owed the homelessness prevention or relief duty – priority kept under review for a 3 month period</p>	<p>Applicants who the LA assess as being owed the homelessness prevention or relief duty. Band B to be awarded with waiting time continued after a 3 month period with waiting time continued subject to engagement with the LA and personal housing plan and actively bidding on properties</p>
<p>Hardship and welfare LOCAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An applicant who needs to move to a particular locality and otherwise would suffer significant hardship to themselves or to a member of their household</li> </ul>
<p>Under Occupying GLOBAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A tenant of a partner housing association under occupying family housing by two or more bedrooms in</li> </ul>

	<p>accordance with the criteria in Appendix A Table 2 or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A tenant of a partner housing association seeking a move to non-family housing that will free up a house to enable use by a family.</li> </ul>
<p>Applicants with dependent children living in accommodation that lacks level access</p> <p>GLOBAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An applicant without ground level access or in upper floor accommodation who lives with at least one child under the age of 3, including pregnant women once their Mat B1 has been received.</li> </ul>
<p>Applicants living in accommodation that lacks basic facilities</p> <p>GLOBAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants without access to any of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bath or Shower</li> <li>2. A toilet</li> <li>3. Cooking facilities</li> <li>4. Running hot water supplies</li> </ol> <p>Electric/gas needed for essential activities</p> <p>Subject to verification by the local authority.</p> </li> </ul>

<b>Band D</b>	
<p>Applicants not assessed as being owed a reasonable preference but who meet the partnership positive community criteria</p> <p>GLOBAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An applicant employed or undertaking training within the borough to which they are applying.</li> <li>• An applicant that can demonstrate a contribution to the local community such as voluntary work. This could be specific to the area where the work takes place or could be positive work on an estate.</li> <li>• An applicant with a family connection to the specific area which is required due to giving or receiving care or specific support purposes.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<p>Under-Occupancy</p> <p>GLOBAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner tenants who are under-occupying</li> </ul>
<p>Households Over-Occupying by 1 bedroom.</p> <p>GLOBAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Households over-occupying by 1 bedroom according to the bedroom standard as detailed in Appendix A Table 2 regardless of household type or landlord.</li> </ul>

<b>E Band</b>	
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No Housing Need GLOBAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicants that do not qualify for additional preference but would like to move to alternative accommodation.</li> </ul>
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## 6. Allocations and lettings

### 6.1 Quota system

When advertising properties on the Select Move scheme, partners will use the following quota system:

Band A	40%
Band B	30%
Band C	20%
Band D	10%
Band E	0%

### 6.2 Advertising

**Properties will be advertised as and when notice is received and therefore will be uploaded at anytime between a Monday and Friday to the website.**

**Each listed property will have a closing date within which the customers will need to register their bid.**

**Large family homes of 4 bedrooms or more including 3 bed parlour homes, bungalows and newly built homes will be advertised for a minimum of one week including weekends and bank holidays as will any properties with adaptations.**

**All other properties advertised on Select Move will be advertised for a minimum of 3 days including weekends and bank holidays.**

### 6.3 Direct matches

A direct match will occur where a property has been identified for a particular applicant and which has been approved by a senior manager in the partner organisation making the match.

Direct matches are used in exceptional circumstances for emergency re-housing such as fire, flood, major incident, urgent major repairs, witness protection, child protection, serious domestic abuse or other exceptional housing management reason. Instances of direct matching will be monitored by the Operational Group for compliance with the shortlisting and offers procedure.

## **6.4 Numbers of expressions of interest, numbers of offers and other restrictions**

An applicant who has been accepted as statutory homeless by a Local Authority will receive one suitable offer of accommodation which can be from the social rented or private rented sector as determined by the local authority. If a homeless applicant refuses one suitable offer of accommodation then the applicant will lose their reasonable preference banding and will be placed in a lower band to reflect their housing needs. The Local Authority will have no further legal duty to provide accommodation. If an applicant wishes to request a review in relation to the suitability of an offer or their status as a homeless applicant they must make an application to the relevant local authority.

Applicants awarded band A or band B priority may lose their priority status if they refuse an offer of accommodation for which they, or their proxy, bid and the property is considered suitable taking into account:

The size of the property

The physical access to the property and the internal layout

The facilities provided

The location of the property and

It was accurately described on the Select Move advertisement.

Any applicants in band A and band B will have their application reviewed every 10 weeks to ensure that the applicant is expressing an interest on suitable vacancies advertised. . Where the applicant fails to express an interest their band placement will be formally reviewed and in appropriate circumstances expressions of interest will be placed on their behalf. Where priority has been awarded by the Local Authority under homelessness duties the Local Authority will have the discretion to review the application weekly. This includes applicants awarded Band C priority by The Local Authority

## **6.5 Offers of accommodation**

An offer of accommodation can be made by telephone, e-mail or in writing subject to the contact details on the application form.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their personal contact details are kept up to date and that they notify Select Move of any planned holidays or expected absences.

If an applicant does not reply to an offer within 2 working days, or 24 hours if the property is ready to let, the offer will be deemed to be withdrawn. A further attempt will be made to contact the applicant within 10 working days to determine whether they wish to remain on the list. If there is still no response, the application will be closed.

If an applicant banded A to C by a Local Authority fails to reply the relevant Local Authority will be informed in order that further efforts can be made to contact the applicant.

## **6.6 Planning restrictions**

Planning requirements may restrict which applicants can be considered for a particular property e.g. must live in a particular area etc. These restrictions will be clearly set out in the advertisement by the partner and short listing decisions will be only be made by the partner in accordance with the requirements of the planning consent.

## **6.7 Local Lettings Policies**

Select Move partners may draw up local lettings policies that are aimed at creating and maintaining sustainable communities which are: time limited and consulted with the Local Authority and stakeholders and agreed with the Steering Group.

Applicants may as part of a local lettings plan be required to attend training to demonstrate their ability to sustain a tenancy. Where training is identified as being necessary, the applicant will need to successfully complete this training before an offer of accommodation is confirmed.

Local lettings policies must be formally publicised by the partner implementing the policy and must also carry out an equality impact assessment.

## **6.8 High risk ex-offenders**

Applicants who are considered by relevant agencies as high risk ex-offenders will be required to have an appropriate risk assessment with partner or multi agencies before an offer of accommodation is made. The aim of this risk assessment will be to ensure that appropriate support and/or supervision is in place before the offer of accommodation is made. This may mean that restrictions will be placed on the property type and/or location offered.

## **6.9 Vulnerable applicants**

Each partner is committed to equality of access to the Select Move scheme. Applicants with special or specific needs and vulnerable applicants will be provided with appropriate assistance. Any support plans submitted must be agreed with the relevant partner. Assistance may also include auto bidding, bidding by telephone, or staff assisted bidding.

A proxy may place bids on the applicant's behalf with the applicant's agreement where a proxy is required or requested.

## **6.10 Sheltered housing**

An applicant for sheltered housing must normally be aged 55 or over or have a need for sheltered accommodation due to a disability or some other vulnerability. An assessment of the applicants need for sheltered housing will be undertaken. It is a condition of all tenancies in sheltered housing schemes that tenants agree to accept the services offered. Separate charges are made for these services in addition to the rent. Further details are available from each sheltered scheme.

### **6.11 Supported accommodation**

There is a range of supported accommodation available in each local authority area. However apart from older persons accommodation supported accommodation is not available through Select Move.

An applicant wishing to access supported accommodation should contact their Local Authority housing options service for more information.

### **6.12 Care and support needs**

If an applicant has high care or support needs and an assessment indicates that they may have specific requirements Partners may make a referral to Social Services requesting a needs assessment if there is not already one in place. Select Move will work with Social Services to allocate accommodation in accordance with an applicant's care and support plan, but there may be cases where there will be no prospect of Select Move partners being able to offer accommodation.

## **7. Closing applications, Reviews and Complaints**

### **7.1 Closing or cancelling applications**

An application will be closed from the housing register in the following circumstances:

At the request of the applicant.

If the applicant becomes ineligible or no longer qualifies under this policy.

When the applicant has been housed through the scheme.

When a tenant of social housing completes a mutual exchange.

If the applicant fails to respond to a request for further information within 28 working days.

Where an applicant has refused three reasonable offers within the past 12 months their application may be closed and will not be allowed to re-apply to the register for a 6 month period. In this case the applicant will be required to re-register and will lose their time on the register.

Where an applicant fails to respond to a review of their application.

Where there are reasonable reasons for the applicant failing to make contact or repeatedly refusing accommodation, or where there is new and relevant information, an applicant can request to be reinstated on the register. Upon reinstatement their original banding and effective date will be awarded. Requests to be reinstated on the register must be made within 3 months of removal.

An applicant whose application has been closed can apply to re-join the register in which case they will receive a new effective date in accordance with this policy.

## **7.2 Annual review of applications**

Every application on the register will be reviewed at least annually on the anniversary of its entry on the register.

## **7.3 Requesting a Review**

An applicant has the right to request a review of any decision made on their application if they are not satisfied with any decision made, for example the banding awarded or effective date applied.

The applicant or someone authorised to act on their behalf must notify in writing the Select Move partner dealing with their application within 28 days of the date on which the applicant is notified of the decision. The notification must set out the grounds for the review. The relevant local authority will deal with any decisions about homelessness duty or housing options.

The review will be carried out by a member of staff of the partner organisation dealing with the applicant who is senior to the person who made the original decision. The review will exclude any staff that may have had any influence or involvement in the original decision. The applicant will be given the opportunity to submit any further information that they may want the reviewing officer to consider. The applicant will also be informed of the right to make oral representations as well as written representations.

The review is a reconsideration of the case and is not limited to the facts at the date of the original decision and will be made on the relevant information available at the time of the review. In addition to any information provided by the applicant, the reviewing officer may ask for further information that is reasonably required to make a decision. The merits of each case will be considered on an individual basis.

Select Move partners' will aim to complete all reviews within 28 days of receiving all relevant unless a longer period has been agreed with the applicant. If the reviewing officer decides that there is deficiency or irregularity in the original decision, or the manner in which it was made, but still decides to make a decision which is against the interests of the applicant on one or more issues, the reviewing officer shall notify the applicant (a) that the reviewer is so minded and the reasons why; and (b) that the applicant, or someone acting on his behalf, may make representations to the

reviewer orally or in writing or both. The applicant will be informed of the outcome in writing. If the original decision is upheld, the applicant will be informed of the reasons for this decision. Where a decision has been made in line with Select Move's policies and procedures, applicants may not have the right to invoke a partner's complaints policy to challenge the decision again.

### **Local Government Ombudsman (LGO)**

The LGO is an independent organisation which considers complaints about how a local authority has dealt with an application or request for a service for example how the authority discharges its homelessness duty under the allocation scheme.

The LGO website is [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)

The LGO address is

PO Box 4471, Coventry, CV4 0EH

### **The Housing Ombudsman (HO)**

The HO is an independent organisation which considers complaints about how a housing association dealt with an application or request for a service for example mutual exchanges or transfers.

The HO website is [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

The HO address is

81 Aldwych, London, WC2B 4HN

The HO website provides advice about which service applicants should contact according to the type of complaint they have.

## **Appendix A**

### **Shortlisting Criteria**

When short listing those applicants who have expressed an interest in a property advertised on the Select Move scheme the following criteria will be followed:

**Table 1**

1. Bedroom Need	The overriding criteria which will be used to shortlist applicants who have expressed an interest in a property whose minimum bedroom need matches the number of bedrooms in the property.
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	<p>An applicant whose minimum need is higher than the number of bedrooms in a property will not be able to bid on the property as they would be over-occupying.</p> <p>Applicants who are assessed as being able to manage in smaller properties will have their bedroom need over ridden providing this does not go over the space standard.</p> <p>Applicants/households that have a desire to live in a larger home will be allowed to bid on a larger property providing they can demonstrate that they are financially able to sustain the larger home. These applicants/households will be shortlisted below applicants that have the actual bedroom need requirement.</p> <p>For applicants with a lower than minimum bedroom need please see the foot of this table</p>
2. Banding	<p>Properties will be advertised in housing need bands in accordance with the quotas in the allocations policy.</p> <p>An applicant who bids will be given priority if they are awarded the band that the property is advertised in (subject to matching bedroom criteria). An applicant not in the band the property is advertised in will be considered in descending order starting with the highest band the property was not advertised in with A being the highest and E being the lowest. For example for a property advertised in band B, Applicant with B band would be prioritised followed by A, C, D and E bands.</p>
3. Connection to Local Authority	<p>Priority of an applicant within each band will be given first to applicants who have a local connection to the local authority where the advertised property is located. This applies to all bands and sub-categories.</p> <p>An applicant without a connection to the</p>

	<p>local authority in which the property is advertised, but has a connection to at least one of the other Select Move local authorities with then be short listed.</p> <p>It is possible for an applicant to have a local connection to more than one local authority.</p>
4. Effective Banding Date	<p>Within each band and after taking into account local connection, an applicant will be short listed in order of the earliest effective banding date.</p> <p>In certain circumstances the effective banding date may precede the application date.</p>
<p>Each property shortlist will follow the above procedure for each applicant with a matching bedroom need. The process will then be repeated for each applicant who will be under-occupying with the closest bedroom requirement. Applicants who have the assessed need for a larger property will always be considered before those that have been financially approved for a larger property.</p> <p>Although under-occupying applicants will be short listed under no circumstances is there any obligation on a partner to offer a property to an applicant who will under-occupy as this is not effective use of housing stock. An applicant who would be under occupying a property would only be offered the property if they can demonstrate it is economically viable.</p> <p>An applicant deemed to be under-occupying will be required to sign a disclaimer acknowledging that housing benefit (or equivalent state benefit) may not cover the full housing cost of their property. All applicants will need to demonstrate their ability to sustain a tenancy.</p>	

In determining the minimum bedroom need the following criteria will be taken into account:

**Table 2**

Single people and couples	<p>One bedroom accommodation need unless any of the following apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need for an additional bedroom for a carer as provided by the Welfare Reform Act 2012 and regulations made thereunder.</li> <li>• Proof of pregnancy is provided by MatB1</li> </ul>
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One bedroom for the applicant including his or her partner.</li> <li>• One bedroom for each member of the household over the age of 16. A couple will be allocated one bedroom.</li> <li>• One bedroom for up to 2 children of the same sex</li> </ul>

	<p>up to the age of 16.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One bedroom for up to 2 children of different sexes up to the age of 10</li> </ul>
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Open Market Property and 'Immediately Available Home' adverts will only be used once the property has been through one full advertising cycle. Where the same type of property in the same area has been advertised within the last month and not be let then these properties may be advertised instantly in the Immediately Available Homes section of the website.. These properties will then be allocated outside of the Select Move shortlisting criteria, allowing for any eligible applicant to be successful regardless of their position on the shortlist.

## **Appendix B**

### **Data Protection**

The Select Move Scheme and its partners will make every effort to keep information provided by applicants safe and confidential. They will comply with all policies on data protection. The Data Protection Act 1998 provides an applicant with the right to request a copy of their records held on the Select Move allocations system. An applicant wishing to see and receive a copy of their records should make a written request to the partner responsible for registering their application.

All information received relating to an application will be treated as confidential. The Data Protection Act 1998 prevents the disclosure of any such information to any other person without the applicants consent.

Information may be shared about the individual and their history irrespective of whether their consent has been obtained in exceptional circumstances, which will include:-

- in accordance with the provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (section 115)
- For the purposes of the prevention or detection of a crime

- Where there is a serious threat to the applicant or a third party including staff or contractors of a partner or any other organisation.
- Where information is relevant to the management or support duties of the proposed landlord or support organisation to ensure the health and safety of the applicant, a member of his or her household, or a member of staff

Any application that has a cancelled, closed or suspended status for 6 years will be archived off the system, likewise any attachment to a live application will also be archived after 6 years..

## **Appendix C**

### **Allocations – Maintaining Standards of Probity**

Section 122 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 restricts the making of a gift, and the payment of a dividend and bonus, by a non-profit registered provider to-

- a. A member or former member of the registered provider
- b. A member of the family of a member or former member
- c. A company which has as a director a person within paragraph (a) or (b).

To ensure compliance with the Act and in accordance with best practice in the granting of tenancies all applicants are asked to disclose any relationship that exists between them and members or employees of the partners to the Select Move scheme.

Each partner housing association shall have in place a policy to ensure that the allocation of properties to board members and employees (or their immediate

families) is dealt with in a fair and transparent manner and in accordance with the Select Move policy.

Each local authority partner shall assess in the normal way any application for housing from local authority member or employees (or their immediate families) but registration, eligibility, the assessment of housing need and any offer of accommodation shall be approved by a senior manager within the local authority.

#### Family member

A family member is not defined in the Act and the Select Move partnership considers that someone's husband, wife, partner, parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, brothers; sisters would be included and that similar relations by marriage or other partnership would also count as a family member. This should not be confused with the definition of close family members as detailed in the local connection provisions for qualification to join the register.

## **Appendix D**

### **Domestic Abuse**

The applicant will be awarded Band A priority due to domestic abuse where it can be assessed that they are in imminent danger if they remain at their address. The assessment will be undertaken through the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process or relevant Select Move partner in conjunction with appropriate support agencies.

Band A will not be awarded where:

- The perpetrator is included on the application form
- The applicant is requesting a move to an area which is near to where the alleged perpetrator is living or where the alleged perpetrator has close family networks.

Band A priority awarded will be time limited and reviewed by the partner organisation that awarded the priority on a regular basis. Priority will be removed where:

- The need for an immediate or urgent move is no longer there;
- Suitable vacancies arise and the applicant does not bid;
- A suitable offer has been made and refused.

Where the applicant is a tenant of a partner organisation and the partner organisation has suitable properties in the areas requested by the applicant then Band A priority will not be awarded. In these cases the partner organisation will arrange a 'direct match' of the applicant to the property.

## Appendix E

Right to Move – Statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local housing authorities in England

An existing social housing tenant (living outside the Select Move area) will not be disqualified on the grounds of no local connection if they: have reasonable preference under s166(3)(e) because of a need to move to the districts of Chorley, Preston or South Ribble to avoid hardship, **and** need to move because the tenant works in the districts of Chorley, Preston or South Ribble **or** need to move to take up an offer of work in the districts of Chorley, Preston or South Ribble.

If the criteria above are met then the applicant will be awarded **local band B** to the relevant district for:

“An applicant who needs to move to a particular locality and otherwise would suffer significant hardship to themselves or a member of their household and where a financial assessment into that hardship has been undertaken”.

Whether or not the applicant meets the above criteria isn't solely determined by the need to move for work, but that it would cause them hardship if they were able to do so.

#### Definition of Work

- Work should be a permanent contract or one with a minimum term of 12 months.
- Work should be of 16 or more hours a week (unless it can be demonstrated that the earnings are substantial).
- Work should not be voluntary.
- Work can include apprenticeships.
- The relevant district should be the main place of work.
- In the case of self-employed tenants, work should be regular as opposed to intermittent

#### Distance, time and travel costs

When determining hardship, the time taken to travel to work and the cost of the travel should be taken into account. The Select Move partnership considers the following criteria could suggest hardship:

Travel time to get to work is in excess of an hour each way (personal or public depending on circumstances). Travel costs are more than £15 per day or 25% of net income from the employment. There is no transport available at all.

#### Other factors

These factors are all considered on a case by case basis as to whether hardship would be faced by the applicant if they could not move:

- Would failure to move mean the applicant would lose an opportunity to gain a better job/promotion, an apprenticeship, increase hours/pay or move from unemployment to employment.
- If the nature of work likely to be available closer to the applicant's home.
- Personal factors including care responsibilities and medical conditions affected by the tenant not being able to move closer to work.
- Any other situation where hardship would be demonstrable if the tenant could not move.

#### Discretion

Every application will be dealt with on a case by case basis allowing all circumstances and variables to be considered.

### Proof of Work

A combination of the following can be used to prove that work or a job offer is genuine:

- Contract of employment (particularly if stating main place of work).
- Wage slips showing hours worked (particularly if zero hours contract) but they are unlikely to evidence the location of work.
- A letter offering employment (it is likely that the employer will be contacted to confirm acceptance).
- A letter from an employer to prove the work and location.

### Right to Move Quota

1% of a Partner Landlord's lets will be prioritised for Right to Move applicants based on the total of the previous year's lettings by the landlord in each district. The number of Right to Move lets will be rounded up to the nearest whole figure, and prioritised for Band B with the advert stating that 'applicants from outside the Select Move area who need to move for work and have been awarded Band B for Hardship will be prioritised'. The quota level will be reviewed annually based on demand.

## Appendix F

### SELECT MOVE

#### OPEN PROPERTY REGISTER POLICY

1. Select Move is the choice based lettings system for Preston, South Ribble and Chorley. Members of the Select Move Partnership let 75% of their properties for rent through the Select Move scheme.

#### Aims of Policy

2. The aims of this policy are to:
  - a) ensure that partners can let properties for which there is no demand from 'non qualifying' Select Move applicants;

- b) provide non qualifying applicants with clarity as to how properties are allocated under the Open Property Register (OPR).
3. Applicants on the OPR will be free to bid on all properties advertised on Select Move and which are designated by partners as open to OPR applicants but will only be considered if the property attracts no bids from suitable qualifying applicants and is deemed to be suitable for OPR applicants by the advertising partner.
  4. The advertising partner will be responsible for agreeing with the relevant local authority those properties that shall be advertised to OPR bids and those which shall not, e.g. properties subject to a s106 agreement specifying a local connection. Unless otherwise agreed with the local authority, the partner shall be free to allocate the property using whatever criteria they deem appropriate subject to:
    - a) fulfilling their own charitable objectives;
    - b) complying with relevant legislation;
    - c) including details of the property in an annual report to the Select Move Partnership and the relevant local authority detailing all properties let to OPR applicants.
  5. The Partnership will also monitor the letting via the OPR through the production of quarterly monitoring reports.

### **Equality**

6. The partners are committed to equality of opportunity and anti-discrimination and to promoting social inclusion and will endeavour to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to access the OPR.
7. Persons who apply to the Select Move register and who do not meet the qualifying criteria for Select Move under sections 2' 3 and 4 of the Select Move policy shall be registered on the Open Property Register (OPR) for "low demand" properties except that an applicant will not be considered if the applicant or anyone included on their application has :
  - a) engaged in anti-social behaviour such that action has been or could have been taken against them, eg. injunction, ASBO, demotion order, possession order;
  - b) been convicted of a serious offence that has not been spent and is likely to pose a threat or risk to any partner of the scheme, tenants, local community or staff;
  - c) housing related debt of £1,000.01 or more such as rent arrears or sundry debts, including debts to a private landlord. However once the debt has been reduced to £1,000.00 the applicant can re-apply;
  - d) housing related debt of £1,000.00 or less and have not made and/or maintained a repayment plan for a minimum of six months;
  - e) failed the habitual residence test and has insufficient funds otherwise to maintain a tenancy;

- f) care and support needs that, having been assessed by a partner organisation, cannot be met through the provision of sheltered or general needs accommodation;
  - g) previously been evicted by a Select Move partner and are still considered a risk to the landlord.
7. References for an OPR applicant will normally only be taken up at the point of an offer of accommodation. Acceptance onto the OPR does not mean, and shall not be taken to imply, that an applicant on the OPR shall be entitled to receive an offer of accommodation.

### **False Or Withheld Information**

8. It is a criminal offence for any applicant to knowingly or recklessly give false information or to withhold information relevant to their application. An offence may be committed if an applicant knowingly or recklessly gives false information or withholds such information which has reasonably been requested on the housing application form or otherwise by the partner organisation. An offence is also committed if the applicant allows a third party to provide false information on his or her behalf, or at his or her instigation. In these circumstances the partner organisation may seek to repossess the property from the applicant.

### **Review of Policy**

9. This policy shall be reviewed at least annually.

## **Appendix G**

### **Legal Framework**

In addition to ensuring the allocation policy meets the duties imposed under the Housing Act 1996, there are several statutes and codes of practice that the policy has to remain compatible with. These include

The Human Rights Act 1998  
Data Protection Act 1998  
Freedom of Information Act 2000  
The Equality Act 2010  
Children Act 1989  
Crime & Disorder Act 1998  
Homelessness Act 2002  
Equality and Human Rights Commission (Code of Practice on Racial Equality in Housing – September 2006)